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The Canadian Jewish news

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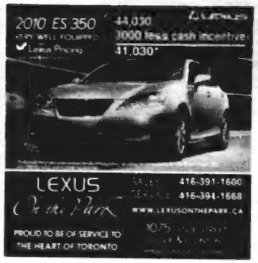

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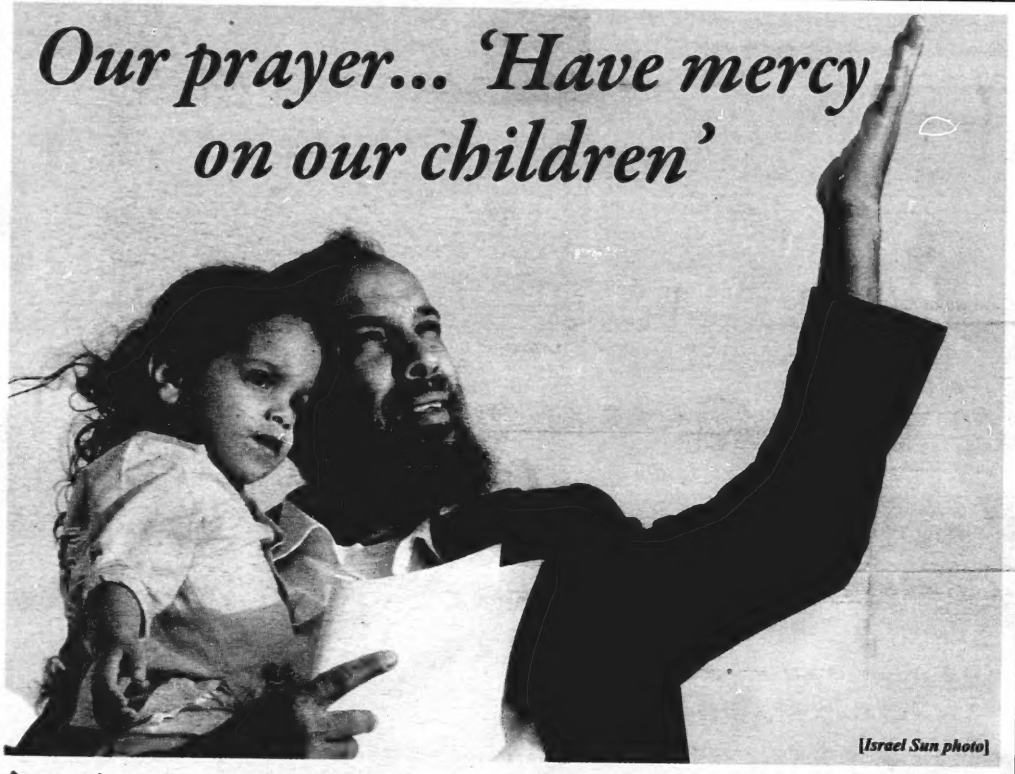
Our prayer... 'Have mercy on our children'



[Israel Sun photo]

The expressions on the faces of both the father and his very young daughter, above, are ethereal. His eyes are to heaven. Her eyes are, too, or at least to a point on the horizon that is farther than her imagination can soar.

His is a look of dreamy wonder. Hers of awakening curiosity.

His arm is stretched emphatically upward punctuating a plea or a paean of praise or perhaps both. Her tiny hand is stretched casually to the side, probably as far as she can extend it, in subconscious replication of her father's reach.

In his other hand, the father holds a sheaf of paper, undoubtedly words of prayer that he has just spoken urgently and fervently for the little girl whom he holds so entirely in his arms, and for others, too.

Editorial

It is a scene so poignant, so evocative, so universal that we sigh.

"May God protect the little children," we cry to ourselves.

"Our Father, our King, have mercy upon us, upon our infants and our young children," we pray together as a community on Rosh Hashanah.

Thoughts for and about our children are a central theme of Rosh Hashanah. Indeed, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks suggests that focus on our children is part of the very theological core of the holiday itself.

"One thing has always struck me about these days: the biblical readings we recite in the synagogue. You would have thought we would read the majestic opening chapter of the Bible... the story of creation," he writes.

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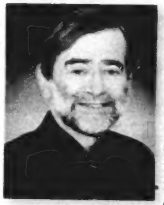
Our best wishes for a Shanah Tovah to all

Rosh Hashanah Greetings

'We pray our voice will be sweet and strong'

Isaac Newton is usually credited with having said, "If I have seen further, it is only by standing on the shoulders of giants." In fact, this image, which reminds us that achievement in the future is dependent on solid support from the past, has Jewish roots in the commentaries of the 12th-century Tosaphist Isaiah di Trani.

It is also a very apt thought for Rosh Hashanah, a holiday with deep connections to the theme of memory as the bridge from the past to a proper future. Indeed, the very name "Rosh Hashanah" means literally "head of the year," as if to remind us that the coming year is also perched on the shoulders of what has gone before. Now is the time that we ask God to remember what was good in the past as He decides on our future, to implore, as He turns the Book of Life to a fresh page, that the good in the pages that have gone before will be remembered.



Mark J. Freiman

As 5770 draws to an end and the New Year approaches, with the likelihood of changes to the way in which advocacy is performed on behalf of the Jewish community, I find myself drawn, more than ever to the spirit of Elul, and the importance of history and remembrance; to the importance of legacy.

If Canadian Jewish Congress speaks today with a clear and authoritative voice, we do so because our voice is magnified by the words that have been spoken by CJC since 1919 on behalf of the Jewish community of Canada.

Over our long history, we have learned the importance of speaking softly and, when necessary, raising our voice. We have spoken out against restrictive covenants in Ontario and for civil discourse in Quebec. We have spoken in favour of the rights of the gay and lesbian community to be free from discrimination in Alberta and against systemic discrimination in the workplace, wherever it may be found. We have spoken in favour of Jewish teachers in Quebec, Sikh railroad workers in Ontario and against the anti-Semitism of Doug Collins in British Columbia, Ernst Zundel in Ontario, James Keegstra in Alberta and Malcolm Ross in New Brunswick.

We have pressed successive federal governments to act against Nazi war criminals and enablers in Canada and have, through principled legal interventions, assisted our Rwandan friends who recoiled in horror to discover genocidaires living freely in our country.

We remember the anti-Semitism of Canada's Charlotte Whitton, who worked to deny Jewish children safe haven from the Nazis, and oppose today the notion that she should be granted a place of honour in our country. At the same time, we remain vigilant in regards to 21st-century anti-Semitism, whether provoked by radical Islam or extremes from the left and right.

We remember the how the life of Anne Frank was, along with so many others, cruelly snuffed out, and we are working today to ensure that surviving saplings from her Tree of Life can be brought to Jewish communities in Canada.

Through all this, we have often won and sometimes lost, but we have never given up the fight or our commitment to the principled positions that have guided us for more than 90 years.

Especially at this time, we meditate on the words of the chazzan in *Hineni*, who prays that he will be as worthy as an "experienced elder" to represent his community. Like the chazzan, we pray that our voice will continue to be sweet – and strong – when necessary.

May we all be inscribed and sealed for a year of happiness, health and prosperity. May we all be deserving of the blessing of peace in Canada, in Israel and throughout the world.

Mark J. Freiman is president of Canadian Jewish Congress.

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Traffic, subway key priorities for Ward 10 candidates

***The CJN* officially begins its 2010 municipal election coverage this week.**

The paper will focus on wards in the GTA with the greatest concentration of Jewish households, namely Toronto wards 10, 16 and 21, and Ward 5 in Vaughan.

Throughout September and October leading up to the Oct. 25 vote, we'll offer regular coverage, as well as profiles of the major Toronto mayoralty candidates and their positions on issues of interest and relevance to our readers.

This week's feature is a question-and-answer piece with Ward 10 candidates for Toronto City Council.

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF, RITA POLIAKOV, CARA STERN
Staff Reporters

Ten would-be city councillors are vying to replace retiring incumbent Mike Feldman to represent Ward 10 (York Centre) at City Hall.

The CJN asked each to give their list of priority issues for the ward and what their first official actions would be if elected.

According to the 2006 Canada Census, Ward 10 has the highest representation of Jewish residents in Toronto, with 17.1 per cent of respondents saying they're Jewish.

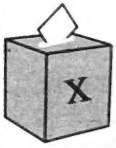
The ward is bounded in the west by Allen Road and Dufferin Street; in the north by Steeles Avenue; and in the east by portions of Yonge Street, Bathurst Street and the Don River West Branch. Its southern boundary is Highway 401.

The candidates are Joseph Cohen; Jarred Friedman, a city planner; Magda Gondor Berkovits, a businesswoman; Nancy Oomen, former executive assistant to Feldman; James Pasternak, current Toronto District School Board trustee for Ward 5; Eric Plant, an insurance agent; Brian Shifman, executive director of the non-profit Smart Commute; Konstantin Toubis, a realtor; Igor Toutchinski, a journalist; and Edward Zaretsky, a retired engineer.

Cohen, a late addition to the race, did not respond to queries by *The CJN*'s deadline.

The CJN asked each candidate the following question: **If elected, what issues will you prioritize as councillor for Ward 10?**

* * *



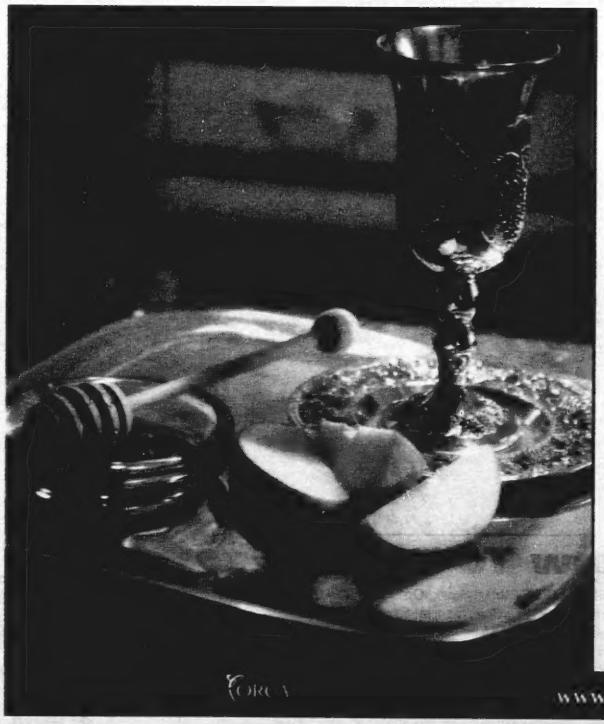
Jarred Friedman: My priorities are... making garbage an essential service; providing safer streets for our community by increasing police presence; encouraging neighbourhood watch; improving existing transit services, and making sure money is being spent to support current TTC services rather than throwing it at future services or projects.

I also support sustainable redevelopment at Downsview Park that provides a positive legacy to the community; revitalizing the community through better city and community planning and making our avenues and streets more pedestrian- and bike-friendly and greener.

Establishing community associations would be an essential part of the planning process, and [they] would take more ownership of the development that occurs in our neighbourhood. There's a lack of understanding of the planning process in the community and we need to give more power to our community to have a say in what's being developed.

Magda Gondor Berkovits: There are several platform issues. One of them is linking the subway between Downsview station and Sheppard station. If the subway goes across Sheppard, it will alleviate a lot of the gridlock we have.

Continued on page 17



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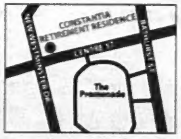

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If this be a 'scum state'...

From the editor's desk...

Relations between Finland and Israel are on a good footing. Stupid, base, ignorant, offensive remarks by one high-profile Finn will not become the burden of an entire people. A single opinion is not the opinion of all. Israelis are sufficiently sophisticated to understand this.

Nevertheless, a single opinion can still give offence.

Last week, the media in Israel widely reported on an unfortunate statement by Frank Johansson, the head of Amnesty International's Finnish branch.

Johansson made an entry on his blog, which appears on the website of Finland's third-largest newspaper *Iltalehti*, that was worthy of a stomp in a wet, dirty gutter in a hard, concrete schoolyard. The splashback is of mud.

"A friend of mine who works in Israel was visiting, [and] while piling wood in the shed, we got to [talking about] his favourite topic," Johannson wrote. "[After] several years of residence in the Holy Land, he has come to the conclusion that 'Israel is a scum state.' Based on my own visit[s], which occurred during the 1970s and for the last time in the 1990s, I agree."

In a subsequent interview with the *Jerusalem Post*, Johannson confirmed that he stood by his statement that Israel is a "scum state."

The fact that Johannson is a high-ranking Amnesty International official is problematic, of course, for the NGO. To the extent that Johannson has any involvement in decisions, statements or pronouncements concerning the Middle East, those pronouncements would have no credibility.

Johansson tried to differentiate his private views from his public persona.

"I am writing those [blogs] in my capacity as a private person, not as an Amnesty official."

But it was a spurious differentiation since he was identified on the newspaper's website by his title: "director of the Finnish branch of Amnesty International."

Asked by the *Jerusalem Post* what other countries, aside from Israel, he considered to be a "scum state," Johansson named none, but did offer that there are "Russian officials" who meet the criteria.

The real difficulty with Johannson's comment is not the splashback that falls upon Amnesty International. Many people already view the NGO as an unreliable institution stained with radical anti-Israel bias.

It is rather as further proof of the extent to which base ignorance has a hold on the so-called informed classes of many parts of Europe.

The only lens through which Johannson and his fellow ideological travellers see the Jewish state is the distorted lens of the conflict with the Palestinians. He and they seem utterly oblivious to the countless other lenses through which they might occasionally peer that would give them a wider, more accurate view of Israel in the world. For example, let us look through the lens of humanitarian aid. Indeed let us look through the even narrower lens of humanitarian aid extended to Haiti after the monstrously devastating earthquake that struck there in January.

Indeed let us compare the aid and interventions offered by Israel and Finland. Both countries are relatively small, though Finland has about 15 times the land mass of Israel, some 337,030 square kilometres to 22,145 square kilometres respectively. Some 5.3 million people live in Finland; 7.6 million live in Israel.

The most recent information I could find about Finland's aid to Haiti was the figure as of Jan. 20. Finland pledged and gave 1.25 million Euros.

Israel's contribution was of a different kind and of a different order. Among the first countries to offer assistance to Haiti, it sent a 200-strong rescue, relief and medical team. The medical team immediately established a functioning field hospital in a soccer field near the airport. The hospital treated hundreds of patients daily, with pediatric and maternity wards, operating theatres and a pharmacy. The Israeli doctors conducted 319 successful surgeries, and delivered 16 babies including three by caesarean section surgery

In addition, Israel supplied Haiti with some 30 tons of medical equipment, 1,150 blankets, 30 large-sized tents, 500 mattresses, 200 sleeping bags and kitchen equipment.

Israel's rescue and medical effort was widely praised, including by former U.S. president Bill Clinton, who was the UN secretary general's special emissary to the Caribbean disaster zone.

I do not make light of or deny the importance of Finland's response to Haiti's humanitarian disaster. All generosity was needed and welcomed. And I apologize in advance if I have left unreported details of additional aid Finland may have sent Haiti.

I simply point out that if Israel is a "scum" state, then the world needs many more such states whose nationals travel around the globe to help save lives and whose contributions in the realm of humanitarianism are out of all all proportion to the number of its people.

But Frank Johannson might not agree.

Canadians wishing to show their appreciation to the Israel Defence Forces Medical and Rescue Team can do so this autumn in Toronto on Nov. 14 when Canadian Friends of Meir Medical Centre, to which the IDF medical team is attached, will be conferring its 2010 Humanitarian Award of Distinction upon them and upon the Disaster Assistance Relief Team of the Canadian Armed Forces. For more information see www.meirfriends.com.

–MBD

SeeJN

PERES COMFORTS THE SCHALITS

Noam and Aviva Schalit visit with Israeli President Shimon Peres last week on the eve of Rosh Hashanah and the High Holiday period. Peres, centre, offered the couple encouragement regarding the fate of their son, Gilad Schalit, who has been held captive by Hamas in Gaza since June 25, 2006, when he was kidnapped from his base in Israel.

[Israel Sun photo]

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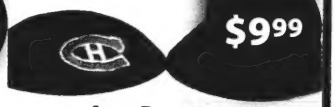

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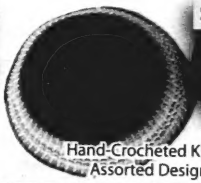

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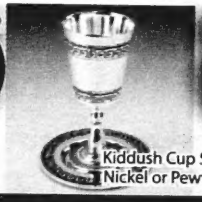

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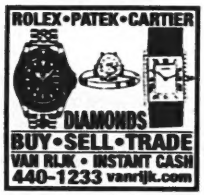
UJA looks to revitalize entertainment division

Reaching out to younger generation of Jews in the community

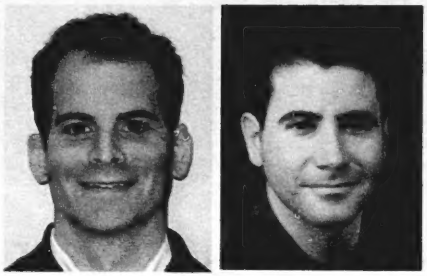
By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Berry Meyerowitz, co-chair of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's media and entertainment division, and Elan Divon, a senior campaign consultant at the federation, are reaching out to the younger generation of Jews in the industry and seeing some success in their efforts to revitalize the division.

A reception before this year's UJA campaign launch at the Carlu was its first event in a couple of years, Divon told *The CJN* in a phone interview. About 50 people attended the reception, and launch keynote Dan Aykroyd put in an appearance too.



Among the challenges the division has faced in remaining active, Divon said he thinks the entertainment business is "a transient business in that people are moving around from job to job. It's a difficult industry to break into and become very successful at a high level."



Berry Meyerowitz, left, and Elan Divon

As well, he added, "There's a lot of travel involved."

He also noted that, because people who work in the entertainment field often become public figures, "a lot of people don't want to affiliate themselves overtly with a particular organization, even if they believe in the cause."

However, Divon pointed out that people in the entertainment industry here have stepped up when necessary. Last year, he noted, Robert Lantos was among those who spoke out when controversy arose over the showing of Israeli films at Toronto International Film Festival. Divon said that UJA wants to "engage" the entertainment community in being pro-active instead of "more reactive."

But Meyerowitz thinks it is more a case of "people [being] concerned about cash flow, and that they have a number of charitable organizations they support. "Our approach is that UJA is an umbrella organization. You're helping so many different areas. Let the professionals at UJA allocate according to whether the funds are going to Israel, to Jewish Family & Child, to day schools, across the board. That's why a lot of us, me included, feel this is a really good charity."

The media and entertainment division is "a very important one, because the potential is so great," said Divon. "We're blessed to have so many talented people in this industry."

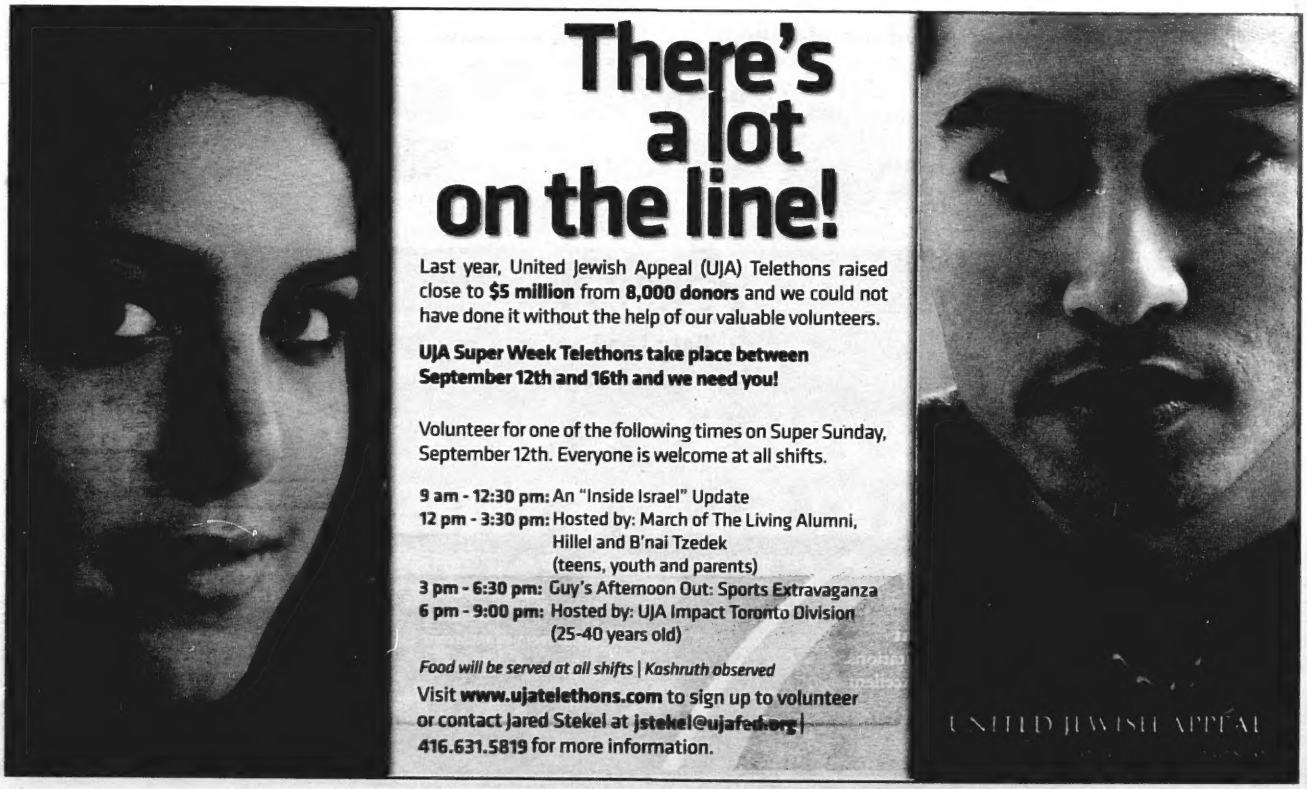
Meyerowitz, the 39-year-old president & CEO of Phase 4 Films, has been involved with UJA for more than 15 years, including a stint in New York's young leadership division when he moved there to work in Internet radio. His co-chair is his friend Noah Segal, executive vice-president of Alliance Films.

In 1996, when Meyerowitz started in the entertainment business, he joined UJA's arts and entertainment committee in Toronto. Four years ago, he signed up for more volunteer work, because he "felt we needed more people contributing.

"UJA is about raising funds to help people in need," he said. "Our goal is to bring in a wider array of professionals... and... we want [the younger generation] to know that there's more about UJA than just being asked for money. We're trying to put together a program where there are benefits, and networking, and good opportunities to work with senior executives who have been in the business a while."

Among programs in the works, the division is planning to screen feature films that have not yet been released, said Meyerowitz. Details are still being worked out, as they are for the division's next event, "An Evening with the Stars," to be held Oct. 20.

The division has an active core of more than 20 members, between its canvassers and event committee. More than half of them are under 30, said Meyerowitz.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3 pm - 6:30 pm: Guy's Afternoon Out: Sports Extravaganza
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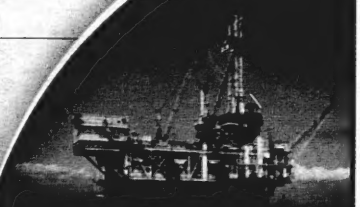

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Dreams and hopes

Continued from page 1

"But actually we don't. Instead, we read about the birth of the first Jewish child, Isaac, born to Abraham and Sarah after many years of waiting. We read about Hannah and her prayer for a child, which was also answered. I find that deeply moving. On this day of days, we read not about God's act of creation, but about ours; not about the echoing vastness of the universe, 18 billion light years across; but about the joy and responsibility of bringing new life into the world. We don't think of God as the master scientist devising systems of organized complexity, but as a parent, loving and forgiving us, his children.

Typically, Rabbi Sacks has once again led us to a profoundly moving insight.

He could have also added that on the second day of Rosh Hashanah we read of the nurturing and sustaining of the lives of whose births we read on the first day of the holiday.

On the second day of the holiday, we read about the near-sacrifice of Isaac. Then we read Jeremiah's promise to his people that there is a future for us full of hope, that our children will return to their homes.

"The message of Rosh Hashanah is that greater even than an understanding of creation is the ability to hear the cry of a child," he tells us so plainly.

The father in the above photo is holding tightly to his daughter, undoubtedly whispering to her the dreams and hopes that rise every day for her in his heart, the very dreams and hopes his own father once whispered to him.

"Have in front of you the image of a single human child," Rabbi Sacks urges us.

In speaking to his daughter, he is, as all parents know, speaking to the Eternal.

Our prayers to the Eternal on this Rosh Hashanah and forever will always be to sustain our ability "to hear the cry of a child." And respond in Eternal conversation.

Never to forget

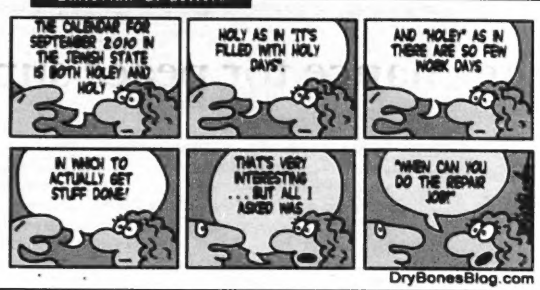
Our own prayers to be inscribed in the Book of Life this new year bring us abruptly to the stark realization that Canadian men and women fighting so far away in Afghanistan utter a variation of that very same prayer each day of their service. And for so many, alas, their prayers have been unheeded.

Last week, Cpl. Brian Pinksen died from wounds he received from an improvised explosive device while on foot patrol in Afghanistan. He was the 152nd Canadian soldier to be killed on duty there. May his family and friends find comfort and strength during these very difficult days as they try to reconcile their lives without him.

May his memory be for blessing.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir went to Japan on the first state visit there by an Israeli official of his rank. It was hoped the trip would warm relations with Japan, particularly in the area of trade and commerce, as many Japanese firms – including carmakers Nissan and Toyota – were staying out of the Israeli market for fear of an Arab boycott.


Dry Bones
THE CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER 2010 IN THE JEWISH STATE IS BOTH HOLEY AND HOLY
HOLY AS IN "IT'S FILLED WITH HOLY DAYS".
AND "HOLEY" AS IN THERE ARE SO FEW WORK DAYS
IN WHICH TO ACTUALLY GET STUFF DONE!
THAT'S VERY INTERESTING . . . BUT ALL I ASKED WAS
"WHEN CAN YOU DO THE REPAIR JOB?"
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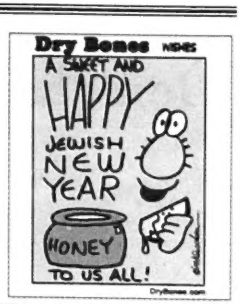

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Greetings from the prime minister

I am very pleased to extend my warmest greetings to all Jewish Canadians observing Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

The High Holidays are an occasion for contemplation, forgiveness and encouraging peace in the community. As you reflect on the past year and seek repentance, a spirit of hope for the coming year prevails. Jewish communities around the world share in the optimism and compassion of these ancient New Year's traditions.

Across Canada, Jewish communities are honouring their rich cultural heritage and sharing time with family and friends as the new year commences. Your commitment to preserving your traditions is admirable and contributes to the strength and unity of our country.

On behalf of the Government of Canada, please accept my best wishes for a healthy and prosperous new year. L'Shanah Tovah U'Metukah!

Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada

* * *

Lawyers continue to fight for Pollard

We are the U.S. pro bono lawyers for Jonathan Pollard. We wish to respond to the guest voice by Bert Raphael, titled "Jonathan Pollard, 25 years on" (Aug. 26). Raphael's speculation is misplaced, and his information is flatly incorrect in various respects. While we will not provide a line-by-line rebuttal, suffice it to say that Pollard has consistently expressed remorse for his actions, to U.S. presidents and others. And while Raphael is critical that he was "dismissed," Pollard has been actively represented by the undersigned lawyers since 2000. We continue to fight vigorously for his release.

Eliot Lauer
Jacques Semmelman

* * *

Torah prohibits homosexual behaviour

Gay-rights advocate David Brody describes himself as both Orthodox and gay ("Orthodox statement on gays welcomed," Toronto; "Rights advocate welcomes Orthodox statement on gays," Montreal, Aug. 26). The Torah in no uncertain terms forbids homosexual behaviour (Leviticus 20:13). The two terms are thus mutually exclusive. Rabbi Adam Scheier of Congregation Shaar Hashomayim is quoted in the article saying that the Shaar has an "unwavering commitment to Jewish law." Why then did the shul allow Brody to speak at the Shaar about being Orthodox and gay, giving others the erroneous impression that they are compatible? For a shul that follows the principles of traditional Judaism, this is a radical break with tradition.

Rabbi Mordechai Bulua
Montreal

* * *

God loves all life

Recent articles have been written regarding people who are attracted to and engaging in sexual behaviours with members of the same sex. I do not for one minute believe that God judges and discriminates against these people. God doesn't behave in that manner. God loves all life. I believe the heterosexual population has problems accepting these people and should just leave them alone and stop making such a fuss. Perhaps it is the heterosexuals who need therapy.

Terry Rosen
Oshawa, Ont.

* * *

Rabbi Heschel's sermon and Soviet Jewry

The Conservative movement and the Jewish Theological Seminary have been of minimal, if any, help to Soviet Jewry ("The sermon that helped spur the Soviet Jewry movement," Aug. 19). Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel's sermon and what it supposedly achieved pales in comparison to the efforts of other sectors of the Jewish world, such as the Lubavitch movement, which to date has more than 100 Jewish educational centres across Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Krygyzstan and the list goes on. To say that Rabbi Heschel "spurred" the movement is an overstatement. The Jewish Theological Seminary to date has no such educational centres in the former Soviet Union, let alone any such Russian-speaking Jewish educational outlets on American soil. If anything at all, the sermon was poetic and emphatic, but it was no catalyst for any Jewish action.

Russell Kohn
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Bikur cholim – a gratifying mitzvah

When I visit my mom, Toby Franken van Lier, at the Apotex Centre in Baycrest I am always impressed and grateful that the Toronto Jewish community has invested its time and money in building and maintaining such a centrally located, world-class facility for our aging parents and grandparents. Every private room has a dedicated team of medical personnel and caregivers close by, and a beautiful showcase usually filled with photos of children and grandchildren. Thus it is a surprise to me that the people in these photos are rarely seen in person. As Rosh Hashanah approaches, may we all be reminded that bikur cholim – visiting the sick and elderly – is one of our most important and gratifying mitzvot.

Ezra Franken
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1536

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

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Don't let the chance for peace slip away, Obama pleads

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U.S. President Barack Obama urged Israeli and Palestinian leaders last Wednesday not to let the chance for peace slip away as he opened a U.S.-sponsored summit to relaunch direct talks shadowed by Middle East violence.

But in the wake of a second West Bank shooting attack against Israelis in as many days and a persistent deadlock over settlements, Obama acknowledged skepticism "in some quarters" about his prospects for succeeding where so many U.S. leaders have failed, and said he was under no illusions about the challenges ahead.

Wading into hands-on peacemaking on the eve of restarting face-to-face negotiations after a 20-month hiatus, Obama brought both sides together for ceremonial handshakes at the White House and a commitment to try to forge a deal on Palestinian statehood within a year.

"As I told each of them today, this moment of opportunity may not soon come again. They cannot afford to let it slip away," Obama said after one-on-one talks with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Speaking ahead of a working dinner at the White House, Netanyahu said last week that he had come to the Washington peace summit "to figure out a historic compromise" with the Palestinians.

The dinner included Abbas, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Jordanian King Abdullah II, the Quartet's envoy to the Middle East Tony Blair (the Quartet consists of the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and Russia), U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Netanyahu.

Netanyahu mentioned the attacks of the previous two days, using them to highlight the importance of Israel's security needs. Netanyahu said that Israel would not allow terrorists to block the path to Middle East peace. Any peace deal, he declared, must be one that guarantees security.

"Peace does not sit well with the idea that you drive down a road and a firing squad guns you down," Netanyahu was quoted as having told Obama during their two-hour meeting.

The prime minister spoke of the need for a "historic compromise."

"The Jewish People are no strangers in our homeland, the land of our forefathers," he said. "But we recognize that another people share this land with us. And I came here today to find a historic compromise that will enable both peoples to live in peace, security and dignity," Netanyahu said.

Addressing Abbas directly, Netanyahu said: "If we work together, we can take advantage of the great benefits afforded by our unique place under the sun. Our geography, history, culture, climate and the talents of our peoples can create unprecedented opportunities in tourism, trade, industry, energy, water and so much more."

Peace "must also be defended against its enemies," Netanyahu said. "We want the skyline of the West Bank to be dominated by apartment towers, not missiles. We want the roads of the West Bank to flow with commerce, not terrorists. We left Lebanon, we got terror. We left Gaza, we got terror. We want to ensure that territory we concede will not be turned into a third Iranian-sponsored terror enclave aimed at the heart of Israel.

"President Abbas, we cannot erase the past," Netanyahu said. "But it is within our power to change the future. Thousands of years ago, on the very hills where Israelis and Palestinians live today, the Jewish prophet Isaiah and the other prophets of my people envisioned a lasting peace for all mankind.

"Let today be a first step, however small, in our joint effort to realize that vision," he said.

Mubarak also addressed the White House ahead of the joint dinner. Speaking in Arabic with a simultaneous translator, Mubarak called on Israel to freeze settlement activity and "seize the opportunity" for peace.

Mubarak said Israeli settlement-building in Palestinian territories is contrary to international law, adding that failure to achieve peace between Israel and the Palestinians has generated great frustration among the populace of the region.

Abbas also addressed the White House, condemning the latest spate of violence against Israelis in the West Bank. He pledged to "spare no effort" to reach a peace agreement with the Israelis.

"We do not want at all that any blood be shed," Abbas said, adding that a comprehensive peace should correct historical injustices.

Abbas reiterated the Palestinian demand for a freeze on all Israeli settlement construction on land the Palestinians seek for a future state, including eastern Jerusalem.

Jordan's king, who also spoke, called on the Israelis and the Palestinians to move quickly to address the most difficult obstacles in achieving a final peace settlement.

King Abdullah warned that the negotiations must produce results.

"Time is not on our side," he said, adding that achieving a deal within the one-year goal would require "sparing no effort in addressing all final status issues."

Obama maintained that final-status issues must be on the table, including establishing borders of a Palestinian state, the Palestinian demands for the right of Arab refugees to return to Israel, and the future of Jerusalem and Israeli settlements.

Please see related stories on pages 52 to 55.

U.S. President Barack Obama embraces his guests Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestine Authority President Mahmoud Abbas at the White House on Sept. 1. ***[Moshe Milner/GPO photo]***

'We've got a lot of work to do'

The following are excerpts from the text of the joint press conference held by U.S. President Barack Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu following their bilateral meeting on Wednesday Sept. 1, in Washington, D.C.

OBAMA: Hello, everybody. Prime Minister Netanyahu and I just had a very productive discussion about our shared efforts to advance the cause of peace between Israelis and Palestinians and throughout the Middle East. I'm going to have more to say about today's meetings, not only with Prime Minister Netanyahu but with the other participants of the talks here in the Rose Garden later this afternoon. But I did want to specifically take some time out to speak to the people of Israel and to the region about the senseless slaughter that took place near Hebron yesterday.

There are going to be extremists and rejectionists who, rather than seeking peace, are going to be seeking destruction. And the tragedy that we saw yesterday, where people were gunned down on the street by terrorists who are purposely trying to undermine these talks, is an example of what we're up against. But I want everybody to be very clear: The United States is going to be unwavering in its support of Israel's security and we are going to push back against these kinds of terrorist activities.

And so, the message should go out to Hamas and everybody else who is taking credit for these heinous crimes that this is not going to stop us from not only ensuring a secure Israel but also securing a longer-lasting peace in which people throughout the region can take a different course.

I also want to express the deepest condolences of the American people to the families of those who were gunned down. And I want to thank Prime Minister Netanyahu, during a very difficult time for his country, for still being so committed to the cause of peace that he is here with us today.

NETANYAHU: Thank you, Mr. President, for expressing what I think is the sentiment of decent people everywhere, in the face of this savagery and brutality.

Four innocent people were gunned down and seven new orphans were added, by people who have no respect for human life and trample human rights into the dust and butcher everything that they oppose.

I think that the president's statement is an expression of our desire to fight against this terror. And the talks that we had, which were, indeed, open, productive, serious in the quest for peace, also centred around the need to have security arrangements that are able to roll back this kind of terror and other threats to Israel's security. That is a fundamental element, an important foundation, of the peace that we seek and work for.

And I appreciate, Mr. President, your efforts to advance this peace for us and for our neighbours, for our region, and I think we can say, for the world.

OBAMA: Thank you. And let me just say that I will be meeting with [Palestinian Authority] President [Mahmoud] Abbas this afternoon. He condemned this outrageous attack, as well. I have the utmost confidence in him and his belief in a two-state solution in which the people of Israel and the Palestinians are living side by side in peace and security. And so I am also grateful to him for his presence here today.

We've got a lot of work to do. There are going to be those who are going to do everything they can to undermine these talks, but we are going to remain stalwart.

And so, to Prime Minister Netanyahu and to President Abbas, as well as to President [Hosni] Mubarak [of Egypt] and King Abdullah of Jordan, I am very grateful for their participation.

Opinions

A false linkage

Linking Zionism with colonialism – much like accusing Israel of apartheid-like practices – is often central to any discourse that seeks to demonize, dehumanize and delegitimize the Jewish state and those who support it. In the same way that the Israel apartheid slur needs to be deconstructed, so too should the Zionism as colonialism falsehood be addressed.

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

Writing in the *New Republic* (Aug. 17, 2010), Dore Gold, president of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, comments that it was the association of Israel with colonialist regimes that "set the stage in 1975 for the most insidious resolution ever adopted in the UN General Assembly against Israel, which stated that Zionism was a form of racism."

Even after the resolution was overturned in 1991, Gold notes that that "comparisons between Zionism and colonialism [have] persisted, arguably becoming even more strident."

The notion that Jews colonized Israel (both before and after the Holocaust) is a gross distortion of history. It goes to the very core of a delegitimization argument that portrays the Palestinians as indigenous to the region, with Jews as the "immigrants" or intruders – which deliberately negates the connection of Jews to Israel that goes back to biblical times and has been sustained, in one way or another, ever since.

In embellishing the calumny of the Jew as interloper, Jerusalem's Al-Quds University has an Internet posting that denies the existence of King David, questions whether there was ever an exodus of Israelites from Egypt and claims that Solomon's Temple was really a centre of pagan worship and that the Western Wall was likely just part of a Roman fortress. When referring to the various conquests of Palestine, Egyptians, Hittites, Philistines, Babylonians, Persians, Romans, Muslims, Arabs, Ottomans and British are mentioned, but Jews are not.

Moreover, in 2000, then-Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat declared that the Temple had never existed, while the Hamas Covenant still proclaims Islamic hegemony over all of what is termed Palestine and draws demonical reference to Jews appropriating Arab lands and challenging Islam.

The inference, of course, is that Jews have no historic rights to their land. But what invariably goes unsaid is that Jews who went to Israel in both ancient and modern times never represented a foreign, colonizing power and therefore, by simple definition, they could not be branded as colonialists.

Also notable is that such immigrants did not take land by force. Instead they purchased it!

In the conclusion to his *New Republic* piece, Gold laments that "ascertaining the truth has never been the objective of those trying to paint Israel with a colonialist brush." Propagandist historical fiction is, after all, so much more compelling.

Making Israel's Yom Kippur universal

By NACHMAN ROSENBERG

Guest Voice

There's a commonly held belief that one reason Israel's enemies chose Yom Kippur to launch their attack in October 1973 was that most of the country would be in synagogue and it would take longer to call up the reserves.

The reality is that unlike the Diaspora, where this day is one of communal prayer, many secular Israelis stay home on this holiest of days. Data show that the day before Yom Kippur used to have the highest number of movie rentals across Israel of any day of the year.

Contrary to a common misconception, the decision to abstain from participation in High Holiday services is not driven by apathy or secularism. The vast majority of Israeli Jews fast on Yom Kippur and identify with the day's solemnity and themes of repentance and judgment.

A leading reason why they stay home is that they are unable to find a house of worship where they feel comfortable. As hard as it might be to believe that a Jew in the Jewish state can't find a good synagogue in which to daven, this is the reality.

"Traditional" houses of prayer come in every shape and stripe, but if you classify yourself as secular every other day of the year, finding this comfort zone on Yom Kippur can be highly frustrating. Many choose to commemorate the date at home rather than be forced to feel like a fish out of water.

Given that a very large percentage of Israel's Jews are secular, yet strive for some sort of accommodation on Yom Kippur, such a situation is untenable.

In recent years, an organization of rabbis called Tzohar, committed to bridging the ever-widening gap between secular and religious, began to pursue a solution.

While many well-meaning organizations reach out to bring fellows Jews into "traditional" settings, this approach does not relate to the interests of many secular Israeli Jews.

Rather than looking for any awakening or return to traditional practice, on Yom Kippur these already spiritual Jews are only in search of an outlet to convey their individual forms of spirituality.

For this reason, Tzohar has developed a global network of some 200 prayer services in community centres, sports facilities and public spaces designed for Israel's secular majority. With an appreciation for the unique sensibilities of this community, the service gives Israelis a prayer environment where they can feel welcome and in sync with the holiness of the day.

The need for such an institution is evident in the ever-growing numbers of participants we see each year. Founded in 1996, the Tzohar rabbis were unsure whether the secular community would trust anything that even felt like institutional religion, and we were thrilled to quickly earn that trust.

This Yom Kippur, more than 40,000 Israeli Jews will welcome the power of Yom Kippur in these special prayer services. Expressing their Judaism in a forum that is in total context of Jewish tradition but respectful of the parishioners' real emotions, we know it will be a High Holiday they will long remember. Most fundamentally, these services will imbue a heightened love for Judaism and Jewish tradition that will last throughout the year.

As even the most casual observer of Israeli society will tell you, this is a nation with no shortage of inner division and conflict beyond the external challenges that face our beloved homeland. There are no easy solutions to any of these problems. But to even hope to overcome the social divide, we know we must feel the spiritual pains of all sectors of the population.

Throughout our history, Yom Kippur has been a constant reminder of our humility, and that regardless of our differences, we are a united people.

Across Israel this year, thousands more Jews who might otherwise have passed the day in front of their television screens will be reminded of this. And their actions will give hope for a brighter future for our land, our religion and our people.

Nachman Rosenberg is the executive vice-president of the Tzohar Rabbinical Organization. For more information, go to www.tzohar.org.il.

Will 5771 be the year of pragmatic peace?

After so many failed efforts, there's little enthusiasm in Israel for the Obama round of the never-ending Middle East peace process. The American president's first 18 months of Arab-Israeli diplomacy were characterized by major errors in understanding and judgment, and while the gestures and rhetoric on Israel have improved, the damage remains. And despite the improved atmospherics, Israelis are expecting Washington to increase the pressure on the Netanyahu government as the going gets rough.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

The stated objective of reaching a comprehensive and stable agreement – not simply the façade of peace – within a year seems particularly absurd. The catastrophic outcome of the Oslo process reinforced the obstacles that need to be overcome – including vast differences over history, religion, security and territory. Another attempt to paper over differences on Jerusalem and the Palestinian myths of a "right of return" for refugees will only make the situation worse.

And while Palestinian and Arab leaders are going through the motions of peace negotiations, they continue to wage a political war to delegitimize Israel. The campaigns to label Israeli defence against terror as "war crimes," as embodied in the Goldstone report, and to label Jewish national self-determination as "apartheid" are the exact opposite of peace based on mutual acceptance.

Delegitimization and "one state" formulas are simply the latest embodiment of the rejectionism that has continued since Arab leaders rejected the UN Partition Resolution of Nov. 29, 1947, and sought to destroy the Jewish state. If there's any chance for a positive outcome in this latest peace effort, this hypocrisy must end completely.

Given this history, a fairy-tale "happily ever after" comprehensive and permanent peace agreement is not in the cards. But a more modest interim framework that reinforces the current stability and provides some confidence building measures may be possible.

The goal of a limited arrangement, including a proto-Palestinian state, reflects the fact that most Israelis seek some form of compromise. Polls show that the majority want an end to the post-1967 stalemate (the "occupation"), without inviting renewed terrorism, as occurred following the Gaza withdrawal in 2005. Internationally recognized and defensible borders (not the 1949 ceasefire lines) would have a number of positive impacts.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is aware of these realities, as are the majority of Israelis who voted his government into office. In contrast to the hostile media campaigns referring to a "far-right ideology," Netanyahu has become a pragmatic leader.

On the Palestinian side, during the 40 years of the Arafat era, peace negotiations were only a façade, and corruption was rampant. Now, Palestinian society is deeply divided, with Hamas turning Gaza into an Islamist stronghold.

Their bargaining chips are limited, and Palestinians desperately need sustained stability. The relative quiet in the West Bank has created an unprecedented economic boom under Salam Fayad's technocratic leadership. To preserve and extend these gains, and prevent the extension of Hamas' rule, there may now be support for pragmatic compromises with Israel.

In this interim peace scenario, the so-called Arab moderates must start to match their deeds with the words in the moribund Arab League peace initiative. Egypt is on the verge of a difficult transition, as President Hosni Mubarak's health deteriorates and stability on its borders becomes vital. And with the United States leaving Iraq to its own civil wars and a nuclear Iran planning to fill the vacuum, Saudi Arabia and other Sunni powers would also benefit from stability in Israeli-Palestinian relations.

Gaining the visible support of these Arab states, including an end to the anti-Israel hate speech and demonization campaigns, should be the first item on the international agenda. This is also an area in which other countries, including Canada, can play a positive role in the peace process.

Such a step-by-step approach – tackling the difficult issues one at a time, and on the basis of realism, rather than more wishful thinking – may finally yield some positive results.

And on this cautiously optimistic note, as we enter 5771 on the Jewish calendar, I add my best wishes for a healthy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

The Kirshner File

Reality and fantasy in the Warsaw ghetto

Much of the information we possess today about the Holocaust was, ironically, preserved by the Nazis themselves. Diligent, even obsessive, hoarders, they amassed a mother lode of what would be self-incriminating documents, letters and photographs of the mass atrocities they wantonly committed in the name of a crackpot philosophy, racial purity.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

In their attempt to document the systematic murder of the Jewish people, their archenemy, they formed special units, usually composed of uniformed soldiers, to film the bedraggled inhabitants of ghettoes. Convinced that they would win the war and wipe out the Jews of Europe, the overarching objective of the 1942 Wannsee Conference in Berlin, they envisaged this footage as a historic record of a "lost race" in celluloid.

For self-serving reasons, the Nazis manipulated some of the footage, hoping to prove that their treatment of Jews in ghettoes was not so bad after all and thereby mislead international public opinion.

Toward the end of the war, virtually all the propaganda footage in Nazi vaults was inadvertently destroyed by Allied bombing raids. In some cases, historians surmise, the Nazis torched the footage, correctly believing it would not serve their interests.

Despite all their efforts, one of their most notorious propaganda films, the incomplete *Das Ghetto*, survived the vicissitudes of time.

Shot by a crew in the Warsaw ghetto over a 30-day period in May 1942, just two months before 300,000 of its inhabitants were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp in Poland, *Das Ghetto* was found mouldering away in a concrete vault in Potsdam Babelsberg, East Germany, in 1954.

It is less than surprising that *Das Ghetto*, the longest existing documentary about that doomed ghetto, turned up there. Babelsberg, the site of a vast film studio, then and now, was where the celebrated movies *The Blue Angel* (starring Marlene Dietrich) and *Metropolis* were filmed.

Babelsberg lent itself to less noble causes, too. Leni Riefenstahl, the darling of Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels, finished *Triumph of the Will*, a classic film glorifying Nazism and Adolf Hitler, in Babelsberg. *Jud Suss*, the 1940 anti-Semitic movie loosely based on a 1925 novel written by a Jewish writer and directed by Veit Harlan, was filmed there as well.

Appallingly enough, the raw footage in *Das Ghetto*, known to archivists, was widely regarded as an authentic account of life in the Warsaw ghetto, which was established in 1940 and liquidated in the aftermath of the revolt three years later. Indeed, clips from *Das Ghetto*, which had no soundtrack, were inserted into a succession of documentaries on the Holocaust from 1961 onward and were regarded as the unvarnished truth about the Warsaw ghetto.

Its flickering and unsettling images portraying hungry, emaciated Jews and corpses splayed on streets conform to reality. But other images, depicting smiling, beautifully dressed Jews living the good life and well-stocked shops and markets, are extremely problematic, to say the least.

In fact, the staged images were expressly designed to fool viewers and create the impression that conditions in the ghetto were tolerable and that "privileged" Jews could not care less about their less fortunate brothers.

A staged scene of a nightclub in the Warsaw ghetto.

Since *Das Ghetto* was never completed, we will probably never exactly know what message the Nazis wished to convey. Did they want a film that hewed faithfully to the truth? Or were they solely interested in conveying bald-faced lies?

In 2006, Yael Hersonski, a 31-year-old Israeli freelance film director and editor who had an interest in archival footage from the Holocaust, saw *Das Ghetto* for the first time at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial and museum in Jerusalem.

"I was shocked by the intensity of the images," she said in an interview.

Little did she know that *Das Ghetto*, 62 minutes in length, would become the subject of her first movie, *A Film Unfinished*, which opens in Toronto on Sept. 23 at the new Bell Lightbox.

Premiered at the Hot Docs festival in Toronto this past April and screened at the Jerusalem Film Festival two months ago, *A Film Unfinished* is 89 minutes long.

It is primarily composed of two elements – raw footage taken both from reels discovered in East Germany in the 1950s and from outtakes originally left on the editing floor that clearly substantiate suspicions that several of the scenes were deliberately faked to distort reality. The outtakes, containing footage of German cameramen accidentally entering each other's frames, was found by a British film researcher.

Yael Hersonski

In addition to footage from *Das Ghetto*, Hersonski grafted interviews with five ghetto survivors to *A Film Unfinished*.

The survivors were found by a dogged Israeli researcher Hersonski had hired. "We were extremely fortunate to have such a persistent researcher," she said.

When filming began, Hersonski – a graduate of the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School and a resident of Tel Aviv – invited each of the survivors into a dark hall and showed them the horrifying footage, all the while fearing that they would not be able to stomach the terror conveyed by the images.

"They were over 80 years old, courageous souls in fragile bodies, filled with memories they were compelled to store away in order to keep on living," she writes in a director's statement. "These days of filming the survivors watching the footage were the most difficult ones for me in the course of the entire filmmaking. After every session, I found myself physically numb and mentally knocked out."

Hersonski also reconstructed an interview with the cameraman, Willy Wist, who died in 1999. For years after the war, his identity remained obscured. But in the 1960s, a German historian conducting research in the Polish archives stumbled upon a ghetto entry permit issued in Wist's name in May 1942, the month and year when *Das Ghetto* was filmed.

After the amalgamation of West Germany and East Germany in 1990, German archivists tried to find Wist, who had been a scrap metal dealer after the war, but to no avail.

Since Wist had long been dead when Hersonski embarked on *A Film Unfinished*, she hired a German actor to portray him, using transcripts from an interview to which he had consented in 1969. Wist, in the interview, claims he knew nothing about the Holocaust when he set foot in the ghetto.

Asked for an opinion of his explanation, Hersonski replied, "There are things we will never know. I do not judge him."

In making *A Film Unfinished*, Hersonski had two aims – to expose Nazi manipulation of reality when it suited their needs and to let survivors recall their experiences in the ghetto.

"Soon we won't be able to talk to survivors," she said.

Hersonski's grandmother, who died in 2005, was a survivor of the Warsaw ghetto. But she was close-mouthed about it. "She talked very little about the ghetto. She chose to live rather than to speak."

To this day, Hersonski remains puzzled as to why *Das Ghetto* was never finished.

"I searched every Nazi archive, but I didn't find an answer. Maybe someone thought it wouldn't serve the needs of Nazi propaganda. Maybe there were technical problems."

It is her hope that *A Film Unfinished* will teach viewers that skilful propagandists can easily twist reality for nefarious ends.

"Images can be edited and manipulated," she warned, adding that "media systems" can muddy the waters of historical truth.

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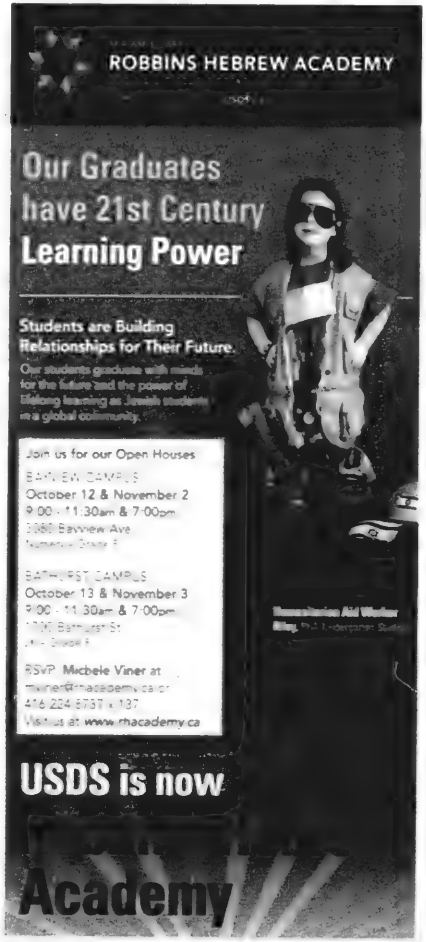
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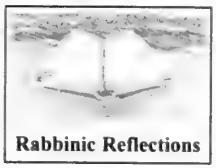
Jewish Life

Going beyond ourselves on Rosh Hashanah

By RABBI ZUSHE SILBERSTEIN

When rearranged, the letters of the Hebrew month Tishrei spell out the word *reishit*, meaning "head of." Similarly, the literal meaning of the name Rosh Hashanah is not "the new year" but "the head of the year."



The head contains all of our prominent sensory powers, including the brain, the seat of our intellect. It's our heads that make us human, distinguishing us from other life forms. But the fundamental aspect of the head is not that it makes us human, but that it opens us up to spirituality that transcends our humanity. The mind enables us to reach an awareness of Godliness that transcends the intellect and indeed, takes us beyond the entire conception of self.

Similarly, Tishrei, "the head of the year," is a month of peak experiences, with prominent holidays that convey important messages regarding our Divine service. The key to all these holidays, however, is not how they enhance and expand our "selves," elevating us intellectually and emotionally, but rather how they empower us to go beyond our minds and our "selves" and relate to God on His terms.

Constraints of space allows us only to discuss Rosh Hashanah, but the same concept applies to all Tishrei holidays.

One Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak, the Holy Berditchever Rebbe, heard a heavenly voice: "If you want to see truly admirable shofar services, visit a little village around Volgograd."

Guided by this heavenly voice, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's "vision" was directed to an army camp where several Jewish soldiers conscripted into the Russian army had gathered for their Rosh Hashanah "services."

They had no prayer books, nor did they know any of the prayers by heart. They stood in a circle and one of the soldiers stood in the centre with a crudely fashioned shofar and addressed his colleagues: "In synagogues all over the world, Jews are gathered together on this holy day and they raise their voices in prayer. They know that today is a day of judgment and each one prays to God for what he needs and what he wants in the coming year. Every person has his individual concerns that dominate his attention.

"We have no families, nor are we thinking of establishing them. We have no fortunes, and our very lives are subject to the Czar's will. What then do we pray for? That God's glory be revealed throughout the world." He then sounded the shofar and the participants dispersed.

This shofar service was cherished in the heavens, because it focused solely on what God wants and not the wants – be they physical or even spiritual – of the person involved.

Rosh Hashanah marks the anniversary of the sixth day of Creation, the anniversary of the creation of man. Yet Rosh Hashanah is considered the anniversary of the creation of the universe, because it's man who brings the Creation to its ultimate purpose. Through his efforts, he makes it apparent that the world is God's dwelling.

Presently, we are at the culmination of man's 5770-year collective effort. The world recognizes the presence of God in all aspects of our lives and destiny, resulting in the imminent revelation of the Mashiach, as in the words of Maimonides when he describes the messianic era: "For the world will be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the ocean bed."

Shanah Tovah.

Rabbi Zushe Silberstein is spiritual leader of Chabad Chabanel – Maison Belfield and Jewish chaplain of Quebec provincial prisons.

What about the new year?

A new year confronts us. What is it that we want from the 12 months that lie ahead?

The first thing we should want is health. This is primary. Health adds zest and savour to our years. With radiant health, we are naturally optimistic – the world lies before us like a land of pleasant dreams. Without health, everything soon turns to ashes in our mouth. All our hopes are blighted, our spirits sag, the universe takes on a more sombre aspect.

But the matter of health, you say, is out of our hands. If anything is beyond our control, this is it. But multitudes of people take the boon of health and throw it away. They drive their bodies relentlessly. They allow themselves no rest. They refuse to learn the secret of moderation. Or they are perfectionists who demand the impossible from themselves and others. Then there are those who give their appetites free rein, who eat, drink, smoke or drug themselves into the grave.

We want health during the next 12 months, but we will only achieve it if we can treat our body as the "temple of the spirit" and are prepared to accept the road of moderation and sensible deprivation.

The second thing we should want in the coming year is economic security. We need to provide for ourselves and our families. We seek recognition for our work, a fair return for our labours. We want enough to educate our children properly and to provide adequately for social and cultural activities. We want to set something aside for our later years. All of this is understandable and desirable. But here, too, there is a necessary resolution: economic security must be a "means to an end," not an end in itself. We must be concerned as much with making a life as we are with making a living. We should pray that what we do gain should not be at the expense of others – or at the expense of our self-respect and most cherished ethical ideals.

We must never worship material possessions, sacrificing health, honour and family to obtain them. When "things are in the saddle," they ride us; they do not belong to us, we belong to them.

The third thing we should desire in the coming year is friendship and kindness. Life can never achieve full meaning or satisfaction unless we experience the warmth, the affection, the appreciation and interest of other people. And we need friends who are sincere, with whom we are not obliged to maintain false social standards, with whom we can find relaxation of mind and spirit.

On the occasion of his 94th birthday, the late writer, historian and philosopher Will Durant was asked what piece of wisdom he would distil from a lifetime of reading and reflection. "If you insist upon one brief answer," he said, "I say kindness."

The person who has not learned kindness remains uneducated no matter how many diplomas adorn his office walls or the number of degrees that follow his signature.

Finally, during the coming year I think we can be most truly alive, and mature if we can achieve a sense of the "mystery" and "wonder" of life. Each of us is a finite creature, our few years, a flash of light between two dark eternities, our being merely a speck on the charts of time. The more we know about ourselves and the world in which we live, the greater becomes the realm of the unknown. This is the verdict of the scientists, no less than the poets. From the smallest atom to worlds of almost unimaginable magnitude, there is so much that lies beyond our human ken.

May 5771 fulfil our deepest longings. May it make real our innermost dreams.

Jewish Life

Questions to ponder in shul

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

One of the common assumptions in our culture is that religion, outside of certain fundamentalist trends, is on the decline in contemporary society. Weaned on autonomy and the desire to chart a path unrestricted by ancient codes, the thinking goes, modern people have moved toward secularization and a resistance to religious authority.

It's not that these assertions are without foundation. Bored or indifferent synagogue attendance on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is by now legend. But the trend is complicated, as a study by economists Robert Barro and Joshua Mitchell indicates.

Titled *Religious Faith and Economic Growth: What Matters Most – Belief or Belonging?* this 2004 paper draws a direct relationship between economic prosperity and declining attendance at houses of worship. This was true whether it was official statistics of church attendance or simply the commitment to religion of individuals.

What to conclude from such data depends on various factors. One could argue that in more developed nations, the rates of literacy and education are higher, health care is more sophisticated and hence the "primitive" need to seek out a deity and be comforted by religious practices is rendered moot.

In contrast with this partly cynical point of view comes the position that economically prosperous nations are wrapped in a shroud of their own arrogance, blindly believing technology and progress will continuously increase the quota of human happiness. This view is perhaps belied by the rise in cosmetic surgery, the dispensing of antidepressant medications and a feeling of *ennui* in the west.

Western religion has contributed to this alienation by failing to maintain its own standards, while at the same time being closed to the adjustments required to enthuse young people.

This statement is only ostensibly a contradiction. When those who teach Judaism attempt to purvey it as a faith that can be all things for all people, yet cannot even consistently say what it stands for and what the rules are, the irony is that this method rarely persuades those who were unconvinced in the first place.

Yet the opposite ethos, that Judaism need be stuck in the mindset of previous generations simply because they were previous generations, without a serious analysis of why modernity is different, also verges on the irrelevant.

Where does that leave us as another set of High Holidays arrives?

It could be that we have moved past the irrational belief in rationality that marked the 19th and early 20th centuries and its dismissive view of anything outside of scientific empiricism.

People have a dignified need to have faith in something that transcends Twitter and *Access Hollywood*. Religion will be powerful and permanent as long as it keeps asking important questions, as opposed to quickly supplying formulaic answers.

In shul this year, if only for five minutes, it is worth reviewing what I wanted to be and why, and what path I can lay out to redirect me toward that destiny. Does God play a role in my life? If not, why? If so, how? If a bit, why not more?

Kol Nidre: solemnity and song

It's one of the pivotal moments of the Jewish calendar. Worshippers, many dressed in white, flock to synagogue and wait, often with trepidation, for the cantor to start singing *Kol Nidre*. But why has a prayer concerned with annulling vows and oaths become so famous? Some insights from the web.

While the concept of annulling vows dates back to the Mishnah, the first references to *Kol Nidre* are found in the eighth to the 10th centuries. As explained in Jewish Heritage Online Magazine, Babylonian scholars did express discomfort that vows could be annulled retroactively "from the previous Day of Atonement until this Day of Atonement." Although that version took hold, authorities in early medieval Europe amended the text to refer to future vows made "from this Day of Atonement until the next Day of Atonement." Both wordings can be found in modern prayerbooks. **[http://bit.ly/nidr01]**

Kol Nidre has also generated controversy outside the Jewish community. It doesn't take long to stumble on non-Jewish websites alarmed by the existence of this prayer and what they feel is a licence to lie and deceive. "Explaining *Kol Nidre*" goes through the prayer line by line and clarifies that it applies exclusively to personal vows made by an individual to God and not between individuals. **[http://bit.ly/nidr03]**

The memorable melody was first notated in 18th-century Berlin, but it is not known when it was first sung. The Protestant German composer Max Bruch (1838-1920) arranged *Kol Nidre* into the cello concerto that is familiar today. However, Chazzanut.com points out that Bruch "did not consider his *Kol Nidre* to be a Jewish composition, but just an artistic arrangement of... a folk tune." **[http://bit.ly/nidr05]**

Gifted singers have performed this incredible prayer. A search in YouTube will deliver you to versions by Moshe Oysher, Mordechai Ben David, Neil Diamond and, yes, Perry Como. Instrumental performances include one by cellist Jacqueline du Pré. **[http://bit.ly/nidr06]**

Other versions merit mention, including the classic by Al Jolson **[http://bit.ly/nidr07]** and a performance by the magnificent Cantor Yossele Rosenblatt. **[http://bit.ly/nidr08]** (On that page is a *New York Times* story about the man who made it his mission to restore Rosenblatt's recordings.)

Bruch doesn't have a monopoly on *Kol Nidre*. Jerusalem's Jewish National And University Library presents other melodies recorded in Jerusalem, Italy and Morocco. The site also showcases a version performed by Nathan Adler and the choir at Toronto's Shaarei Shomayim Congregation in the early 1950s. **[http://bit.ly/nidr12]** Nicolas Jolliet offers a reggae version using sitar, surbahar, tabla, oud and dumbek. **[http://bit.ly/nidr10]**

In 1944, Judy Weissenberg was 15 years old and a prisoner with 800 other women at the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp. On Yom Kippur, some of the older women asked permission to do something to mark *Kol Nidre*. They received a candle, a siddur and 10 minutes to pray. **[http://bit.ly/nidr11]**

But instead of praying, the women burst into tears. "I never heard either before or since then such a heart-rending sound. Even though no one really believed the prayer would change our situation, that God would suddenly intervene – we weren't that naive – but the opportunity to cry and remember together helped us feel better. It reminded us of our former, normal lives; alleviated our utter misery, even for a littlest while, in some inexplicable way… That is the *Kol Nidre* I always remember."

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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There's something about Judaism

By ELLEN WEISER

Guest Voice

It seems that it has all been written or said before. In these times, it appears that now more than ever, we are being blamed for everything from holes in the ozone layer to the winter without an end.

Certainly, all bad tidings are our fault, which is why we have been blessed with a sufficient supply of guilt to allow us to handle it all. It is because of this kind of thinking that the central idea of a Jewish connection comes into play.

Sept. 10, 2001. The date bears no significance to the tragic events that followed the next day. It was on the 10th that I was confronted with my first experience of blatant, as opposed to subtle, anti-Semitism.

I was on my way into my son's junior high school to pick him up, when two students approached me outside, gazed at my Magen David and proclaimed, "Look at the f**king Jew."

My first response was shock, followed by tears of both anger and sadness. My son knew immediately by my face that something was wrong. I told him what happened, and his reaction was to find those responsible and confront them. I was about halfway back to my car when I decided that I had to inform the vice-principal. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to give him enough information to find and punish these perpetrators.

However, the event struck a strong chord within me. I am probably the least religious person, but I knew my sense of Judaism was alive and well when I could react so strongly to such ignorance. I knew that if my faith meant little or nothing to me, my response would have been virtually non-existent. This gave rise to my thinking about a Jewish connection and how our faith seems to be such a binding force.

Several years ago, the great comedians Mel Brooks and Carl Reiner created a character known as the 2,000-year-old man. Played so perfectly by Brooks, he was interviewed by Reiner about numerous topics. One question posed to him was, "Who in your opinion is the greatest inventor?" His reply, "Jewish or anybody?," implying that if the individual were not Jewish, his/her accomplishments, if any, would be deemed to be less than noteworthy.

The Jewish connection is omnipresent, revealing itself in so many ways.

When watching a television game show, do you do your utmost to establish if any of the contestants are Jewish? Do you find yourself cheering for them simply on the basis of their religion?

If a tragedy occurs, such as the murder or accidental death of someone in the community, is the gravity of this event augmented because the victim is Jewish?

Do you play "Jewish geography" at a simchah? Upon introducing yourself to your fellow guests, do you ask a question beginning with, "Are you related to…" or "Do you know…?" When Sandy Koufax refused to pitch a crucial World Series game on Yom Kippur, you could almost hear the entire Jewish community cheering in unison.

How does one account for this connection within our faith? Certainly, a sense of comfort and security would offer a partial explanation. To paraphrase a classic Jackie Mason-ism, it's most unlikely that while walking down a dark, deserted road, we would quicken our pace, thinking, "Oh my God! I'm being followed by an accountant!" This imaginary scenario illustrates the feeling of security that we experience when with our own.

When looking for our dream home, we tend to think in terms of a "Jewish area." Other issues involved with such a major purchase, including proximity to schools, shopping, transportation, etc., seem to take a secondary role. There is always that bond, whether we acknowledge it whole-heartedly or reluctantly resign ourselves to its existence.

Although we may argue and disagree among ourselves about religious practice within our various denominations, we are all Jews. The backbone of our faith is the connection, something to grasp, regardless of whether we keep Shabbat, attend services regularly or maintain separate meat and dairy cutlery, dishes and cookware.

These rituals are all important, and their significance should not be dismissed. Whether we perform them or to what degree should not detract from the Jewish connection. If one chooses to use regular coffee on Pesach instead of purchasing coffee marked "Kosher L'Pesach," is such a person any less a Jew?

If we are one mitzvah short of performing the 613 required, do we shake our heads in despair and dismiss everything, much the way one would after weeks of dieting, only to yield to temptation and polish off that carton of Baskin Robbins ice cream?

We must not get hung up on petty issues, whether we follow our faith to the letter or see the inside of a shul only three days out of the year… or not at all. There are too many whose happiness is dependent on our despondency. The Jewish connection – it is what we are, who we are and what our children will be. Let us preserve it with all the reverence it deserves.

Ellen Weiser is a Toronto writer.

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Candidates vie to replace Feldman

Continued from page 3

It would loop the subway so you could go from Union all the way around in a loop, so that would be good for everyone in Toronto.

It certainly would benefit Ward 10, where I live, but the spinoff would help everyone.

The other [priority] is Downsview Park. It should be kept as a park for our children and our grandchildren, for generations to come.

Nancy Oomen: From what people have told me, they want to see clean parks, they want to see park improvements, they want to see roads that are not filled with potholes, they want to have efficient snow removal, reliable transit, and they want to keep the community safe. Those are things that I've heard from residents from all of my years working in the ward.

I've been working… on the accessible water play and sensory garden that's coming to Earl Bales Park. I've been doing all the work with staff and the donors and the consultants to try to get it on track because we really want to open it here. So hopefully that's going to happen.

I'd like to continue working with seniors and all the different communities because it is a very multicultural ward. I want [Ward 10] to continue to be the place where they can go to help get issues resolved.

James Pasternak: We need to change the temperament at City Hall. Many constituents feel there's an erosion of trust and we need to make sure they feel a part of the process again.

Ratepayers and taxpayers are at the tipping point. I've seen many seniors losing their homes and young families unable to move [to Ward 10] because of the tax base. Taxation is out of control.

Our [transit] system is 30 years out of date. It's crucial we have a spending envelope for subway-only expansion. I would support expansion of the Sheppard subway to Downsview station.

The current plan to renovate Wilmington Plaza is unworkable. I would not support it and I would vigorously oppose closing the off-ramps to Allen Road.

I'm also deeply concerned about the anti-Israel groups hijacking public events. I'm the only one of the candidates who has held elected office [as a TDSB trustee] and the ward needs a voice … the Jewish community needs a voice at City Hall.

Eric Plant: That's a good question, but the more important [question is] *how* will I get things done? It's OK to set up a wish list, but my plan is to go around and ask people what needs to be done. I want to institute town hall meetings. There's a failure to see the potential in Toronto. My top priorities would be service, transit… a lot of people want the Sheppard [subway] line extended to Downsview station. I'm creating a list of what needs to be done by going door-to-door. Once elected, I'll go through the list. Things like tree-clipping, grass cutting, potholes… all these little things, we can't fix them unless we know what they are.

In terms of bigger items, the Wilmington Plaza [proposed renovation] is something I want to get involved in and I want to hold a meeting about the city's plan to get rid of the Allen Road on/off ramps from Wilson Heights Boulevard. I don't like the way the city is going about this, and I'll make it more transparent once I'm elected.

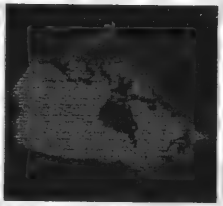
Brian Shifman: I want to work on transportation. The city needs an expanded subway network. It's important for a city this size to have a master transportation plan. We need to look at the infrastructure and maximize efficiency.

I want to close the loop on the subway line, but not across Sheppard Avenue. I would leave the decision on how best to do this with expert planners.

Continued on page 18

Canadian Friends of Haifa University

Partners for Peace
2010 Tribute Dinner



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For more information, contact Hetty Shapiro, Executive Director Canadian Friends of Haifa University 416.972.9400 | hshapiro@haifa-univ.ca | www.haifa-univ.ca

Ward 10 is largest Jewish riding in Toronto

Continued from page 17

The ward also needs more community engagement. I'd like to hold quarterly, rotating town hall meetings throughout the ward and expand knowledge on projects for the neighbourhood.

[Toronto] also needs a funding change. We need to upload services that properly belong to the provincial government, like social services. And I'd look at getting a larger share of the gas tax from the province.

I also don't think it makes sense to close the [Allen Road] ramps. That's part of the city's Downsview secondary plan, though it hasn't yet been approved.

I also want to push to remove the private vehicle tax.

Konstantin Toubis: We need... to upgrade the TTC system. [It] needs new buses and more buses. We have lots of residents in the City of Toronto… we only have a few subway lines. We need to build more.

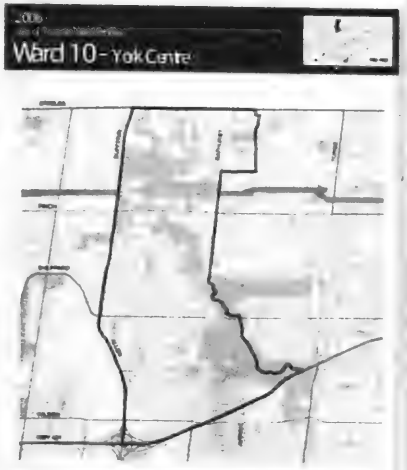
It was a good idea to charge 5 cents for plastic bags – people would think to take five bags or 10 bags – but my question is, where is this money going? [The government] recommends that stores spend the money on green programs, but do you have an idea where this money goes? [I would] build a special fund and use that money for programs for the environment. Let's be honest: Ward 10 is not the safest ward in the city of Toronto. One of the issues is [youth crime]… We need more police officers on the road, patrolling. We need to see these guys in the ward.

I don't want to see children on the street, doing nothing. We need a youth council. This committee has to be for all youth. We need to understand all youth and create programs, especially in our ward, where we have lots of low-income families.

Igor Toutchinski: My first priority is the traffic delays. In my opinion, we can improve our traffic if we eliminate some unnecessary bus stops to avoid traffic jams. We need, as soon as possible, synchronization of green traffic lights to avoid bus delays and traffic jams. Another thing is our TTC. Sometimes our TTC buses come to a stop three at a time. Sometimes people wait 30 to 40 minutes for the bus. We have to adjust the bus schedule in our area. I propose to make, once a year, a Bathurst Village Festival [to encourage multiculturalism.] We can close Finch Avenue to Sheppard Avenue. We have lots of businesses around… people can try the food of these restaurants, we can put a stage in the centre and bring stars from Russia, Israel, the Philippines.

Edward Zaretsky: I've lived [in Ward 10] for 55 years. My priorities [include] improved wheel transit and more benches on the streets for seniors to rest on. We also need to set up organized activities for children and we need bike lanes. We have one on Bathurst Street, but no one knows about it.

There's so much that has to be done to get kids off the street [and] let kids go into an area that's secure to learn to play sports or have seminars. Kids get out of school and there's nobody home for them. Parents don't know where these kids are. They're running wild in the streets. I can get someone to teach music after school, maybe to explain baseball or football. It's not hard to do if you have a vision.



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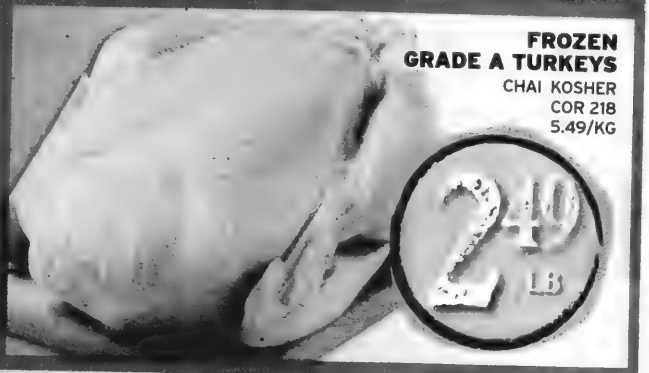

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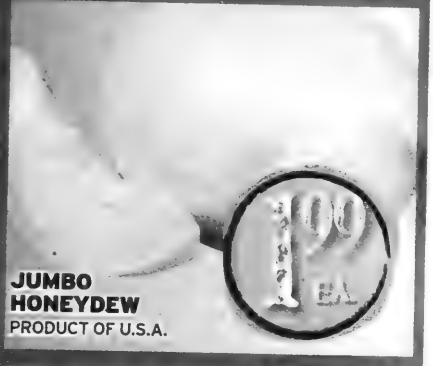

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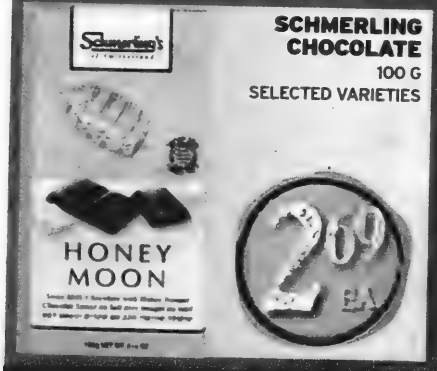

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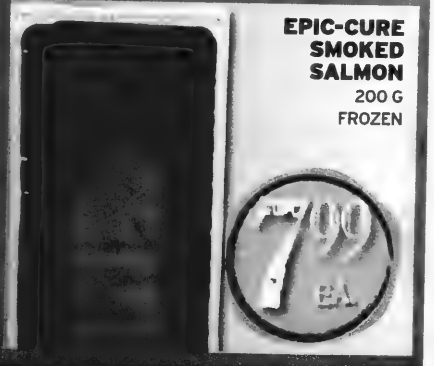

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Ministers promote trade, peace in Israel

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

International Trade Minister Peter Van Loan and Peter Kent, minister of state of foreign affairs (Americas), both filled their schedules with Israel-related tasks last week.

Peter Kent

On Aug. 31, Kent began a nine-day trip to Israel to "launch Canada-Israel discussions on the Americas," he said in a statement. He added that Canada also wanted to look at "shared objectives in the region" on the issues of "security, democracy and prosperity."

His working visit included talks with Israeli President Shimon Peres, Foreign Affairs Minister Avigdor Lieberman and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Daniel Ayalon.

Peter Van Loan

He was also scheduled to tour various sites in the country, including the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology and Yad Vashem.

Additionally, Kent had scheduled a visit to the West Bank, where he was to meet with Riyad al-Malki, the Palestinian Authority's minister of foreign affairs, to discuss how to implement a five-year, $300 million "package of assistance" to the Palestinian Authority that is intended to focus "on support in the areas of security and justice."

Canada first announced this funding in December 2007 at the Paris Donors Conference.

Kent was scheduled to return Sept. 8.

Meanwhile, in Toronto last Thursday, Van Loan held a working luncheon talk for the Canada Israel Chamber of Commerce (CICC) to highlight ongoing trade agreements between the two countries and announce that he will travel to Israel.

Van Loan said he was proud of Canada's 61-year political relationship with Israel.

He noted that since the 1996 signing of the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement, bilateral trade between the two countries has grown to $1.3 billion.

"But our success goes far beyond trading goods back and forth," Van Loan said, noting that Canadian businesses such as Research In Motion, Air Canada and Super-Pharm have built a "strong commercial presence" in Israel over the years and that Israeli corporations such as Teva Pharmaceutical Industries and Amdocs have similarly "made inroads" here.

Asked what Canada is looking for trade-wise from Israel in the future, Van Loan said the government is "betting" on the strength of the country's science and technology sectors for continued return on investments.

"We're also working on taking our science and technology partnership to a new level in the years ahead," he said.

"When it comes to collaboration between innovation and technology, Canada and Israel have led the way," he said.

Van Loan also noted that earlier this year, prime ministers Stephen Harper and Benjamin Netanyahu agreed to "take yet another important step" in Canada-Israel trade by establishing a bilateral innovation conference.

He said that project is "currently in development."

Speaking about his upcoming trip to Israel, he told *The CJN* that it would have a "strong focus" on the science and technology sector, but unlike Kent, he has "no plans" to meet with anyone in the PA to discuss Canadian-Palestinian trade opportunities.

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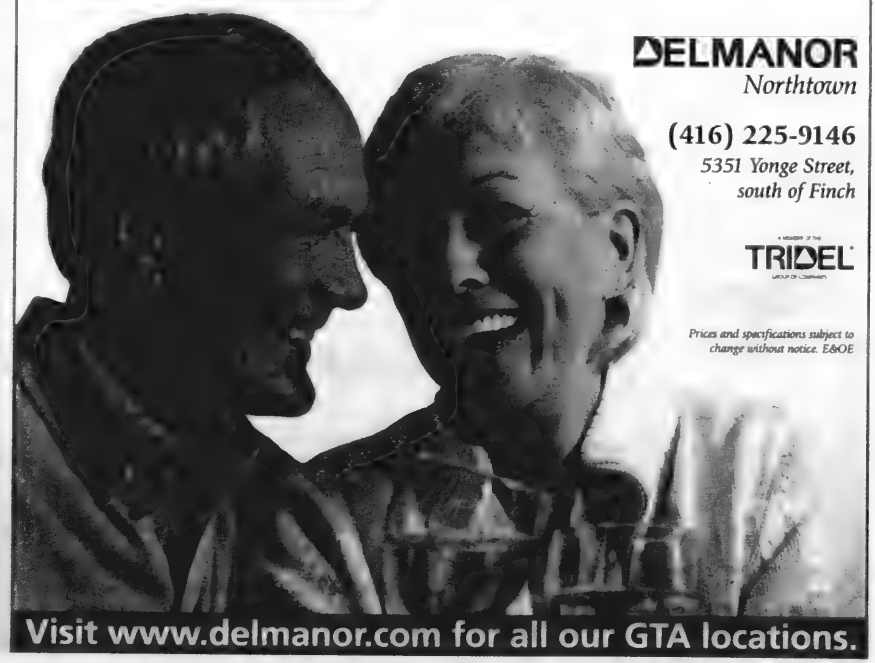

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Israeli professor builds 'self-thinking' robots

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

If Daniel Weihs wanted to take over the world in a supervillain coup, he probably could.

Weihs, an aerospace engineer and professor at Technion – Israel Institute of Technology autonomous systems program, is involved in building robots. Autonomous robots.

"An autonomous system is a system that... has to think, it has to decide on its own. It's the generalization for the concept of a robot," said Weihs, who spoke at the Jewish Urban Meeting Place at an event hosted by JUMP, Birthright Alumni Community and The House, on Aug. 26.

"[Autonomous systems] can take the place of humans in dull, dirty, difficult and dangerous jobs," he said, explaining that these robots can be used in factory assembly lines or air traffic control centres.

"A human controller can't control more than 20 [airplanes] at one time. Robots can do many more."

Weihs' lecture, titled "Batteries Not Included: Exploring Israel's Technological and Military Advancements," focused on Technion University, which was founded in 1924 and currently has 9,000 undergraduate and 4,000 graduate students. The school's projects include building a satellite that was launched into space, creating unmanned airplanes, scooters, tanks and underwater vehicles and building the Snake, an autonomous, "self-thinking" robot with a camera attached to it that's currently being used by the Israel Defence Forces.

"Its purpose is to go into cracks in collapsed buildings. There's a camera in its face, if it sees a body, it can measure its temperature," Weihs said, adding that, if the body is warm, crews can be sent in to rescue it.

During his speech, Weihs explained the components of an autonomous robot. These systems have sensors, which act as its eyes and ears; decision making and assessment tools, which act as their brains, communication tools, actuators or limbs, and the payload, or the transporting system.

These robots, according to Weihs, have different levels of independence. At the lowest level, the systems are fully programmable and supervised, at the highest they're able to make decisions in groups without supervision or programming which can cause problems, Weihs said.

"If an unmanned vehicle shot at people it thought were Taliban, and they took off their uniforms and became innocent bystanders, they go to... court. Who do you charge? The operator? [The vehicle] made its own decision. There's an issue here. You can lose control. You need to make sure the decisions that are made are humane," he said.

During the event, Weihs also described Technion University's medical projects, which include tiny robots that can be attached to the body of a patient during an operation and control the amount of movement from the scalpel.

Professor Daniel Weihs of Technion University spoke about autonomous robots at the Jewish Urban Meeting Place.

"It measures the involuntary tremors of the surgeon and the motions of the patient. It analyzes the motions and deducts from the motion of the scalpel," he said.

Technion is also working on creating robotic surgeons, as well as micro-robots that could swim through the body and deposit medicine in the appropriate area.

Weihs ended his talk with a newer project at Technion. Rather than create robots, experts are trying to control animals and insects, such as locusts, by attaching electrons to their brain.

"As of last week, our locusts can move right, left, forwards and backwards. The next step is to attach a camera to the locusts," he said.

Shira Webber, the director of joint programs at JUMP, sees Weihs' speech as an important reminder of Israel's technological contributions.

"It's easy to get bogged down by the negativity that surrounds Israel," she said. "This is really just to show [Israel's] advances in science and technology... [it] highlights Israel in a positive way."

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Municipal Vote 2010

Moscoe says goodbye to Ward 15, politics

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Howard Moscoe's reign in Toronto Ward 15, Eglinton-Lawrence is no more.

After three decades in municipal politics on North York and Toronto city councils, the veteran politician is stepping down.

His announcement last Monday came as a surprise, as he had left his name on the list of candidates for the Oct. 25 municipal election.

Speaking to *The CJN* last week from Iqaluit, Nunavut, where he was attending board meetings of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Moscoe, 70, said he has no regrets about retiring at this juncture.

"I've been on the job for 31 years. It's time to move on," he said, adding that he's now looking forward to spending more time travelling and being with his family.

Asked about his future plans, he would only say that he has "some interesting offers" on the table.

His retirement comes after another longtime councillor, Ward 10, York Centre's Mike Feldman, 82, announced in July that he's also calling it quits.

Moscoe's departure from the race leaves five remaining candidates – Josh Colle, Rob Davis, Giussepe Pede, William Reitsma and Ron Singer – vying for his seat on council. He said he's endorsing Colle, son of Eglinton-Lawrence Liberal MPP Mike Colle.

Moscoe said he's happy to have left many projects "with a solid foundation" on the go in his ward for his successor to complete.

One of them is the controversial re-vitalization of Lawrence Heights. He said "replacing this area with a mixed-income community" is essential.

"The planners made a lot of mistakes in the 1930s and 1940s when they thought that simply buying new housing for low-income people was the solution to all their problems. This was false. [Residents] were disadvantaged more by being gathered in ghettos."

The proposed redevelopment of the public housing section of the neighbourhood has angered some local residents, many of whom are afraid of increased traffic congestion and poor city planning to properly integrate the nearby Allen Road artery.

Moscoe, who is Jewish, said he's also proud that one of his last acts on council was successfully passing a motion in council two weeks ago to create a museum celebrating "Jewish immigration at the turn of the century."

Howard Moscoe

There's a "forgotten" Jewish history of Toronto that needs to be remembered, he said.

The museum will be housed in City Hall when it's completed in about three years, he added.

"I'm proud to be leaving this as my legacy," he said.

Moscoe, whose grandmother came to the city in 1912, noted that much of Toronto's Jewish immigrant population originally settled in an area called "The Ward," located between University Avenue on the west side and Trawley Street (now Bay Street) to the east, and between Queen Street to the south and College Street on the north end.

"It was a Jewish immigrant slum, much like that of New York's Lower East Side, in the shadow of City Hall. And in fact, New [Toronto] City Hall was built on top of it," as was hospital row on University, he said.

Moscoe admitted to having mixed feelings about leaving council.

"I love my job. It's exciting, but the memories are bittersweet. But I think I'll be remembered most for the little things that affected people's lives," such as pushing through a bylaw to put an end to the city's apartment buildings charging for visitor parking, he said.

Another was his motion to force retail stores to allow public access to restrooms.

"My reputation has been as a fighter. In politics you can sit back and get re-elected, or you can do things and rub people the wrong way and make enemies. My 31 years have been controversial, but I can now sit back and say to my grandchildren that I did some things, and here's what I did," he said.

Moscoe said that he wants voters in his ward to "look for the candidate that is intelligent and cares about people."

Regarding the city's mayoral race, Moscoe said "it's anybody's guess" as to who will win, although he's backing Coun. Joe Pantalone, because "he understands the art of compromise."

Asked whether he ruled out a return to politics down the road, Moscoe said it's "the furthest thing" from his mind.

Greater Toronto Area

Stepping up to the plate for Israeli kids

By CARA EDELL
Special to The CJN

The third annual Pitch for Israel baseball tournament swung into action on Aug. 22 at the Powerade Centre in Brampton, Ont., and on Aug. 29 at Camp Robin Hood in Markham.

More than $425,000 was raised for vulnerable children in Israel through One Family Fund Canada. The tournament was sponsored by Scotiabank, JUMP (Jewish Urban Meeting Place), Cineplex Entertainment, Fabricland, Magen Boys Entertainment and others, said Daniel Warner, the event's founder and organizer.

"One Family Fund Canada is an incredible Jewish organization that directly supports Israeli [families] whose lives have been devastated by terrorism," Warner said. "They are a valued tournament partner."

Warner said that meeting some of the children at One Family Fund's bowling night when they were here before the tournament was a highlight of his summer.

Kortney Shapiro, left, and Marissa Daniels were volunteer co-ordinators at the Scotiabank Pitch For Israel baseball tournament.

"Our committee was invited to interact with the beneficiaries of the money that we have been working so hard to raise. Their energy shone through in spite of the hardships they have endured. These bereaved children need our support, and [working with] One Family Fund was the best way to help them."

Over 400 players, participants and volunteers attended the tournament, which was five times the size of the first Pitch for Israel in 2008. With an overwhelming response from the Jewish community, Warner said there were 30 teams at the Pitch for Israel in Toronto in addition to 12 teams in London, Ont., and 12 in Detroit.

"The Pitch is quickly growing up," Warner said. "We want to find Jewish leaders in different cities who are interested in joining us in expanding the Pitch to new heights."

The Detroit tournament was created last August when Benjy Gordon and Adam Blanck of Michigan decided to run the event in their hometown. They have successfully raised over $25,000 for Detroit- and Israel-based Jewish causes this year, Warner said.

The London tournament was a natural fit for expansion, as Warner has been very involved with the University of Western Ontario's Jewish community through AEPi, Hillel and Chabad. He said the Pitch For Israel has now become the title sponsor of the largest Western student softball league.

For the first time since the tournament's launch in Toronto, Warner welcomed Canadian politicians including MPs Peter Kent and Ruby Dhalla, and MPPs Glen Murray and Monte Kwinter to the Powerade Centre.

Kent and Dhalla presented the awards to the top fundraisers, Warner said.

Warner's idea for the tournament was born after he participated in a Birthright Israel trip in the early 2000s. His *madriach* stressed the importance of "giving back to the Jewish community," which made Warner step up to the plate. "I realized that if I combined softball, Jews and an important Jewish cause, we would have a homerun on our hands," he said.

"I enjoy getting involved in worthwhile projects that unite our community and engage the younger generation to make an impact."

Over the past decade, Warner has been linked to many organizations including UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, the Reena Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Society. He has received recognition for his community service from UJA and Dhalla's office, and was nominated by Jewish Federations of North America as a Jewish Community Hero in 2009.

He has received the Righteous Hand Jewish Campus Life Award and was a finalist for international president of the year for the AEPi Jewish fraternity. Most recently, he founded The Tribe – a philanthropic network that focuses on expanding the social scene for Toronto's young Jewish professionals through events, speaking engagements, travel and nightlife.

"But my main objective is to help those in need in our community here and in Israel, while aiming to inspire others to get involved, and give back in their own way," he said.

"It's important for Jews to realize that we are all players on the same team, especially in light of recent developments. We need to stand together, united," Warner said. "The players and volunteers are the ones that have made the Pitch For Israel what it is today, and the community support from various Jewish organizations and sponsors is uplifting."

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שנה טובה ומתוקה

YORK PRESIDENT RENEWS EXCHANGE AGREEMENT WITH HEBREW UNIVERSITY

York University President Shoukri at Hebrew University. Left to right: Hebrew University Vice-Rector Yaacov Schul, York University Vice President Research & Innovation Stan Shapson, President Shoukri, and Hebrew University Vice President Carmi Gillon.

On a recent trade mission to Israel with the Premier of Ontario, Mamdouh Shoukri, President & Vice-Chancellor of York University, renewed the exchange agreement between York and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Continuing a longstanding tradition of encouraging York students to study at Israeli universities, while also hosting Israeli students on our campus, the renewed agreement facilitates student and faculty exchanges, and the development of new York-Hebrew University partnership projects. The renewed agreement builds upon a forty-year relationship between the two universities, and complements York's existing exchange programs with other Israeli academic institutions.

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION FOR EXCELLENCE

The dynamic Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Antiracism Education, *Learning from the Past, Teaching for the Future*, has garnered international acclaim. Developed by Professors Michael Brown and Mark Webber, and established in partnership with York's Centre for German and European Studies, the program brings together Canadian, German and Polish education students to study – in order to teach about – the Holocaust and racism.

York's Jewish Teacher Education Program prepares students for careers in Jewish education, awarding degrees earned in both the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies.

The York University Visiting Professorship in Israel Studies brings an Israeli professor to our campus to teach, conduct research, and give public lectures. We thank the generosity of our friends in the community, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, and York's Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies.

Photo Credit: Mark Webber

*Participants in **Learning from the Past, Teaching for the Future** gather in front of Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland with Professors Mark Webber (far left, second row from top) and Michael Brown (rear, third from right).*

Visiting Professor of Israel Studies Orit Rozin with Israeli Consul General Amir Gissin.

GET INVOLVED WITH OUR CENTRE

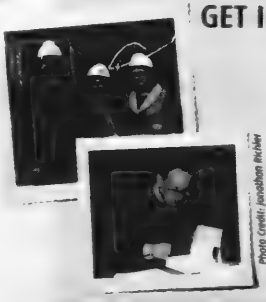

Photo Credit: Jonathon Reiher

You don't need a hardhat to get involved in our Centre, but Advisory Committee President Barbara Bank donned one to explore the Centre's offices in the new York Research Tower while it was still under construction. Our Centre appreciates her intrepid spirit and visionary support.

At a series of lectures given last year, Anthony Julius launched his new book, *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Antisemitism in England*, at York University. We have stimulating lectures and exciting programming planned for the year ahead.

Left photo: left to right, Paul Marcus, President and CEO of York University Foundation, Barbara Bank, President, Centre Advisory Committee and Sara R. Horowitz, Director.

Below: Anthony Julius inscribes his new book.

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY: CENTRE FACULTY AS LEADERS IN RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE

Two new milestone publications by Centre members are *Jewish People, Yiddish Nation: Noah Prylucki and the Folkists in Poland* by Kalman (Keith) Weiser, the Silber Family Professor of Modern Jewish Studies, and *Kerem: Creative Explorations in Judaism*, edited by Centre Director Sara R. Horowitz and Gilah Langner. Forthcoming in December, *Jewish People, Yiddish Nation* explores the rise and fall of Yiddishism, a major cultural movement that shaped Jewish collective identity in the twentieth century. *Kerem* is an annual publication featuring contemporary Jewish thought, literature, commentary and ritual.

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Ahouva Shulman, Hebrew
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FAN EXPO

Thousands of fans gathered at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre for the Fan Expo Aug. 27 to 29. It was a chance for fans to meet celebrities from the genres of sci-fi and fantasy, animation, gaming and horror. Top celebrities this year included Marvel Comics legend Stan Lee, right, and William Shatner, left, known for his iconic roles as *Star Trek*'s James T. Kirk and T.J. Hooker in the TV police drama *T.J. Hooker*, and most recently *Boston Legal*'s Denny Crane.

JEWISH HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

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The community is invited to participate
in the ceremony by lighting a
Yahrzeit Candle

שיעור פרשת

גידי קורן וחברים

ילדי העובדים הזרים

לפני שבועות מספר הבטחתי את צערי על כך שספר הבנים אלי ישי, הוא זה שעוסק בבעייה הקשה של ילדי העובדים הזרים. להלן קטעי דבריו של ישי שפי כתל אביב בתגובה למאמרי: "ראשית את דבריו של פרופ. קרון ואני משתתפים על דבריו. הוא מצליח לברוך בחכמה את השנאה לש"ס עם בעייה עולמית אנושית. להלן מכתבי לשר אלי ישי, שזיהה לי האפיק להגיד מה שכל אחד חושב ואימר בשיחות לילי שבת, אך לא יכיר להגיד או לכתוב זאת בפרהסיה". את מכתבו של מר שפי לשר ישי אפשר לקרוא בבלוג http://www.tapuz.co.il/blog/ViewEntry.asp?EntrId=1122181

לא הזמנה בידי הזכות להלן את לילי שבת עם מר ישי שפי, ולאחר דבריו אני יד שפה על כך. זה שהוא מבחר "שכל אחד" בארץ וחשב כמו השר ישי- אומר הכל. השר ישי, למי שאיננו מעודכן, אמר של העובדים הזרים ש"הם מביאים איתם שלל מחלות", ועל הזמרים והלסבניות ש"הם אנשים חולים". לשיטתו, הוא גם אמר לגבי ילדי העובדים הזרים שהוא צופה לגרש "שיתחזרו לארצותיהם, שבא ומבוא שלהם מתגעגעים אליהם".

שר מבים שמביע דיעות כאלה מפקם את ישראל על המפה בדיוק במקום של אירען, וכל נסיון לטשן שישראל יחזר בארדה אינו מקבל על הדעת בעליל. הם רואים אותו ואת ליברמן ומשוכנעים שישראל, ארץ ומדינה הן בעצם אותו דבר.

משפט השבוע

ביה בית המשפר של בוסטס עיאמדן מדגדה מאשם של מג"ב, והוא ישבצה על כך בהחלטה של בית המשפט. וכך אמר האב: " אני לא יכול להאשים ילד בן שמונה עשרה שיורה בילדה בת עשר".

סיאול קרץ 2010

הזמנתי להרצאות בסיאול דרום קוריאה על ידי מתמחה שלי שחזר למולדתי. הבטחתי בינם שבת הרצאות ותכננו לימים ראשון. מה גדולה היתה הדהמתי לגלות שיום ראשון הפסירים הנהא היה יום העצמאות של דרום קוריאה. השבתי לעצמי שלא בעבדה, לא בארה"ב ובוודאי לא בישראל- יתקיים כעס ישראי בינם העצמאות. לא יעלה על דעתו של איש לבלות בשבדה ולא להניח עם המשפחה. לא סתם אני שותה את רשמי המסע בקטע הזה, כי הוא מגלם את מה שקורה שם- האנשים האלה שבדים כמו גמלים. אפילו יהודי מהימבים, התרבות לא מאפרות לבא-דרום קוריאה הוא גם כלכלי. הם, יחד וסין שמים את המערב בבים הקטן. הבר האמריי הוא בבי בשתי מרגה.

בבית המלים שבו ביקרתי ידי מספר הלידות ועך עשר שנים מעשרת אלפים לחמשת אלפים בשנה, מה שגורם לקוריאה לדאגה עמוקה. את הסיבה לירידה המאסיבית מסביר לי מארחי: "גידולו של ילד כאן עולה הון עתק. כל ילד מעמם מקבל שיעורים פרטיים מדי שיעלית באוניברסיטה". בקוריאה הולכים שמונים אחוזים מהגשר לאוניברסיטה, והגורים יעשו הכל כדי שיצליחו. הם אפילו לא שמעו על האמנה היהודית. ולא פלא- השנה חל גידול של חמישים אחוז בהתאבדויות של בני נוער בשל הלחץ הבלתי נסבל עליהם.

יום העצמאות הקוריאני מציין את השחרור מ 35 שנות שלטון יפאני, שהסתיים ב 15 באוגוסט 1945, עשרה ימים אחרי הפצצת הירושימה ונאגאסקי. הקוריאנים מתנהגים בצורה שקשה להבדילה מן היפנים ביעילות, בזריזות, בימוט ובמשמעת המפורסת שלהם, ואני שואל בהזדמנות פקידה בכירה במשרד הבריאות הקוריאני האם זה בגלל שבמשנת הבינום לפני הקוריאנים את היפנים השאנים. היא שוללת את זה כלאחר יד ואומרת :"היפנים היו שפקים מידי בלידתן את קוריאה מכל אוצריותיה ובמירה- ולא היה השבר להם להקנות לנו את השיכים שלהם". הפקידה הבכירה יודעת שאני ישראלי, פ' כך הבמתי לפני הפגישה שלי. היא אומרת לי "התפרשה הקשה של הבינים גרמה לנו להגיש כלואים. אני מניחה שזה מה שעניי על הפלשתינאים, לא כך?" אני הנהן . אני מסביר לקוריאנית שלא כפשני את פלשתין, אלא שהיהודים והבנינים הקשו אותנו בהקשה להדק אותנו לים. היא מתרגשת. אבל אז אני גם מבין יותר בידר מדוע ישראל וחינה לשפר מהבנה בדיוק כפי שיראת מסרי. אבל שיעור בינים.

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"Yes... S'wonderful!" ★★★★ (out of four) – *The Toronto Star*, **The Soul of Gershwin**

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Theatre gala to honour 'unsung hero'

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

He stood up for Israel, and now the Harold Green Jewish Theatre will be standing for him.

This October, the theatre will be honouring Ucal Powell, the executive secretary treasurer of the Carpenters' Union in Central Ontario. Powell, who immigrated to Canada from Jamaica in 1969 and joined the Carpenters' Union in 1970, is a friend of the Jewish community, supporting both Israel and the local diaspora.

In 2008, when the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) called for a boycott of Israeli academic institutions, Powell and the Carpenters' Union put forth a resolution supporting Israel and peace in the Middle East at their 2008 Canada Conference.

"There has been a great deal of misinformation circulated about Israel by some misguided Canadian labour organizations. The Carpenters' Union felt very strongly that the record had to be corrected," said Powell in an e-mail interview about the resolution.

"I can assure your readers that the Carpenters' Union will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the State of Israel and Canada's Jewish community for many years to come."

Aside from publicly supporting Israel, Powell has also supported causes including the State of Israel Bonds and the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

But this isn't exactly common knowledge, said Cary Green, who helped found the theatre.

"I would describe Ucal as one of the great unsung' heroes in the Jewish community," said Green. "When you do a gala, you look for someone to honour...Here was an opportunity for me, as a friend...to have him highlighted.

"I want the Jewish community to recognize its friends, and Ucal is certainly one of the greats among them."

Ucal Powell

The gala itself, which will raise money and awareness for the theatre, will be held on Oct. 7 and will feature Louise Pitre, a Tony nominated actress and singer, as well as musical guests Beyond the Pale.

Avery Saltzman and David Eisner, the theatre's artistic directors, are taking a two-pronged approach with the gala, which will include dinner along with the entertainment.

"Our guests are coming because they're fond supporters of Ucal Powell or are friends of the Harold Green family and supporters of the company," said Saltzman.

Eisner agreed.

"It's kind of a neat trick. Not only do they honour someone that's never been honoured, they get to support a Jewish theatre company."

For Powell, the theatre is a worthy cause.

"[The theatre] is an organization that is mandated to celebrate and share Jewish culture through the creative arts. In addition, this theatre company helps to foster tolerance by providing audiences of all cultures and backgrounds with a better understanding of the dynamic nature of Jewish culture," Powell said.

"We are blessed to live in a country that celebrates diversity as a core value and fundamental element of our national identity. And I know that we will continue to cherish our diversity as long as organizations like the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company continue to thrive."

The gala, which is co-produced by the Canadian Council of Carpenters, will take place at the Paramount Conference and Event Venue on 222 Rowntree Dairy Rd. in Woodbridge. Cocktails will be served at 6 p.m. and dinner starts at 7 p.m. For tickets or more information, visit www.hgjewishtheatre.com.

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Irving Levine and Lionel Robins

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מרכז למדעי היהדות

To all our friends, family and the entire Jewish community, we extend our warmest wishes for a Happy and Healthy Rosh Hashana

Sobeys Kosher Market
Clark & Hilda

Newmarket shul moves into larger building

Or Hadash Synagogue gets a new home

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

Members of Or Hadash Synagogue held their High Holiday services at a golf course last year. This year, they'll be held at home.

Or Hadash, a Reform synagogue in Newmarket, Ont., has moved into a larger building, located in the heart of downtown Newmarket. The temple's last location, on Leslie Street, held about 100 to 115 people, which, during events and High Holidays, was too small for the growing congregation.

"This will give us more room to grow," said Larry Raifman, the synagogue's president, adding that the new building, located at 451 Botsford St. will hold around 140 to 150 people.

"It's a really good location for us. It's in downtown Newmarket, near a public library. Parking's really good in the area," he said, explaining that the synagogue will use two of the building's three floors.

In the past, the synagogue, which currently has around 40 to 50 member families, held Shabbat services at Southlake Village, a long-term care facility, and High Holiday services at Glenway Country Club.

"To be able to hold simchahs as well as High Holiday services in one location, I think it gives more of a feeling of community," Raifman said.

Funds are raised for the new home through initiatives such as a charity golf tournament.

Apart from holiday services, the new home, which was celebrated with a dedication service on Sept. 5, will also accommodate the congregation's Hebrew school and will cater to the synagogue's growing, diverse membership.

Or Hadash, which has been around since the early 1990s, serves the northern part of York Region, as well as some congregants from Richmond Hill and Thornhill. Members come from Aurora, Newmarket, Innisfil and Keswick.

"We have everything from families with young children, newlyweds, interfaith couples, single parents with kids, a whole range," said Raifman. "I think [the new location] gives members a reaffirmation that we're alive and looking to grow and serve them in the future."

Rabbi Jonathan Crane, who works part-time at Or Hadash and leads High Holiday services, sees the move as an important opportunity for the synagogue.

"To have sufficient space [for] services and programming and education, it really means to have a footprint, not only in Newmarket, but also in Ontario and Canada," he said. "Now [members] will be able to worship in the place they call home."

For Bonnie Mark, who has been a member of Or Hadash with her family for around eight years, location is an important factor in choosing a synagogue. But community is more important.

"It's very much a community-based synagogue. It's a little different from a synagogue in the city. We don't have people coming for morning services throughout the week, it's more about the Hebrew school, the youth, High Holidays, that kind of thing," she said.

"We're very relaxed, very welcoming… Originally, I would have said [that I stayed a member] because of the location, but the location could only last so long. If you don't feel comfortable, you go in your car and go to the city."

Coast to Coast

Toronto academic aids U.S. health care bill

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

As commutes go, it's a pretty formidable one. With the working week approaching, Sherry Glied leaves her home in New York City and hops on a plane to Washington, D.C. After five days of putting in very long hours, she reverses direction and heads back to the Big Apple to spend the weekend with her husband and two young children.

It's quite a grind, but for a health-care economist, being at the centre of the health-care universe in Washington is a dream come true.

Sherry Glied

Glied, 49, is living the dream as assistant secretary for planning and evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As such, she serves as principal advisor to Kathleen Sebelius, secretary of health and human services, who is implementing "Obamacare," the U.S. government's ambitious health-care agenda.

In her capacity as a senior administrator, Glied heads a 110-person team. "We provide policy analysis, evaluate existing programs, and staff teams to figure out how to implement health policy," she said on the phone from Muskoka in northern Ontario.

Glied was visiting family during a summer respite from her busy schedule. The daughter of Monika and Bill Glied of Toronto, she attended Bialik Hebrew Day School briefly before enrolling in Associated Hebrew Schools. After high school, she earned a degree in economics at Yale University, studied law at the University of Toronto and then earned a PhD at Harvard as a health economist.

A career academic whose research has focused on the financing of health-care services in the United States, Glied advanced from her job as assistant professor at Columbia University to a full professorship in health policy and management and then as chair of the department.

"I got a great job at Columbia, to my mother's eternal chagrin. I married an American and I'm stuck," she said.

A dual citizen, Glied served as a senior economist for health-care and labour market policy to the President's Council of Economic Advisers under presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

While still on leave from university, she worked with then-first lady Hillary Clinton in trying to re-make American health care.

"I was always interested in social policy and how you can make people better off," Glied said. That included "lots of statistical research and data analysis."

An Obama political appointee, before taking office she appeared before a Senate committee to be questioned by lawmakers. She was confirmed on June 22 and took office shortly after that.

"I've always been a big proponent of universal health insurance," she said, noting that this is something the current plan envisions.

"The Obama policy is not particularly a government one," she said. "It wants to make sure everybody has coverage."

Implementing the health-care bill of more than 2,000 pages is a monumental task, and though it doesn't take full effect until 2014, some of it is already operational. One such provision allows children to stay covered under their parents' health-care insurance until they turn 26, she said.

The health-care plan has proven fairly unpopular in the United States – RealClearPolitics' late August average of polling data shows 52 per cent oppose it versus 39 per cent in favour – with critics pointing to, among other issues, the provision that allows adults to still be covered by their parents' insurance.

Glied acknowledges that there is opposition to the plan and that "some people are concerned the government is taking too big a role and that quality will diminish and they are afraid that they will pay more to take care of other people."

But, she said, "I think it is perfectly possible for the system to work effectively [to extend] coverage and not cost a lot more money. The way the system works now is that there is universal coverage for those 65 and over [in Medicare]. The new people coming in are not terribly sick. On average, they don't cost that much to cover."

Glied said the United States spends much more on health care than other countries, "with not much better outcomes."

"By being more efficient with existing programs for those 65 and older," you can find cost savings, she said.

So, does the Canadian experience in providing universal health care influence her views?

"I'm neither a proponent or a critic of the Canadian health system. I believe, consistent with Jewish values, that people should have access to health care.

"Virtually all other countries have universal health insurance, except the United States. No two systems are the same."

Though only on the job for a couple of months, Glied feels she's hit the jackpot. "It's very exciting. It's a wonderful opportunity for someone who's devoted their life to this to make a difference. It's not often in public life you get a chance to do something important. It's a widespread feeling in the office," she said.

In 5070 Ve'ahavta, the Canadian Jewish and Humanitarian & Relief Committee, continued its Tikun Olam work in Canada and around the world with your support of our programs and events. With your support we were able to:

- Distribute 15,000 Kinder Kits to underprivileged children in Canada, Israel, Poland, Haiti, Kenya, and Zimbabwe to relieve one financial obstacle to a child battling poverty;
- Expand our outreach services to the homeless populations by having vans on the street five days a week and serving over 5,000 people in the past year;
- Launch a children's breakfast program that serves over 700 students coming from low-income families in the downtown core, thereby increasing a child's ability to concentrate and better learn in school;
- Facilitate 3 volunteer projects providing medical care and public health education in Guyana, and complete the provision of over $1,000,000 of aid to our partners in Zimbabwe;
- Create a Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund that raised $240,000 for orphans and other survivors and supported the Israel Trauma team;
- Run the first Ve'ahavta Street Academy that delivered an 8-week course on Transitioning off the Street to the homeless. All 10 of our students graduated the program;
- Spoke in over 30 synagogue and schools of all Jewish denominations on Tikun Olam and Chesed (Kindness).

Kinder Kits distributed by March of the Living participants to Polish students, April 2010

During the Jewish year of 5771, we remain committed to:

- Increasing the number of people served through our Mobile Jewish Response to the Homeless outreach project by directly serving shelters with our volunteer van shifts in 2011 as well as serving people on the street;
- Sending 30,000 Kinder Kits to Jewish and non-Jewish communities throughout the world – Canada, Israel (10,000 kits), Poland, Kenya, former Soviet Union, Guyana, Zimbabwe and Haiti;
- Enhancing our long-term efforts in Israel by sending volunteer teams to help out in soup kitchens, trauma centres and distribution centres for our Kinder Kit program;
- Expanding our Ve'ahavta Street Academy to operate year-round;
- Sending two medical and public health education teams to Guyana, to serve communities in the rainforest.

Please consider making a tax-deductible Rosh Hashanah gift to Ve'ahavta through our website, www.veahavta.org

Shana Tova to everyone and thank you for your continued support of Ve'ahavta.

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Shul-bombing evidence OK, judge rules

Compiled by CJN staff

A Superior Court judge last week turned down a defence request that he throw out handwriting evidence that allegedly links Ottawa university professor Hassan Diab to a 1980 attack on a Paris synagogue.

Justice Robert Maranger rejected arguments from Diab's lawyers that French authorities who are seeking Diab's extradition abused Canadian court processes by providing "tainted" expert evidence that kept the legal process going even though the evidence is flawed.

Maranger ruled there's no evidence of an absence of "due diligence" by France and that rejecting the evidence is "disconnected" from the alleged abuse.

Although French authorities had withdrawn two initial handwriting reports and replaced them with another, the defence contended the evidence should be withheld because of "mischief" in the case.

Federal lawyers have said the handwriting evidence is crucial. Experts have identified Diab's signature on a hotel registration card and prosecutors allege that person was responsible for the synagogue attack.

The terror plot on Oct. 3, 1980, Simchat Torah eve, killed three French male pedestrians and an Israeli woman and injured 40 others. The bomb was hidden in the saddlebags of a parked motorcycle that exploded outside the Rue Copernic Synagogue as hundreds of worshippers gathered for services.

According to prosecutors, Diab is accused of having driven the motorcycle that exploded.

Diab, who was arrested two years ago and was released on condition he wear an electronic monitoring device, claims he's the victim of mistaken identity. He says his name is common in his native Lebanon.

Defence lawyer Donald Bayne said last week he would ask for a stay of proceedings when the extradition hearing resumes on Nov. 8, based on the "misconduct of France" and a failure in diligence and accuracy by French officials.

McGill U to honour Richler

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — McGill University is raising funds to create the Mordecai Richler Writer-in-Residence Program, which aims to "inspire a new generation of writers" and honour one of Montreal's most famous authors.

Richler never attended McGill nor did he graduate from any university, but he was awarded an honorary doctorate of literature from McGill in 2000. He died in July 2001.

The bilingual program is to be located in both the department of English and the département de la langue et littérature françaises in the faculty of arts. Its mandate, however, isn't limited to nurturing novelists.

The program will offer students "an enriching opportunity to study practical and theoretical approaches to writing for such media as television, film, radio, stage, interactive media and print publications."

Richler, who raised a ruckus with his caustic essays on Quebec's language laws, might have found it amusing that he would be memorialized through a program that will also seek to "enhance [the literary translation] program's visibility in the French-speaking cultural community both in Canada and abroad."

McGill hopes to annually attract accomplished Canadian writers from "diverse stylistic and linguistic traditions."

Two writers will be selected each year, who will be paid $37,500 each. They'll be required to teach one course, give public lectures and readings, organize writing workshops, and advise undergraduate and graduate students, with enough time left over to write.

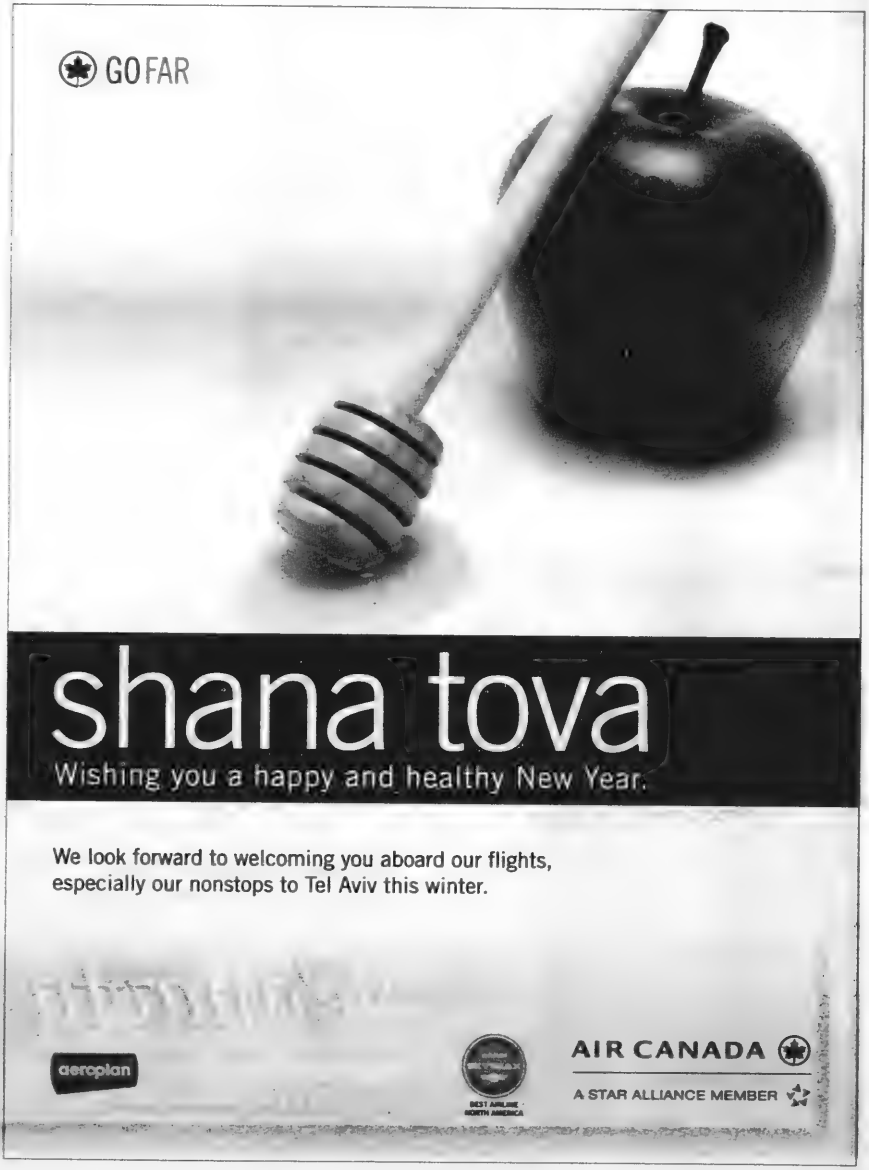
The program, as envisioned, would also provide bursaries to graduate students totaling $40,000 each year, and launch a literary journal.

McGill hopes to raise $2.5 million for the program, and has received $750,000 to date, including a $100,000 donation from Richler's widow, Florence.

That McGill would choose to pay this posthumous tribute is not without irony. Richler chided McGill for its pretentiousness, and when he accepted the honorary degree, he spoke of its quota system for admitting Jews until the late 1940s.

"Housing this position at McGill, in a city where writers from diverse cultural backgrounds flourish, will offer students and academics a unique opportunity to explore the wealth of Canada's distinct literary worlds and celebrate the richness of this diversity," said arts dean Christopher Manfredi.

On Sept. 21, McGill is organizing a "Literary Pub Crawl" to commemorate Richler in a spirit of bonhomie and encourage contributions to the writer-in-residence program.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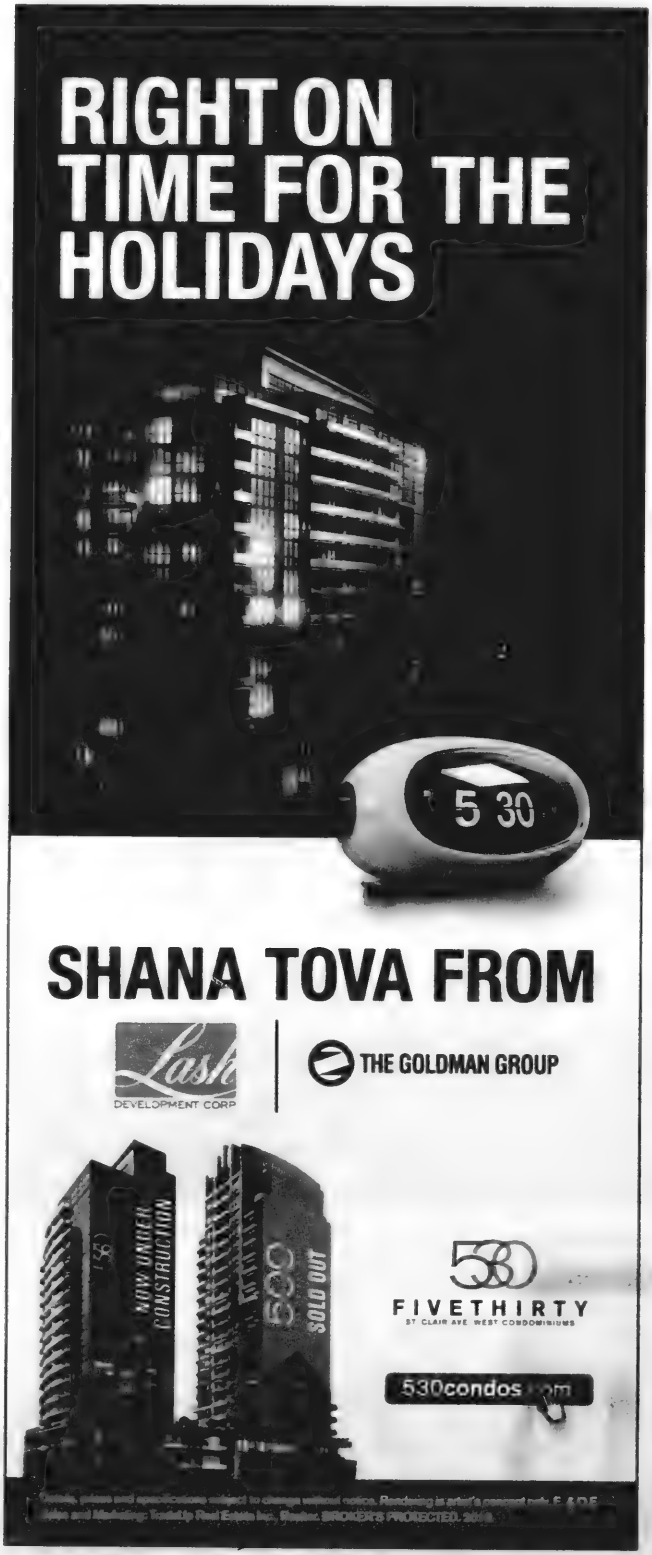

Coast to Coast

Nowhere to go but up?

Recent political changes suggest Washington talks could surprise

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The period leading up to the Netanyahu-Abbas summit in Washington, D.C., starting on Sept. 2, was marked by a surprising discrepancy in tone and content between most news reports, on the one hand, and much commentary on the other.

In general, news items reflected a widespread scepticism that anything positive would or could emerge from the summit. The attitude was that this meeting would be much ado about little, except perhaps to hand U.S. President Barack Obama the appearance of a foreign policy gain in advance of this fall's U.S. Congressional elections where members of his Democratic party are expected to do badly.

Illustrative of a growing tendency in the news to blur the line between fact and opinion, a Reuters report, carried in several Canadian papers on Aug. 30, captured the reigning scepticism with a play on a famous saying by media guru Marshall McLuhan: "It is unclear what, if anything, may come out of [the] talks or whether the meeting itself is the message."

Another theme that dominated much of the reporting was the centrality of Israeli settlements to the very viability of the talks, as if nothing else was at issue.

This focus achieved an outrageous emphasis when the *New York Times*, in a story also carried in the Sept. 1 *Globe and Mail*, reported in the opening paragraph that four Israelis, including a pregnant woman, murdered the day before in the West Bank, "underscored the disruptive role that the issue of Jewish settlements could play in the already fragile negotiations."

This judgment was presented as an objective fact. It was not until two paragraphs later that readers hear the "Israeli" view that Hamas, which claimed responsibility for the attack, "seemed" determined to thwart negotiations "which it virulently opposes." The failure of the *Times* to see Hamas' violent opposition to peace – and to a Israel inside any borders – as *the* salient, objective fact in this tragic affair speaks volumes.

To be sure, there were a few exceptions on the news side to the sheer scepticism about the talks and to the fixation on settlements. For instance, in his Aug. 31 *Winnipeg Free Press* story, Samuel Segev drew attention to how the Washington talks fit into what he views as Obama's developing strategy for the Middle East. Segev wrote, "Despite the low expectations in Israel and among the Palestinians [over the Washington meeting], there nevertheless are some new elements that did not exist in the past: An Arab 'cover' to any concessions that Abbas could make; and, more importantly, an American readiness to offer 'bridging proposals' in case of a stalemate."

But given the reigning negativity on the news side, it was all the more surprising to find a positive outlook for the Washington summit in several prominent commentary pieces – including Martin Indyk (in the *New York Times* and reprinted in the *National Post*) and Aluf Benn in the Aug. 28 *Globe and Mail* ("It's too early to write off direct talks"). Benn, editor-at-large of *Ha'aretz*, argued that the low expectations for the talks actually work to the summit's advantage, as does the fact that recent changes "in the political environment" (consistent with what Segev described) "give peace a better chance" now. In particular, Benn noted that in order to gain Obama's co-operation in dealing with a nuclear Iran, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has had to pay a price, which Benn calls "a Natanz-for-settlements tradeoff."

In a significant departure from conventional wisdom, Benn wrote: "The international media portray Mr. Netanyahu's government as 'hard line,' but examining its actions shows a different picture. The current Israeli government is the most dovish since Yitzhak Rabin's assassination 15 years ago. Mr. Netanyahu has been reluctant to use military force and has slowed settlement growth. Security and economic co-operation with Mr. Abbas' Palestinian Authority is as strong as ever, while Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad is making progress in his bottom-up state-building progress."

Benn is far from being naive or overly sanguine. He acknowledges the "serious obstacles," including in Abbas' camp, that stand in the way of success. Still, he has indicated another side of what is typically presented in one-dimensional form, with all the onus for progress placed on Israel and no expectations made of the Palestinians.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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SPECIAL

Sole Power and Magen Boys join forces for the Showtime Event Expo

In business we often refer to cliché thoughts such as "my slice of the pie", "going for the gold", or "trying to be number one". Business owners are always trying to achieve maximum growth and distance their companies from their competitors. The business of "parties", "entertainment", and DJs" is no different. In fact, it is often more competitive as the big players attempt to distinguish themselves from the pack. That is what makes SHOWTIME so interesting.

For the first time ever, the two largest entertainment forces in Toronto have teamed up for a greater cause. Magen Boys Entertainment owners, Page and Jian Magen, along with Sole Power Productions owner, Abby Tobias, are working together to create "the best trade show this city has ever seen". Gloria Benaim, owner of G Consulting, is the group's third partner and the event's lead coordinator.

While Gloria oversees the day-to-day operations of the event show, Page, Jian, and Abby oversee all the production aspects. Production? I asked the same question. "We want the show to look and feel like an actual party", explains Page Magen. "We want attendees to be able to visualize what an event can look like". "This show is meant to accomplish several goals" says Jian Magen. "We saw that there was a void in the trade show market, so we wanted to create a forum in which we showcase the city's best service providers, truly catering to the needs of Toronto's clientele". The organizers of SHOWTIME promise to do just that as well as introducing many new, unique and unseen exhibitors to clients.

"We are in a unique position based on our background as entertainment company owners, venue owners, and performers. We speak to clients every day, and have a good understanding of their wants and needs" says Abby Tobias. "SHOWTIME will be an event dedicated to providing those things to our attendees". Keep in mind that Sole Power and Magen Boys work with over 1500 events annually combined. No one else in this city can gather input from a base that size and use it to facilitate a trade show and expo like this. Abby also noted that Gloria is not only an Event Planner who often works with Judy Stein Consulting, but also runs a successful venue (Factory Lounge) and has kids of her own for whom she plans parties. "Gloria always offers a unique perspective about what clients are looking for, based on her personal experience".

This group has been creating memories at the city's best parties for the past 10 years. Although competitors, the Magen brothers and Abby have always maintained a close friendship that has finally lead to the birth of SHOWTIME. "We expect to offer one expo event in 2010, and another two to three in 2011" says Gloria. "We have so much to offer and want to give our clients lots of choice. It's important they make informed decisions when planning their upcoming events".

October 6th, 2010 is the date, and Beth Torah Synagogue is the location. SHOWTIME will host close to 100 exhibitors, and the group anticipates over 500 attendees. It's nice to see a group of young people who aren't trying to "have their cake and eat it too, but rather make the cake, dress it up, and then share it with everyone!" I'm excited to drop by Beth Torah on October 6 and have a slice...it's SHOWTIME!

Toronto, Ontario

Aviva and Noam Schalit in New York with city mayor Michael Bloomberg

Meeting Aviva and Noam Schalit

By SAMMY KATZ
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

I arrived in Jerusalem recently with colleagues from the Canadian Network for Israel Affairs. We decided that the first thing we had to do in Israel, before any of our meetings, before visiting friends and family, and even before visiting the Western Wall, was to visit Aviva and Noam Schalit, parents of kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit, at their protest tent outside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's residence in Jerusalem.

The night before our meeting, I lay awake, tossing and turning. All I could think about was, "What if my son or brother was Schalit? Would I have been able to stay strong and cope for four years as the Schalits have?"

Walking toward the tent, I saw sheets draped over the fence of the prime minister's residence. The sheets were covered with thousands of signatures from people who want Schalit to return home. The pictures of Schalit as a child remind you that he could have been your brother, son, grandson, cousin or nephew.

When we walked into the tent, Schalit's parents were sitting alone. The look on their faces was one of four years of exhaustion. When I shook Noam's hand, I was at a loss of words. For months I had planned what I would say if I ever had the chance to meet with the Schalit family. The night before I knew exactly what I would say, but when we met, I realized that I couldn't say anything to bring them relief.

What would an apology for their suffering do? I couldn't possibly say that I understand the pain they are going through. Nearly none of us can. I broke the silence by talking about their other son, Yoel, and how we were excited to meet him.

Draped over a chair in the tent, I saw Gilad's favourite T-shirt, with the words "Reserved for Gilad" printed on it. It was at this point that I almost burst into tears. I decided to stay strong, as the last thing I wanted was the Schalits' comforting me. It was the exact opposite reason for why we visited them.

When we left their tent, I realized that the Schalits have been sitting the world's longest shivah. For more than four years, their son has been in terrorist captivity, and the only time they have "seen" him is in an extremely short video clip released by the terrorists holding him, in which he looks frail.

As Aviva, Noam, Yoel and all those who support them "celebrated" Gilad's 24th birthday this past Aug. 28, all of Am Yisrael must take a moment to reflect; what if he was your son or brother?

Let us all pray with the Schalits when we celebrate Rosh Hashanah and let us pray that Gilad returns home soon and safely.

After all, we are all the Schalits' family.

Sammy Katz is the managing director of the Canadian Network for Israel Affairs, a pro-Israel campus organization.

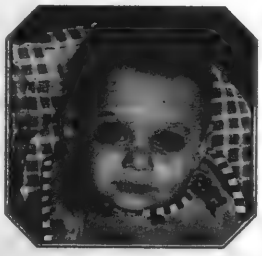
FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

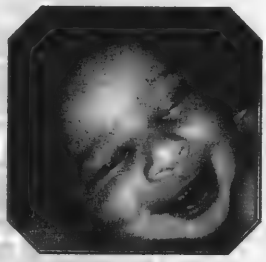
Mazel tov on the engagement of Jennifer Kirsh & Michael Gavendo, from parents Marion & Gary Kirsh and Linda & Leon Gavendo.

Happy 50th to my hubby. Loren, have a wonderful birthday. Love, Lisa, Emma-Belle and all of your family and friends.



Happy first birthday to Samuel Aron Gilbert! We love you so much, Mommy Lindsay & Daddy Adam, and the Goldstein and Gilbert families.

Wishing Asher a very happy fifth birthday - have a great year in SK! Love, Mommy, Daddy, Bob and Trudy.



Jason & Jessica Beitchman are overjoyed at the arrival of Benjamin, born June 25. Benny is welcomed by his brother Nate, and his bubbies, zaidies, uncles and aunts.

Mazel tov on the recent birth of Nechama Shifra to Sima (Ostrov) & Yosef Mendlowitz.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to WWW.CJNEWS.COM and click the Family Moments button!

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Please note holiday deadlines for What's New. Deadline for Sept. 22 is Monday, Sept. 13. Deadline for Sept. 29 is Wednesday, Sept. 15. Deadline for Oct. 7 is Tuesday, Sept. 21. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Saturday, Sept. 11

AN ISOLATED NATION

Rabbi Moshe Stern of Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, 3600 Bathurst St., delivers the Shabbat tshuvah drashah on "The Jewish People: An Isolated Nation." 6 p.m. Men and women welcome.

Monday, Sept. 13

RABBI KROHN SPEAKS

Rabbi Paysach Krohn, author of the Magid series, speaks at the Sam and Sara Kerzner Memorial Lecture. 8 p.m. Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto, 613 Clark Ave. Free.

Tuesday, Sept. 14

PURE MODESTY

Rabbi Yirmi Milevsky of B'nai Torah Congregation, 465 Patricia Ave., lectures on "The Lost Art of Pure Modesty." Sponsored by **Fran** and **David Woolf** in memory of **Max** and **Regina Good**. 7 p.m.

D.A.N.I. HOTLINE

Every Tuesday, D.A.N.I. special needs hotline. 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. 416-638-8457.

CHILD SURVIVOR SPEAKS

Anita Ekstein, child survivor of the Holocaust, on "How Life Changes." Beth David, 55 Yeomans Rd. Sisterhood Hall, 8 p.m. Sisterhood members free, guests $5. Refreshments served.

Other News

HIGH HOLIDAYS

Congregation Shir Libeynu: Join their egalitarian, inclusive, participatory High Holiday services in midtown Toronto (St. Clair W. and Avenue Rd.) Children's programming/care included. Range of membership/ticket fees available. shirlibeynu.ca, 416-465-5488.

Jewish families and singles are invited to attend High Holiday services at **Am Shalom Congregation**. 769 Huronia Rd., Barrie. 705-792-3949. Seating limited.

All are welcome to join **Chabad of Danforth-Beaches** for High Holiday services. Children's program available for ages 3 to 12 (reserve space). No membership, background or affiliation necessary. Suggested donation $180 for all services. 416-809-1365.

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism welcomes the community to their High Holiday services, with powerful readings, poetry and music. Meron Banquet Hall, 1600 Steeles Ave. W. Tickets required. For more info: **Roby**, 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

Tot program offered Sept. 9, 4 p.m. at **Temple Sinai** and Sept. 10, 4.30 p.m. at **North Thornhill Community Centre**: 300 Pleasant Ridge Ave. Children 5 and under are invited to have a Rosh Hashanah experience with **Rabbi Erin Polonsky** and **Cantor Katie Oringel**. Community welcome, no charge. Older siblings welcome. Be prepared to present picture identification at the door. 416-487-3281.

Join **B'Nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel** for services in Oakville. www.bnaishalom.ca, info@bnaishalom.ca, 905-901-9889.

HOLOCAUST GROUPS

The Holocaust Resource program at Baycrest offers support groups: one for child Holocaust survivors, to be held at Baycrest; one for children of Holocaust survivors, to be held at Wagman Centre, and in collaboration with the Miles Nadal JCC, an additional group for children of Holocaust survivors. All groups start in September. For more information, contact **Shoshana Yaakobi**: 416-785-2500, ext. 2271, or syaakobi@baycrest.org.

Continued on page 41

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Continued from page 40

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

Friends of Yiddish launches its new program with its annual membership breakfast, featuring a lecture by historian **Dan Heller** on "Jewish Youth and Inter-generational Conflict in Interwar Poland." Sept. 12, 10 a.m. at Workmen's Circle. Free for paid-up members. Admission for non-members is $15, which can be applied to the cost of membership if it is purchased immediately after the program. 416-736-8073.

SUKKOT AT SOLEL

Solel Congregation of Mississauga invites the public to their family Sukkot program. Sept. 22, 5 p.m. Arts and crafts, decorate the sukkah, service and dinner. $6 per person, $20 for a family. 905-820-5915. Sukkot services continue Sept. 24 at 10 a.m.

SUKKOT CARNIVAL

Sukkot family carnival, Downsview Park. Sept. 26-28, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 35,000 square feet of rides, games, food and prizes for the whole family. $15 all day pass per child ages three to 18. Everyone else free. Proceeds to NCSY Toronto programs. www.ncsy.ca for passes.

MELTON MINI SCHOOL

Fill the gaps in your Jewish knowledge. Two hours once a week, Wednesday evenings or mornings. Primary texts, no homework. Hebrew skills not necessary, but desire to learn is. Loretta, 416-789-7400.

CHORALAIRS

The Choralairs of North York start their new season Sept. 14 at Earl Bales Community Centre, 4169 Bathurst St. Rehearsals are Tuesday evenings, 7:15 to 9:45 p.m. New members always welcome. No auditions required. **Sally**, 416-636-8247 or sallyl@sympatico.ca. **Brian**, 416-631-0029.

YIDDISH FOR ADULTS

Sunday morning Yiddish class for conversation, reading and writing. Beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Prosserman JCC, 4600 Bathurst St. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. $125 for 10 sessions. Starts Sept. 26. **Ester**, 416-635-2883, ext. 5189.

PYNK FUNDRAISER

Temple Har Zion presents local band **GoFreddieGo**, Oct. 23 at 8 p.m. Proceeds from the event support PYNK, Sunnybrook Hospital's young women's breast cancer program and Temple Har Zion projects. $25. Refreshments, cash bar, silent auction, raffles. 905-889-2252 or gofreddiego@bell.net for tickets.

FINANCIAL LITERACY

JVS Toronto offers free workshops in "Financial Literacy for Jewish Agencies." If your agency is interested in hosting financial literacy workshops or would like more information, contact **Allen Stern**. astern@jvstoronto.org or 416-636-2481 ext. 217.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Beth Emeth Leadership Development Program includes seminars, institute-type learning and interactive participation. Open to anyone who feels they can benefit from leadership training. Now accepting applications. Maximum 25 students. Classes begin Oct. 7 and meet monthly on Thursdays from 7-9 p.m. **Rosalie Shadlyn**, 416-633-3838.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC. Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner talks about "Forgiveness: Seeking, Granting and Are There Limits?" Sept. 16, 1:30 p.m. Refreshments served. 416-924-6211 ext. 155.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons for men and women. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. Everyone welcome. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama Sept. 15, departs 10 a.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 p.m. Bingo Tuesdays, Sept. 21, 12:30 to 3 p.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30 p.m. Sunday night dance resumes Sept. 19 at 6-8:30 p.m. Line dancing Thursday resumes Sept. 23 at 10 a.m. **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Membership $25. All welcome.

LZA Senior's Cultural Club. Tuesdays 10 a.m. Discussion group at Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Lecture: "Current Events," with **Doug Haddow.** Sept. 14. 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

Bingo Bonanza, Sept. 15. 1-3 p.m. Two cards for $1.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

New children's programs being offered this fall. Drama Tots and Kinder Tots, Toddler Grooves, Kids Love Tech and Little Superstars pre Shabbat music with **Mark Weinstock**. Visit website for a full list.

High Holiday services with **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein**. Egalitarian, participatory. For tickets: **Karen**, ext. 4255, or kolel@prossermanjcc.com.

Open house, Sept. 12. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Everyone welcome. Register at ext. 4235.

Work out the Brazilian way with Capoeira, a blend of martial arts, sports, dance, culture and philosophy. Held in conjunction with the youth class. Ten per cent off family registration.

Buddy Bootcamp, designed to shock your muscles and make fitness fun. Injury prevention, methods of training, safety and technique are explored. Held in conjunction with youth class.

Tic Tac Two morning program for two-year-olds. Two, three or five mornings per week from September to June. Includes weekly Shabbat program. Limited space left. **Kailah**, ext. 4351.

Planning meeting for Professional Retirees Organization. Sept. 14, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Room 205. RSVP with Janet, ext. 4259.

Register now for fall programs including memoir writing, floral arrangements, jokers club, movie Mondays, and more. For details of all 55+ programs, contact **Janet**: ext. 4259.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel services. Sunday 8 a.m. Thursday 7:15 a.m. Kosher breakfast included. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Celebrate Yom Kippur with First Narayever Congregation at Miles Nadal JCC. Led by **Rabbi David Weiss**. Children's programming, family services and babysitting. $100. Tickets available at front desk, ext. 0, or through the shul: 416-927-0546.

Hebrew conversation table: practise your conversational skills over coffee at MNJCC's Second Cup café. Open to all members of the community. Free with purchase of a beverage or treat. Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Oct. 5-Dec. 14. Registration is also open for beginner and intermediate level Hebrew courses. For info: sharonis@mnjcc.org, ext. 154.

A three-part exploration of Jewish texts in a (nearly) paperless world, with **Dan Mendelsohn Aviv**. Oct. 5: "Torah to Tanakh." Nov. 9: "Talmud Tetris." Dec. 14: "The People of the (Face) Book." $10 each, three sessions for $25. toronto@fmams.org.il, 416-789-7400.

Preschool classes this fall: Sammy's Jewish Year, Shabbat Club, Drama Tots, Now You're Two. Sign up today.

Decorate the MNJCC sukkah with other families. Sept. 26, 12-1:30 p.m. sarahbn@mnjcc.org, ext. 277.

Study music this fall: play in a first-rate klezmer ensemble with **Eric Stein** on Tuesdays starting Oct. 5; "Planet Music" with **Barry Livingston**, Thursdays starting Oct. 14; women's chorus every second Monday, starting Sept. 20.

Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space. **Debra Friedman**, "Teenage: Portraits at the Threshold." Photographic exhibit. To Oct. 8.

Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.kofflerarts.org.

Israeli dance classes for beginners and intermediates. Sept. 20, Prosserman JCC. Beginners 7:30-8:30 p.m. Intermediates 8:30-10 p.m. Intermediate level dancing also at Darchei Noam Synagogue, Tuesday evenings. 8-11 p.m. $7. **Teme Kernerman**, ext. 4364.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

NA'AMAT RETREAT: Na'amat Toronto council members recently took part in a daylong summer retreat at the home of Laurel Wiseman, vice-president of Na'amat Toronto. Programming and fundraising ideas for the coming year were high on the agenda. From left are Wiseman and Doris Wexler-Charow, president of Na'amat Toronto. ***[Mollie Rothman photo]***

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 48

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
ADAM (KARL) SANDERS ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, Sept. 19th at 11:00 a.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Dufferin St. N. of Major Mackenzie
Hebrew Men of England Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the loving memory of our
CAROLE JACOBSON ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, Sept. 12th at 11:30 a.m.
Lambton Cemetery
Hebrew Men of England Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
SAM HENNICK ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, Sept. 12 at 10:00 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Beth Emeth Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling.

To place any other family-related notice, please call at least 10 DAYS prior to the issue date.

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Features

Dealing with scars of terrorism

By MASADA SIEGEL
Special to The CJN

Several things run through your mind at the end of a great adventure seeking beauty in the world, especially when you have quit your job, run out of money and aren't certain where in the world you are headed next. But, a philosophical discussion on the meaning of life with a perfect stranger, no less, certainly is not one of them.

Grant, a member of an elite Australian special forces team was in line behind me at the Sydney airport, when he started talking to me. It was August 2004, and I was returning home after three months of wandering around Australia and New Zealand. He was heading to Wales.

Guest Voice

"Everything happens for a reason," Grant's voice echoed in my head.

"How can you be so sure?" I asked.

"I know it. I've seen it every day of my life, and it's just how the world works," he said confidently.

"How can you believe it?" I wondered. "How do know that things happen for a reason? Maybe things happen and we give them reason, and not the other way round."

A million thoughts swirled in my head, especially Sept. 11.

I vividly remember that day, as I was working for CNN on the Lou Dobbs show *Moneyline*, as a field producer. I had just started and was excited, as financial news was perfect for me, generally low drama.

I distinctly remember a conversation with my father in late Aug. 2001. I said, "I can do this. The markets go up and down, there is no blood and guts in these news stories."

Weeks later, Sept. 11 happened right in front of my eyes. Writing about it today still brings me to tears.

In disbelief, I watched smoke pour out of the enormous gash in one of the World Trade Center buildings. Soon after, the building started to fall. As I watched my brain was screaming, "There are people in that building and you are watching them die and there is nothing you can do." I had never felt such anguish and helplessness.

"Where were you on Sept. 11?" I asked Grant.

"I'll never forget Sept. 11," he said. "My mother died in my arms at the hospital and then my brother and I heard the news."

I couldn't help but think, as I was watching the world falling apart, his world was also falling to pieces thousands of miles away. Soon after, Grant was sent to fight the war in Afghanistan.

I covered the story for two years and my usual happy sunny disposition disappeared. Covering funerals and sad stories daily took its toll. I needed a change and wanted to focus on the good in the world. I read books by the Dalai Lama and every positive person out there I could find. But the book that made the most sense to me was the Australia and New Zealand guidebook. So I did the math, dug into my savings account and booked myself a flight.

In my quest to find a new perspective on life, I climbed glaciers, went whitewater rafting, hiked mountains and was talked into skydiving in New Zealand with my new friend Dave Ellis.

Dave and I bonded immediately after jumping out of a perfectly good airplane 12,000 ft. above the ground. So when he invited me to spend time with him and his girlfriend in Australia, I accepted. I had no plans for this adventure and wanted to see where the world would take me.

One evening in Perth we had dinner with Dave's warm and loving family. His British grandmother, Bette Ellis, told me she met her husband in Jerusalem in 1946. Leonard was in the British military, and they traveled the world together. She was an adventurous lady filled with energy and as a youngster was an avid dancer.

Mesmerized, I listened. On Feb. 28,1967, her world was changed forever. She was severely injured in a terrorist bomb attack in Aden, Yemen. The bomb exploded during a cocktail party. The two women talking to Bette were killed. Her injuries were severe and she was left as a paraplegic: paralysed from the waist down.

The incident shattered the Ellis family. Her youngest son, David, was sent to England to be looked after by Bette's sister. Her husband, Leonard suffered from extreme guilt because he had left Bette at the party as he was called away to work. They eventually divorced and she was left a single parent to three children. Leonard went on to have three nervous breakdowns and died at age 62, from cancer.

In my search for beauty in the world, I had come face-to-face with terrorism more than 40 years later, and saw the effects it had on a family. Once again my heart was ripped to shreds over how one act, one moment in time, can shatter a person and a family forever.

The story stuck with me and I recently emailed Dave's father, Alex, to interview him.

"Thanks for the interest in Mum's story," he wrote. "Yes, the impacts may go on for years and in many cases are difficult to cope with, whereas the public interest tends to be more about the event and the immediate impacts. In many ways, there are almost forgotten victims of such attacks. Mum was a very strong person and led a very active life considering the extent of her injuries. Her story is certainly one of strength and hope, but there is no doubt that many other victims have not fared as well.

"Coincidentally," he continued, "Mum passed away two years ago...The date is very easy for us to remember as it was Sept. 11, 2008."

Wiping away tears, I shook my head in disbelief. I can't help but wonder about the timing.

Although nine years have passed since Sept. 11, for many it is as if it happened yesterday. For even more people, the scars of terrorism will be there for generations.

I don't know if I believe if things happen for a reason, but I do know that giving them reason is all most people can accomplish.

Try taking a moment out of your day, remember the victims of terrorism and try to do something to make the world a better place.

Features

The man behind *The Prime Ministers*

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

JERUSALEM — Yehuda Avner sits behind his desk, surrounded by neat stacks of paper, shelves of files and walls filled with photos and newspaper clippings. He calls this space, a storage locker beneath a building in Jerusalem's Rehavia neighbourhood that he has converted into his office, his "hideaway."

It is in this modest nook that he put together his new less-than-modest 700-page masterpiece, *The Prime Ministers: An Intimate Narrative of Israeli Leadership* (Toby Press).

"This is my little museum," says Avner, 82, who came to Israel in 1947 from Manchester, U.K., when he was 18.

Yehuda Avner

After becoming a founding member of Kibbutz Lavi in the Galilee, he caught a break that landed him in the Foreign Service in the late 1950s. From there, he became secretary and English speechwriter for prime ministers Levi Eshkol and Golda Meir. He was also adviser to prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin, Menachem Begin and Shimon Peres. Avner also held ambassadorships in London, Australia and Ireland, and posts as consul to the Israeli Embassy in New York and Washington.

Avner retired in 1996, when Peres lost the election and Benjamin Netanyahu became prime minister.

Avner's first work, a non-fiction book called *The Young Inheritors – A Portrait of Israel's Children*, published in 1982, was his attempt to get into the minds of the first generation of Israeli-born youth – their ideas on Israel, the Diaspora, Arabs, Jews, secular, religious and other issues.

Avner is confident that *The Prime Ministers*, his second major work, will have a broader readership. Already, it was No. 2 for three months on Steimatsky's English non-fiction bestseller list when it was launched in Israel in March.

The book is a chronological account of Avner's personal experience in Israel, from his arrival to the end of his 40-year diplomatic career. During this time he met, worked closely with and was a fly on the wall around Israel's founding fathers and a foreign minister, Abba Eban, as well as U.S. presidents Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter, U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger, Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat, British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, Princess Diana and the Lubavitcher Rebbe, to name a few.

The book is based on the author's extraordinarily vivid memories and his newspaper clippings, photographs, notebooks, diaries, minutes, speeches, memorandums, letters and classified government material, from Israel and the United States.

"I've got lots of stuff I shouldn't have, and my book is based upon that," says Avner with a coy smile.

For this reason, the book has already become a major source of academic interest, since it contains a great deal of material that has never been published before. That said, a lot of material that Avner wanted to include in the book was cut by the Israeli censor and by a ministerial committee convened to review the first draft.

"The book would have been 100 pages longer if not for the censor," says Avner.

Still, a lot of juicy tidbits remain. One of the more controversial, according to Avner, was the enmity that existed between Rabin and then defence minister Peres over the Entebbe operation in 1976. "I have that in great detail in my book," says Avner. He was also relieved that the censor had the "good sense" to leave in certain encounters between Israeli prime ministers and their American and British counterparts.

Avner's prime objective was not to be scandalous, but instead to provide as clear a window as possible into this critical chunk of Israeli history. "I am hoping every generation will simply learn about these early years," says the father of four. "That is something very important to me."

This is why he wrote the book in the style of an historical novel and less like a textbook.

"I developed my own genre," says Avner, a self-proclaimed obsessive note-taker and diary keeper.

Continued on page 44

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Avner faced challenges in creating book

Continued from page 43

"My task was to pump oxygen into these people, to recreate moments and bring episodes back to life as I remember them."

It took him three years to weave these descriptive moments, often scribbled into a notebook on his bedside table, into a single, cohesive narrative. "In the end, it just came together like Lego."

While the structuring of the book came easily to him, Avner faced other challenges in putting it together. The greatest of these was taking responsibility for his re-creations.

"I took a big risk breathing life back into these characters," he says. "In doing so, I took certain storytelling liberties, without impinging too much, I trust, on historical truth."

While he cannot guarantee that the scowl he describes on a president's face, or the laughter of a prime minister is completely accurate, the approval he received from individuals close to some of his characters – among them Harry Horowitz, a longtime Begin associate, and Rabin's daughter, Dalia – have inspired confidence in Avner that he has succeeded in painting an accurate portrayal. This portrayal gets to the heart of some historical truths, as well as Jewish and Israeli ones.

"When I finished my last sentence, I leaned back, paused, closed my eyes and thought to myself, '60-odd years after the State of Israel is established, and nothing fundamental has changed.'"

For starters, he says, the Palestinian conflict is much in the same place. Setting aside the Muslim-fundamentalist-led conversion of the conflict from a political [Arab vs. Israeli] to a theological [Muslim vs. Jew] one, the core practical issues of a Palestinian-Israeli peace remain the same – lack of trust between parties, final border issues, refugees and the nature of the proposed Palestinian entity.

"If you compare the qualitative natures of the Palestinian state proposed by [current] Prime Minister [Benjamin] Netanyahu today with that presented to [then-Egyptian president Muhammad Anwar El] Sadat by Begin, there is virtually no difference," says Avner, adding that in both cases, the proposed Palestinian entity would have no army and would have its airspace controlled, along with its relations with foreign governments.

"For Begin, it was 'autonomy, plus' and, for Netanyahu, it's 'statehood, minus.'"

The external threats facing the state are also similar. Today's primary threat is from a nuclear Iran, while in Avner's day Israel's existence was threatened by the combined forces of Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

He recalls a meeting he had with Rabin during the Six Day War, in which it was revealed to him that on the morning of June 5, 1967, when Israel sent its air force to destroy Egypt's air force, only six planes remained in Israel to defend the country in the event of a counter-attack.

"I can honestly say that one of the most terrifying periods of my life were the three weeks leading up to the Six Day War," he says. "The nature of the threats may be different, but the fact is that Israel is still confronting an existential threat. The biggest challenge facing Israel today is still survival."

This thought consumed him while drafting the book. "I have grappled much with the question of why. Why it is that after all these decades, our legitimacy is still being questioned and we are virtually isolated in the international community," he says, pointing out that Israel belongs to no geographic entity in the United Nations, to no power bloc such as NATO and to no economic space like the European Union.

"We have nobody in the world that is our natural kith and kin, nobody who will stand by us in natural solidarity. Why is that? It's a philosophic question, it's a diplomatic question, it's a political question and it may also be a religious question."

Avner's explanation of Israel's loneliness among the nations goes to the very crux of Jewish identity.

"Our identity is unique in the family of nations. It begins with the Exodus from Egypt where we entered history as a people, and the giving of the Torah at Sinai where we entered history as a faith. Ever since, we have walked through history with this duality. We are the only ethnic group in the world, in terms of modern statehood, in which we are at one in the same time a people and a religion."

This dichotomy, he says, is as disturbing to Jews as it is to non-Jews and accounts for much of Israel's internal socio-cultural tensions, namely those between the state's religious and secular populations.

"It is an uneasy coexistence," says Avner. "While some would like to see the two components of Jewish identity torn apart, others say no way."

Under the circumstances, he says, Israel has developed remarkably well. "Until 1948, we were the objects of history. Since 1948 forward we became the subjects of history, and for the first time in 20 centuries carried the responsibility of power."

Given that Israel comprises individuals from more than 80 countries, the overwhelming majority from places with no democratic experience, Israeli democracy is a marvel.

Continued on page 49

זה היום עשה ה' נגילה ונשמחה בו

Jewish Community Organizations, Synagogues and Schools join our brothers and sisters in Israel in celebrating a Happy & Healthy New Year 5771. We pray for peace with security and honour.

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Fri. Sept. 17 - 12:00 noon

October 7th Issue
DISPLAY
Tues. Sept. 28 - 12:00 noon
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Global anti-Semitism: a 'crisis of modernity'

By HERSHELL EZRIN

Anti-Semitism may be the oldest hatred, but its resistance to eradication rests upon its purveyors' uncanny ability to reinvent and restate ancient anti-Semitic tropes in new virulent forms. This was one of the key messages I took away from the recent Yale Experts conference examining the rise of a veritable smorgasbord menu of attacks across the globe: from the lingering impacts of Nazi propaganda on Islamist and Arab circles to the 21st-century Holocaust deniers, from the genocidal anti-Semitism espoused by Iranian leaders to the rejection of national states by postmodern academic and feminist circles, from self-hatred to the marriage of convenience of extreme right and left views with respect to Jews and Israel, where frequently no distinction exists.

Hershell Ezrin

With the spread of the Internet and new methods of social media interaction, so-called "digital anti-Semitism" has flourished, aided and abetted by the marginal economics of this new technology.

More than 100 international academic experts met Aug. 23 to 25 to debate causes, trends and potential remedies under the auspices of the Yale Initiative for the Interdisciplinary Study of Anti-Semitism and the International Association for the Study of Anti-Semitism. The conference took as its perspective that global anti-Semitism is a "crisis of modernity." Coming in the months before the November 2010 International Parliamentary Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism to be co-sponsored by the government of Canada and the International Parliamentary Coalition, currently chaired by Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, the deliberations of the Yale conference serve as an important building block for the Ottawa conference.

Last year, a powerful Canadian multi-party delegation headed by Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney played an important role in endorsing the London Declaration, which set out an action plan for countries and parliamentarians to fight the scourge of anti-Semitism. This important work will be advanced in the Ottawa deliberations.

The range of studies and commentary was vast, but certain messages struck home. A common theme is the rejection of the notion that Jews can stop anti-Semitism by changing some of their behaviours or Israel's actions. In a witty keynote address, Prof. Ruth Wisse of Harvard University asked rhetorically "How do we put an end to anti-Semitism? No, really, how do we?" For her, "the situation of the Jew is irrelevant in this political instrumentality… the error is expecting to find within Jews the capacity to fight against anti-Semitism." Citing Jean Paul Sartre, she noted that Jews would have had to be invented if they didn't already exist, as anti-Semitism works by misdirection, with Jews serving as the false cause for other issues. No specific action by Jews will supply a so-called remedial action.

Tony Comper, the former Bank Montreal CEO who, together with his wife Liz, have undertaken groundbreaking work in Canada to launch FAST (Fighting against anti-Semitism together, www.fightingantisemitism.com), has taken the same view. He argues that it is the responsibility of the non-Jewish community to fight this ancient scourge, not Jews. Bringing together some of Canada's most prominent non-Jewish business leaders and refusing to accept financial support from the Jewish community, the Compers have already reached more than 800,000 Canadian school children in an award-winning program that's without parallel elsewhere.

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Parliamentary conference to continue discussion

Continued from page 46

The rise of Islamist anti-Semitism was detailed by several speakers, including Menachem Milson of MEMRI and Jeffrey Herf, author of a troubling study of Nazi propaganda in the Arab world and its after-effects in postwar militant Islam. Milson repeatedly shows that current Arab and Iranian television make no distinction between Jews and Israel. He adds the challenging footnote that often the eyes of the world are blind to Arab anti-Semitism, the messages ignored, because of the implications for "undermining the peace process between Arabs and Israelis." Further, he argues that the Muslim treatment of Jews during the Muslim Golden Age has been used as an inoculation against current-day charges of reverting to anti-Semitism.

While showing the indigenous roots of anti-Semitism in the Qur'an or subsequent liturgical writings (references to Jews as apes and pigs, their attempts to poison the prophet and the stones and trees call to kill the Jews), Milson finds that much has been imported into modern Arab anti-Semitism. From the blood libels of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to Holocaust denial (or the sense that if the Holocaust occurred, Jews deserved to be punished) to the murder of Jesus, the dehumanization and demonization of Jews is clear and consistent. Herf concludes that the rise of Islamism is a "labour of selective tradition" and he, like Milson, laments that there not enough Arab voices ready to oppose any racism, including anti-Semitism. Instead, a double standard is practised of opposition to some forms of racism, such as Islamaphobia, but not others.

In a provocative discussion of trends in worldwide anti-Semitism in 2009, Prof. Dina Porat of Tel Aviv University asks and then rejects the idea that the Arab-Israeli conflict is alone the source of anti-Semitism. She argues that the Middle East is "the match that lights the fire but that the wood [the fuel] for the fire lies elsewhere in the problems of Europe today." Noting that some of the major tracked rises in violent anti-Semitic incidents over the past decade had no ready reference point in Arab-Israeli matters but in other events, such as the first Gulf War, the war in Afghanistan or challenges about the integration of foreign workers in Europe.

Islamist anti-Semitism on agenda

For Porat, the Middle East situation is also used to crystallize identity and capture young people's interest in the Muslim world. Islamists and radical leftists find common cause in their anti-American, anti-globalization, anti-colonialist and anti-fascist agendas. In the search for current-day martyrs such as the Palestinians, the Holocaust is actually inverted and used against Jews as a source of demonization of their actions for people who should know better.

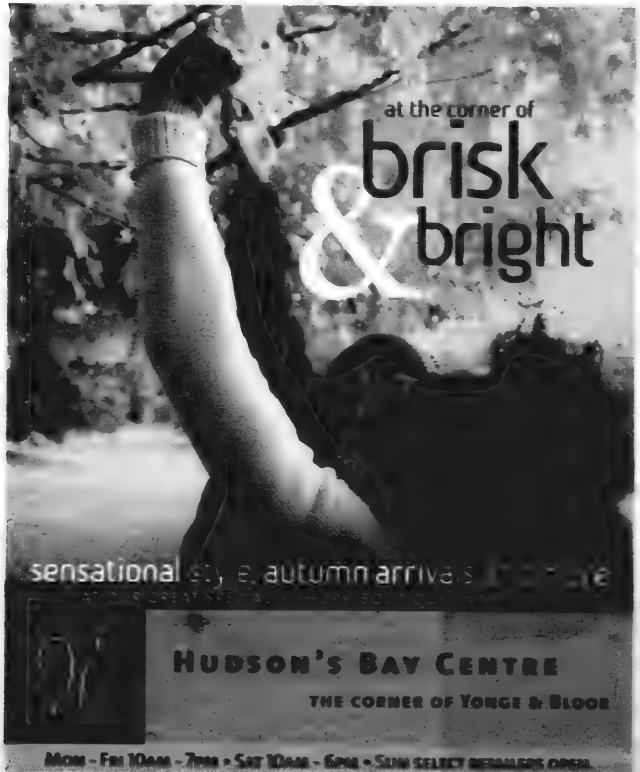
Robert Fine of Sussex University in the United Kingdom, explores the left's belief that its current actions are neither anti-Semitic nor in support of contemporary anti-Semitism in Europe. For the left, political and genocidal anti-Semitism of the 19th and 20th century is tied to a period of European history in which ethnic nationalism and colonialism prevailed. With the emergence of the post-national, post-colonial era (as evidenced in the the emergence of the European Union, for example), anti-Semitism is a spent force, a racism of the past. Anti–Semitism is no longer seen as a problem except for a few right-wing bigots. The new racism that the left must fight is Islamaphobia. In a breathtaking leap of logic, the left is actually hostile to those who currently fight anti-Semitism among the left and charge that it is being wrong-headed. Rejecting the claim that anti-Semitism is present in Europe today, the radical left sees these charges as nothing more than a self-serving reference of a powerful lobby. In the radical left view, current attacks on the left seek to privilege the suffering of the Jews over others' suffering. To this is added the notion that the term anti-Semitism is now abused and overused in order to prevent or censor debate about legitimate issues, such as Israeli actions.

Led by an incisive evening discourse by Cotler on genocidal anti-Semitism as practised by the Iranian leadership and required global actions, several other speakers focused on the uniquely disquieting efforts funded by Iran and channelled through non-state actors to promote and expand anti-Semitism. Phyllis Chesler of the City University of New York animated a provocative panel on the history and psychological roots of anti-Semitism among feminists. Case studies of remedies in disparate parts of the world were presented.

Messages about the strands of evolution of anti-Semitism were clarified. But one of the Yale conferences unique achievements was to allow for a clearer focus on the profound changes in the means of distribution. Rabbi Abraham Cooper of the Simon Wiesenthal Center set out examples of digital anti-Semitism in its hideous manifestations. It was left to one of the founders of the precursors to the Internet, Prof. Abraham Wagner of Columbia University, who ran the U.S. Department of Defence's Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency, to explain the unique power and capability of the Internet and social media to spread hate, free of charge and with a reach and access unparalleled in history.

The themes raised at Yale will continue to be explored in the November parliamentary conference and in the parallel international experts' conference in Ottawa this fall. The focus on remedies and commitments by states and individual leaders who can make a difference suggests the battle to combat anti-Semitism is reaching a new and welcome phase.

Hershell Ezrin was the founding CEO of the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) and is coordinator of the Ottawa International Experts' Forum, to be held Nov. 7 to 9.



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At prayer in the morning

In search of a minyan

By CHERYL APPLEBY JACKSON
Special to The CJN

I have said *Kaddish* twice a day with a minyan since my father's funeral this past February. Mostly, I stand with *chaverim* and my family – my mother, my brother, my sister, and my husband – at Adath Israel Congregation. For three days during the shloshim (the first 30 days of mourning,) I stayed at my daughter's house in the Annex due to renovations in my home and sought the comfort that I was used to among a downtown community that was unfamiliar to me.

My husband was excited to join me for the Minchah/Ma'ariv service the first Wednesday evening at Congregation Anshei Minsk in Kensington Market.

Not only had he had his bar mitzvah there, but it seems we own seats there in perpetuity. When my father-in-law passed away, we inherited seat 12 in the men's section and seat 12 in the women's section, which were purchased by his grandfather. We even found his name on the plaque in the main foyer – he was a president of the synagogue.

The synagogue still looks impressive from the outside, but the entrance during the week through a side door into a dingy basement was disappointing.

The rabbi greeted us warmly, and when he heard that I was the one saying *Kaddish*, he announced to the half dozen men milling about that Minchah/Ma'ariv would take place upstairs in the main sanctuary, not in the basement as was the custom during the week.

I was directed upstairs to the women's balcony, although the only other gentleman who spoke to me – the charming Ben, who we were to see many times in our travels – suggested I just sit at the back or in a separate row of the main floor.

As it was, I was quite content to sit alone, well above the distractions on the main floor. I thought of the many people who had once filled these seats and felt a deep sadness as I looked around at the dust and dirt and grime covering everything.

We waited quite a while for the requisite 10 men, and then began the traditional service.

Thursday morning, I left bright and early for the minyan at the Miles Nadal JCC.

In the course of my research over the preceding days, I had seen a notice in *The CJN* that said to call Coleman Bernstein for information. Coleman assured me that they never lacked a minyan for their regular Thursday morning services, and not only was I welcome, but I should plan to join them for breakfast after the davening.

When I entered the light-filled chapel, a very nice man introduced himself to me as Coleman, while others busied themselves providing us with siddurim and seats.

There was one other woman in a room full of men, who arrived just after we began Shacharit. Everyone was friendly, especially once they learned that I was saying *Kaddish* for my father, who was known to many of the daveners.

I felt a wonderful sense of comfort, being surrounded by kindness and warmth, both during the service and at the kiddush/breakfast afterward.

Feeling at home there, I asked if it would be possible to put together a minyan for Thursday night or Friday morning. Unfortunately, they only met on Thursday mornings and Sunday mornings.

But I was in luck for the following morning. The Markham Street Shul (Congregation Shaarei Tzedek) was organizing a minyan for someone who was completing the 11 months of *Kaddish*, and I would be welcome to join the few men who were going there for Shacharit.

The only minyan I could find for Thursday evening was at the Minsker shul again.

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I was intrigued by 'traditional egalitarian'

Continued from page 48

I went down the stairs, but the rabbi wasn't there and the man with the beard, black suit and tzitzit who greeted me told me to sit in the office behind the door, while the service was held in the basement room.

I was very pleased to see Ben there, because with his support, the minyan was again moved upstairs, and I had the women's section to myself.

The few men seemed to be a cross-section of ages and backgrounds, but I'm not sure, because no one else spoke to me.

Eventually, more men drifted in until there were nine people milling around. I was number 10. We waited and waited, and waited.

Forty-five minutes later, I called my husband, who was driving in from Brampton, to come directly to the synagogue, as we were still waiting for a minyan. We began as he walked in, and I saw below me the men's ranks swell to 10 and then 11 as another latecomer (who had attended Minchah elsewhere at 1 p.m.) joined us for what he thought would be Ma'ariv.

Friday morning, the traditional service started a little late as we waited for the guests for whom the minyan was arranged – but I was welcomed warmly. I sat in the women's pew, which was one of the four sections of wooden benches surrounding the wooden bimah.

Soon I was joined by the wife of the man saying his last *Kaddish* and who was leading the service. Small Jewish world – I had last seen him when we were in Grade 10 together. We enjoyed breakfast and reminiscing, and I was very moved by the words he spoke about his mother, a beloved teacher at Associated Hebrew Schools.

Although there are sometimes Friday night services at other venues, that night the only service, billed as a traditional egalitarian service, was at the First Narayever Congregation, a short walk down Brunswick Avenue. I was intrigued by what "traditional egalitarian" would mean.

The sanctuary was comfortable and renovated, but more importantly, the rabbi was warm and welcoming. A young woman chanted the traditional Shabbat service, and she had a lovely melodious voice. I did find the addition of the Matriarchs to traditional prayers distracting and I'm not sure if I agree with it, but the service as a whole was a pleasant, welcoming way to have Kabalat Shabbat.

The Narayever also has a well-attended Shabbat morning service, followed by a full luncheon/kiddush that everyone is invited to. It was very nice to see families with young children enjoying the service, and the nursery/children's service as well.

As we walked home in the pouring rain, we talked about the downtown Toronto Jewish community as we had experienced it. For Saturday evening, we would be back home at Adath Israel, because there was no minyan to be found south of St. Clair Avenue.

Since our downtown sojourn, we have attended services regularly at Adath Israel, but on occasion at Beth Tzedec Congregation. It is located conveniently, has times that often fit our schedules and never lacks a minyan.

We've also been to Beth Radom Congregation for its 6 p.m. Friday minyan, when Shabbat dinner is held at my daughter's home, and once to Holy Blossom, which is closer to my home and provided grape juice and challah for my four-year-old grandson.

But the warmest and most welcoming minyan is when we make our own on a Friday night at my brother's home, where he provides the 18-year old Scotch for our "l'chaim" l'chaim.

I think of my dad, Moishe Appleby, of blessed memory, and how he was always the first to make a minyan and lead the service for others. There is a succouring that takes place as we say the *Kaddish* together. At that time my father is with us, and his memory sustains us as we say, "Amen."

Cheryl Appleby Jackson is saying Kaddish for her father, Moishe Appleby.

Pioneering spirit still alive and well

Continued from page 44

"As messy as our system is, I wouldn't change it," says Avner. "Every group has its representation, every group has its safety valve."

Israel's political echelon has developed significantly since Avner's arrival. The system has emancipated not only the Sephardi immigrant community but also all minority and new immigrant populations. "Israel's democracy has developed enormously in every way," he says. "I'm talking about freedom of organization, freedom of the press and freedom of political organization."

At the same time, the pioneering Zionist spirit that existed among Diaspora Jews of his day is alive and well today. "You only have to look at the letters-to-the-editor column of the *Jerusalem Post*," he says. Nowhere is this spirit stronger than in the Canadian Jewish community, which Avner visited several times throughout his career.

"I love the Canadian Jewish community. It's a community that has its priorities right in terms of its investment in Jewish education," he says. "Toronto, in particular, is an outstanding community in the Jewish world."

It's communities such as Toronto that give Avner hope for the Jewish future. He's also hopeful about Israel's future. "I see a future of peace," he says, adding that first Iran will have to be neutralized, (and thereby south Lebanon and the Gaza Strip as well) and that it will be necessary to help the Palestinians build their economy and establish their emerging middle class.

"This is a process, a historic process," he says. "It won't lead immediately to peace, but to pragmatic coexistence based on mutual interests, and that is a good start."

As for his own future, Avner predicts another book. "I have another one up here," he says, tapping on his temple. Although he refused to give details, he says he has already begun researching.

Finally, he offers one clue. "Again, I want to take a period and turn it into a story," he says.

The Prime Ministers was released in North America on Sept. 1. Avner tours North America, with a few stops in Canada, from Oct. 19 to Dec. 4. *The Prime Ministers* is available on Amazon and at Judaica stores in Toronto and Montreal. For more information, visit yehudaavner.com.

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Preparing for Rosh Hashanah in Gambia

I'm spiritually, religiously and culturally on my own

By JOSH SCHEINERT

For those who know me, my Jewishness is quite apparent. But that's largely because of my affinity for Jackie Mason, the word *oy*, and knishes. As a mostly secular Jew in a secular society that "gets" Judaism, I haven't had to worry much about "being" Jewish. There's family, Friday nights and the police officers who stopped traffic outside of my shul on High Holidays to help facilitate my Jewish identity.

Recently, I moved to Gambia, a West African country you can't even find on the map, it's so small. Some 90 per cent of the population is Muslim. Ramadan ends the day before Rosh Hashanah.

Instead of the shofar each morning to mark the month of Elul, I hear the muezzin's call to prayer. On the beach, in the hallway outside my office and on sidewalks, one can always see people stopping what they are doing in order to roll out their prayer mats during the day's designated prayer times. A cellphone company is giving away 12 trips to the Haj in Mecca. I don't think I'm eligible.

For the first time in my life I'm somewhere that doesn't "get" Judaism. It's not that I feel lost, or even so out of place. Instead it's something intangible. I'm at once spiritually, religiously and culturally on my own.

I've never had to think so hard before about my Jewish identity, what it means to me and how I'm going to maintain it. I've gotten some assistance on some of the essentials. My cantor at Beth Tikvah Synagogue in Toronto, Tibor Kovari, lent me the entire High Holiday service on CD for me to upload onto iTunes (an Apple first maybe?), and Israel's bookstore gave me a deal on travel-size machzors. And I brought a kippah.

Josh Scheinert

From a religious perspective, I'm equipped. I might be without a minyan, but I have the means to conduct services. Yet, I'm still missing something. What had been growing more and more latent is now making itself known – a desire to be a part of something, a community.

A rabbi might disagree, but it's become apparent that my Judaism is as much about people as it is about God. Sure, God brings people together, but you can't make a brisket for just one person – the leftovers would take weeks to finish – and my Rosh Hashanah includes brisket (my mother's, to be exact). So as the New Year approached, I appreciated more than I ever have before how essential culture is to our religion and how it fosters one's sense of identity.

But please don't take the above as me kvetching about my circumstances. I'm not all that upset. In a way, I think it's kind of neat. Not only am I discovering myself in new ways, but now yom tov candles will glow somewhere new, apples and honey might become a new staple in the Muslim West African diet, and a male goat (there are no rams here) might lose his horns.

Shanah Tovah from Banjul.

Josh Scheinert of Toronto is a visiting lecturer in the faculty of law at the University of The Gambia.

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Face to Face in Washington

Netanyahu, Abbas each give a little on first day of talks

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

Tell us what you want. Now listen to what your partner wants. Now tell us what your partner wants.

In slow, almost excruciating increments, talks between Israelis and Palestinians are taking on the dimensions of a counselling session moderated by the United States.

Heading into a White House dinner last Wednesday evening with President Barack Obama and the Jordanian and Egyptian leaders, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas outlined their bottom lines: security and recognition for the Jewish state, settlement halts and final-status negotiations for Abbas.

By mid-morning Thursday, when they met in the upper reaches of the U.S. State Department beneath the watchful eye of a portrait of Benjamin Franklin in the cavernous room named for the first U.S. secretary of state, it was clear that some mediation had taken place.

PA President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Bejamin Netanyahu establish head to head contact in Washington. *[Moshe Milner / GPO photos]*

Netanyahu was more forthcoming about final-status talks, if not settlements. Abbas was just as adamant about Israeli concessions, but was more forthcoming about understanding Israel's security needs. A little later on, George Mitchell, the top U.S. envoy to the region, took a break from talks with the two leaders to announce that they had agreed to meet in their home region in two weeks, around Sept. 14 or 15, and to follow up with meetings every two weeks afterward.

Mitchell said the first goal was to reach a "framework agreement" that would outline the necessary compromises, and then work out the details that would flesh out a full agreement. Setting a cordial tone was key, he said.

"We have encouraged the parties to be positive in their outlook and in their actions," Mitchell said.

"I believe these two leaders – President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu – are committed to doing what it takes to achieve the right results," Mitchell told reporters, explaining that after the Sept. 14-15 round of talks, negotiation teams, headed by the two leaders, would meet every two weeks.

"They agreed that for these negotiations to succeed, [the talks] must be kept private and treated with sensitivity," Mitchell said, adding that "both Netanyahu and Abbas condemned all forms of violence that target innocent civilians. They reiterated a common goal of two states for two peoples."

"They agreed these negotiations can be completed in one year. They agreed that the logical next step will be working and achieving a frame agreement – establishing a necessary compromise that will lead to the treaty," Mitchell added.

"They agreed that in their actions and statements they will create atmosphere conducive to agreement," the Mideast envoy went on to say.

In her opening remarks at a news conference Thursday morning with the two leaders, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made it sound as if half the battle was getting to the point of talking.

"I know the decision to sit at this table was not easy," Clinton said. "We understand the suspicion and skepticism that so many feel, worn out after years of conflict and frustration."

But Clinton pressed the parties to get to the core issues – the fate of Jerusalem, the Palestinian-Israeli borders, the question of Palestinian refugees – quickly. "We are convinced that if you move forward in good faith and do not waver on behalf of your people, we can resolve all of the core issues within one year," she said.

That remains to be seen, of course. Critics have said that lip service and photo-ops may be the only achievement to come out of this summit and the negotiations that follow. For the time being, merely holding a meeting to launch talks gives each leader something to take back home. Obama will get credit for relaunching direct negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis after a two-year hiatus. Netanyahu will be able to argue to the world and to the Israeli public that he's interested in serious negotiations. If there are gains for the Palestinians, Abbas will be able to show the Palestinians they can wring concessions from Israel by talking, not by violence of the Hamas variety.

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Netanyahu ready to go to core issues

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Netanyahu, who until now has insisted that security and incitement are his more immediate priorities, suggested he's interested in more than the appearance of talks and that he's ready to go to the more vexing core issues.

"The core issues that you described, Madam Secretary, are things we have disagreements on, but we have to get from disagreements to agreement," he said at Thursday's news conference.

Netanyahu, who on Wednesday evening recognized a Palestinian claim to the land of Israel – a breakthrough for the scion of a family and tradition that for decades upheld an exclusive Jewish claim to the land – told Abbas that he "respects" the Palestinian right to sovereignty.

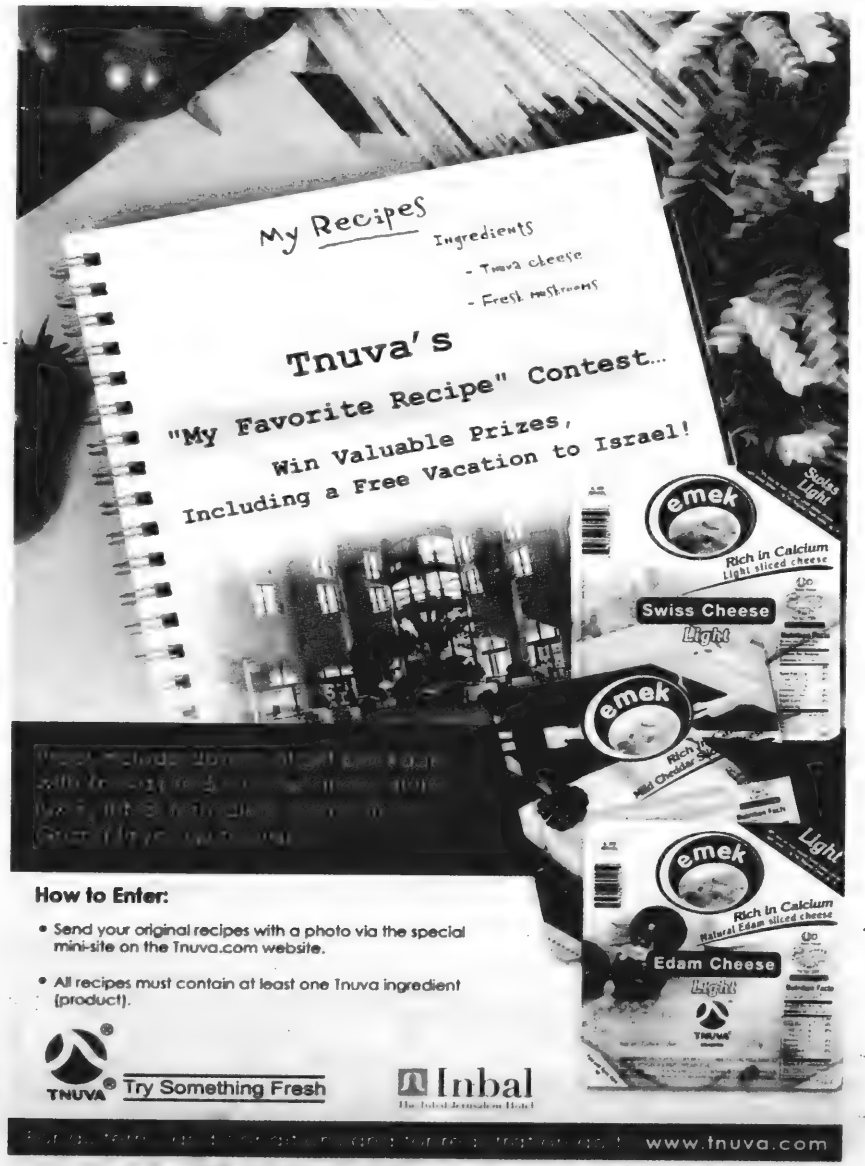
For his part, Abbas, whose remarks at the White House dinner constituted a laundry list of Palestinian plaints, was expansive Thursday morning in acknowledging Israel's security needs, especially in the wake of two terrorist attacks in two days that left four Israeli civilians dead, including a pregnant woman.

"We not only condemned them but also followed on the perpetrators and found the car that was used and arrested those who sold and bought the car," he said, touting the performance of a Palestinian security service he said was still "young." "Security is of essence, it is vital for both of us. We cannot allow for anyone to do anything that would undermine your security and our security."

At the same time, each leader held their ground on significant differences that threaten, even at this early stage, to derail the talks. Abbas has threatened to bolt the talks unless Netanyahu extends a 10-month partial moratorium on settlement building that expires on Sept. 26. Netanyahu has indicated that he will let the moratorium lapse and will not reintroduce it until an agreement is in place. Abbas gave no ground on Netanyahu's demand that Palestinians recognize Israel as a Jewish state, telling him that it was in enough in 1993 that Palestinians recognized Israel. Netanyahu holds that recognition of a Jewish claim is key to ending the Palestinian culture of incitement, which he says is a cause of terrorism. "In this document we give enough to show our intentions are good," Abbas said.

The meetings got started Thursday with a meeting of the two negotiating teams, and then broke up into one meeting between Mitchell, Clinton, Abbas and Netanyahu in Clinton's office, and another between the negotiating teams to work out the details of the mid-September follow-up meeting. After that, Mitchell reported, Abbas and Netanyahu went into a face-to-face meeting.

U.S. President Barack Obama, right, addresses his invited guests, from left, PA President Mahmoud Abbas, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, King Abdullah II of Jordan and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.



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Face to Face in Washington

Abbas fears Hamas could still play spoiler to peace talks

By AMOS HAREL and AVI ISSACHAROFF
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A few seconds after the speeches by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (who said little new), came smiles, a warm handshake and an intimate conversation between the two leaders. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton sat between them, nodding. Netanyahu and Abbas have never before been seen so close to each other.

That may be the main reason for optimism ahead of the expected wrestling match between the two leaders' teams in the negotiations that lie ahead.

Until last Thursday, Netanyahu and Abbas conveyed a sense of mutual contempt. If even the slightest amount of trust has been created between them, this would be the greatest American achievement so far.

But on Sept. 26, the two face a challenge: the end of the construction freeze in the territories. There was consensus in Ramallah yesterday among both Abbas' Fatah party and his inner circle that if the moratorium does not continue, Abbas will not be able to continue the direct talks.

That would mean a prolonged impasse, at least until the next elections in Israel. And for the 75-year-old PA president, it would also deal a blow to his own standing and that of his party in the territories, leading many Palestinians to conclude that Hamas was right and force is the only language Israel understands.

Aware of the huge effort the Islamist group is investing in torpedoing the talks, Abbas told Netanyahu that the PA security forces are doing everything possible to catch the perpetrators of last week's shooting attack near Hebron.

Both Israeli and Palestinian sources said the security forces have a lead to the identity of the perpetrators and last Thursday's dragnet may have captured one of them.

Another positive development is that, unlike in the past, Israel did not blame the PA for the attacks. On the contrary, Israel holds the PA security forces in high esteem.

An Israeli officer who has been following developments said, only half jokingly, that over the past two days, the PA security forces have arrested every Palestinian who said the word Hamas more than twice a day.

Continued on page 55

The parties make their points to each other. From left, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and U.S. envoy George Mitchell. *[Moshe Milner / GPO photos]*

לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו • לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו • לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו •

Face to Face in Washington

Americans said to be pressuring the PA

Continued from page 54

But the PA fears that unknown sleeper cells might perpetrate attacks in the hope of provoking a harsh Israeli response, or settler violence, that would force Abbas to halt the talks.

Over the past few weeks, PA forces have stopped many couriers bringing cash from abroad to Hamas. They are teachers, doctors and merchants. Such people are a real threat to the PA: coming in below its intelligence radar, these individuals could commit the next terror attack.

The money trail reveals that Hamas had been making increasing use of Palestinian businessmen working overseas. They buy merchandise abroad with Hamas money, sell it and give the money to Hamas operatives in the West Bank.

Hamas, for its part, is not even trying to hide its intentions. Last Thursday, senior Hamas official Mahmoud Zahar said the group wants to liberate the West Bank, just as it liberated the Gaza Strip. That means more attacks in the near future.

In related developments, a senior Palestinian source told *Ha'aretz* that the American administration renewed its pressure on Abbas to stay in direct negotiations with Israel, even if some construction in the settlements resumes after the end of the current moratorium. The source warned that Abbas would not be able to agree to a renewal of construction and will be forced to withdraw from the talks.

Netanyahu shakes Abbas' hand as Hillary Clinton looks on

According to the source, a Palestinian OK to the renewal of construction just as direct talks are resumed is politically impossible. Sources in Ramallah said that both the Israelis and Americans know Abbas' likely course of action. At first, Abbas will demand that the talks not last longer than a year, culminating with the establishment of a Palestinian state in the 1967 borders, and with Jerusalem as its capital.

Abbas would not be able to give up Palestinian sovereignty in east Jerusalem and especially the Temple Mount, but large Jewish neighbourhoods would be retained by Israel. If this much is achieved, Abbas will be able to agree that the refugee issue will be resolved primarily within the borders of the new Palestinian state, with only a few tens of thousands receiving Israeli citizenship as a humanitarian gesture.

At the moment, the PA does not seem to be determined to demand Israel take historical responsibility for the refugee problem. In earlier negotiations, the PA traditionally insisted each refugee be allowed to choose from several choices of compensation, including financial remuneration and a return to Israel proper, subject to an agreed quota.

The PA would also agree to a presence of NATO, but not Israel Defence Forces troops, in the West Bank and the Jordan Valley, and would only agree to land swaps at a ratio of 1:1 in size and quality – in other words, it would not agree to swap fertile West Bank lands for Israeli deserts.

A key contention could arise around the future of the large settlement of Ariel. The PA does not believe it can agree to the city being annexed to Israel in a future agreement, since it's located near the middle of the West Bank, cutting into the territorial contiguity of a future state.

However, the PA might agree to allow some settlers to remain as Palestinian citizens and realizes other settlement blocs – Gush Etzion, Maaleh Adumim and the Jewish neighbourhoods around Jerusalem – will remain in Israeli hands in a future agreement.

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Toronto International Film Festival

A preview of TIFF feature films and documentaries

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

A complex Montreal Jewish man looks back at his turbulent life, trying to make sense of it.

Mossad agents embark on a mission to capture a Nazi war criminal.

The ambitious Jewish governor of an important U.S. state resigns following a sensational sex scandal.

A Palestinian mother and an Israeli physician join forces to save her sick baby.

These are among the themes of some of the feature films and documentaries due to be screened at this year's Toronto International Film Festival, which runs from Sept. 9 to 19.

Mordechai Richler's satiric novel, *Barney's Version*, which was published four years before his untimely death in 2001 and is generally considered to be one of his finest works, has finally been brought to the screen.

Directed by Richard Lewis and starring Paul Giamatti as Barney Panofsky, the lead character, *Barney's Version* turns on an impulsive and politically incorrect TV producer who tries to prevent his past from derailing his future.

The Debt, a thriller starring Academy Award winner Helen Mirren and adapted from an Israeli film, unfolds on two levels.

A Nazi war criminal who was supposedly rubbed out by Mossad agents 30 years ago may not have been killed after all, prompting the Mossad to launch a new mission to track him down.

Precious Life, an Israeli documentary by TV journalist Shlomi Eldar, charts the struggle of a Palestinian woman from the Gaza Strip to save her four month-old son, who was born without an immune system.

He will die unless he receives a bone marrow transplant, which can only be performed in an Israeli hospital. Being anti-Israel, the mother's family and friends object to surgery in Israel. The mother herself believes that suicide bombings are legitimate.

These moral and political dilemmas form the heart and soul of *Precious Life*, which was premiered at the Jerusalem Film Festival.

Miral, by Julian Schnabel, opens as a Palestinian woman establishes an orphanage in Jerusalem after the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Thirty years later, a seven-year-old orphan named Miral is admitted. When she is 17, the first Palestinian uprising erupts, forcing her to make an extremely difficult decision hinging on romantic love and ideology.

A scene from *The Matchmaker*

The Israeli Arab actress Hiam Abbass stars as the director of the orphanage, while Freida Pinto (*Slumdog Millionaire*) assumes the role of Miral.

Tears of Gaza, by Norwegian director Vibeke Lokkeberg, graphically examines the human cost of Israel's invasion of Gaza on the lives of its Palestinian inhabitants.

The reason for Israel's military operation, the firing of rockets at Israeli villages and towns near the border by Palestinian rejectionists, is conspicuously missing.

This documentary also looks at Israel's siege of Gaza, which has been controlled by Hamas for the past three years.

Eran Riklis' *The Human Resources Manager*, a tragi-comedy, is set in Israel and is about the manager of an industrial bakery who can only save its reputation by taking a coffin to Romania.

Seasoned Israeli actress Gila Almagor has a starring role.

The Matchmaker, by Avi Nesher, takes place in Haifa in 1968 as a teenaged boy takes a summer job with a Holocaust survivor, who opens his eyes to realities he never imagined.

A tender story of love, loss and survival, *The Matchmaker* is also an exploration of a fledgling country.

The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer chronicles the fall from grace of the ferociously ambitious and hypocritical Jewish governor of New York, who admitted he had used the services of prostitutes.

Alex Gibney's film consists of interviews with Spitzer, the escort he met most often and Spitzer's enemies.

Casino Jack is a biopic of Jack Abramoff, a prominent Washington, D.C. Jewish businessman and lobbyist who went to prison after being convicted of fraud. Currently living in a halfway house, he is due to be released in December.

This docudrama charts the dubious career of a con artist par excellence.

Toronto International Film Festival

Israeli feature film is both sad and comical

Mark Ivanir, right, and Guri Alfi in *The Human Resources Manager*.

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

A suicide bombing in Jerusalem and a burial in Romania

Eran Riklis' *The Human Resources Manager*, which will be screened at the Toronto International Film Festival on Sept. 13, 15 and 19, is framed and defined by these disparate events.

When a Romanian woman named Yulia, an employee of a large bakery in Jerusalem, is killed by a Palestinian terrorist in yet another attack in the second year of the second Palestinian uprising, the company is thrown into disarray.

A newspaper reporter (Guri Alfi) writes a story charging that the bakery exhibited indifference and inhumanity in failing to claim her body at the morgue. The truth is more complicated, of course, but the director of the company, a sober woman with a frown (Gila Almagor), fears that the article will have adverse effects on sales.

She summons the human resources manager (Mark Ivanir), a glum fellow who does not really like his job, and instructs him to clear up the mess as soon as possible to head off a public relations disaster.

After Yulia is positively identified, he makes arrangements for her corpse to be flown to Romania and given a proper burial in her hometown.

Until this point, *The Human Resources Manager* is uniformly gloomy. But after the manager and the pesky reporter arrive in Romania with Yulia's coffin in tow, it veers off temporarily into the realm of comic relief.

The multilingual Israeli consul (Rosina Kambus) who greets them at the ragged airport is both zany and serious.

In breezy and flirtatious tones at odds with her position as a diplomat, she introduces her Romanian boyfriend as the vice-consul (Julian Negulesco).

But in a grim warning of what may lie ahead, she warns the manager that Romania, formerly a Communist country, lies suspended between east and west and is not exactly regarded as a plum posting.

Barely having disembarked from the plane, the manager quickly learns that Romania is not, shall we say, like Canada or Britain.

Sensing that Yulia's body will not be released unless money changes hands, the manager takes the initiative and leaves a bribe with a policeman.

It's clear that rampant corruption is one of the legacies of communism.

Romania itself is depicted as a bleak, forlorn and underdeveloped land of rundown apartment blocks, aging factories and lousy roads.

The manager, in his conscientious effort to track down Yulia's relatives, stumbles upon a dysfunctional family.

Yulia's ex-husband (Bogdan Stanoevitch) hardly has the time of day for him, while her 14-year-old son (Noah Silver), who appears to resent and dislike his father, is scruffy, rebellious, non-communicative and seemingly homeless.

Far from being discouraged by this motley cast of characters, the manager, divorced himself, carries on, determined to lay Yulia to rest.

But troubles loom on the horizon. The supposedly reputable driver of the van who is transporting Yulia's remains cannot proceed after being stopped by the police. Nor, due to a maddening technicality, can the manager inter Yulia in her hometown.

Being resourceful and flexible, the manager, in typical Israeli style, surmounts these transient difficulties. In doing so, he rediscovers his humanity and comes to appreciate qualities such as patience and tolerance.

Alternately sad and quirky, *The Human Resources Manager* is a solidly crafted film, ably directed by Riklis.

He wrings fine performances from the actors, particularly Ivanir, whose hangdog face communicates empathy, shrewdness and world weariness.

Though small in scale and ambition, it is a film with heart.

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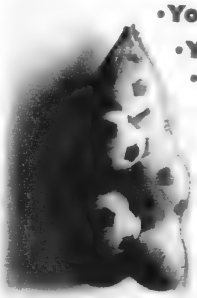

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Short film about wartime hacker

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

Interregnum is a short animated film loosely based on René Carmille, the first known computer hacker, who cracked the Nazi code that marked some of France's population for death during World War II.

It premières at the Toronto International Film Festival this month.

"Their system identified all the Jews they were trying to abduct, all the resistance members, anyone they wanted to target in their complete records," said filmmaker Nick Fox-Gieg about the Nazis' code. By punching holes into a card and feeding it into a machine, the cards could be sorted easily. Punching Column 11 on a person's card indicated that person was slated for execution.

"Carmille figured it out," Fox-Gieg says. "Whatever the reason they wanted to [execute people], those cards had Column 11 in common."

He said the Nazis tried to automate the process but didn't understand the technology. "Essentially this was a giant information technology experiment that backfired from the Nazi point of view."

Since the Nazis lacked training, they were dependent on French clerks to staff offices and prepare and read punch cards, which helped make Carmille's change to the cards successful.

"The remarkable thing is the SS officer overseeing the process would not be able to tell a deadly card from a regular one. The clerks would dump all the cards into a hopper, and the machine would spit out the ones marked for death," said the Toronto-based filmmaker, who created the film after reading Edwin Black's *IBM and the Holocaust*.

Carmille and his co-workers created a system so that people targeted for the death camps would not have Column 11 punched on their card. Their cards could be put through the data system time after time, but would never come out, thanks to his ingenious plan.

Although there is no documentation on how many people Carmille actually saved, Fox-Gieg believes that Carmille must have been partly responsible for saving some people since the number of French Jews who survived the Holocaust was higher than the number in other countries.

"René had many more exploits. This was his last big caper at the end of the Nazi occupation," Fox-Gieg said. "He was so close – he was on the last death camp train out before liberation. Right at the end of the war, his cover was blown, and he was sent to Dachau where he died."

Filmmaker Nick Fox-Gieg

Fox-Gieg was able to compress the remarkable story into six minutes, a requirement for Bravo!FACT funding.

"Bravo was generous in terms of understanding delays. I waited till we had just the right cast," Fox-Gieg said. The cast includes the voice of actor Colm Feore in a dual role.

Interregnum, one of seven Bravo!FACT films in the festival's Short Cuts Canada lineup, screens at the Art Gallery of Ontario's Jackman Hall, Sept. 13 at 6:30 p.m. and Sept. 14 at 5 p.m. Visit www.fox-gieg.com for more information.

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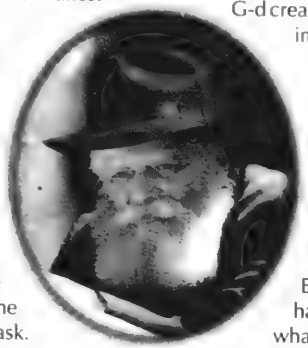
A New Year's Message of
The Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachen M. Schneerson of blessed memory

The eve of a new year calls for self-evaluation and for making the necessary resolutions for the coming year.

Such a "balance sheet" can be valid only if the assessment recognizes the full extent of one's ability.

Only then can one truly regret, the missed opportunities, and resolve to henceforth utilize one's capacities to their fullest extent.



When Adam was created, the Creator immediately apprised him of his powers and told him what his purpose in life would be:

"Replenish the earth, and conquer it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that exist upon the earth (Gen. 1:28)."

Man was given the power to conquer the whole world and to rule over it, on land, at sea and in the air, and he was enjoined so to do; this was his task.

The "world conquest" which was given to man as his task and mission in life, is to elevate the entire Creation.

Needless to say, before a person sets out to conquer the world, he must first conquer himself, through the subjugation of the earthly and mundane within himself. This is attained through actions which are strictly in accordance with the directives of the Torah, the Law of Life - the practical guide in every-day living, so that the material and mundane become permeated and illuminated with the light of the One G-d, our G-d.

G-d created one man and on this single person on earth He imposed the said duty and task. Herein lies the profound, yet clear, directive, namely, that one man - each and every person is potentially capable of "conquering the world".

If a person does not fulfill his task, and does not utilize his inestimable divine powers - it is not merely a personal loss and failure, but something that affects the destiny of the whole world.

Everyone must therefore ask themselves, How much have they accomplished in this direction, and to what extent have they failed, so that they can make the proper resolutions for the coming year.

G-d, Who looks into the heart, upon seeing the determination behind these good resolutions, will send His blessing for their realization in the fullest measure.

With Best wishes for a Happy, Healthy and Sweet New Year!

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Spice of Life

Traditional – and good for your health

By BEVERLY LEVITT
Special to The CJN

This week we usher in one of the happiest days of the Jewish calendar, Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. The holiday begins with a festive erev Rosh Hashanah dinner.

Families attend the first service of the Days of Awe – the 10 holy days when we're called upon to re-examine our lives – to wake up, and not only smell the roses, but plant them for other people to enjoy.

The first day of the Festival of Trumpets is marked by the blowing of the ceremonial shofar and the last ends with its final call – one long note sounding eerily like a human cry – at sundown at the end of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

On this holiest of days, we fast from sunset on Yom Kippur eve to sunset on Yom Kippur day. The idea of fasting is to bring hunger pangs, which make us acutely aware of how difficult it is to face our frailties. And that is why, when the sun goes down and the shofar is blown for the last time, we're almost giddy with spontaneous laughter and shouts of joy, as we wish each other the ultimate greeting for a bright future – Next year in Jerusalem! And we know it's just a matter of moments that we can break our fast and eat.

One of the true miracles of this holiday is that all the mamas and grandmas, even though they've been sitting in synagogue all day with the rest of us, are bustling about the kitchen when we get home. But this evening they'll have a special challenge, because we anticipate the traditional Ashkenazi dishes we were brought up on – recipes handed down from mother to daughter to granddaughter and today, grandson – *l'dor vador, l'dor vador* – from generation to generation.

Although lately, we've been told that our favourite dishes – chopped liver, blintzes with sour cream, cottage cheese and sour cream kugel to name a few – as delicious as they are, go against everything we've come to know about health and nutrition.

Because these recipes were developed in eastern Europe, where there wasn't a variety of fruits, vegetables and herbs, our ancestors created a cuisine made primarily of starch, and then, according to rabbi and cookbook author Gil Marks, they "added cheap cuts of meat, copious amounts of schmaltz (chicken fat), sugar and salt to impart flavour."

Lately, creative Jewish cooks have been adapting traditional Jewish fare into our health conscious lifestyle. "Healthy Jewish cooking is no longer an oxymoron," Marks says.

Marks modifies many traditional holiday recipes in his *The World of Jewish Entertaining* (Simon & Schuster). Instead of emphasizing "big chunks of meat," as the Ashkenazim did, he uses meat sparingly, as a flavouring instead of the main event. He uses a lot of recipes from the Sephardim, (Jews who migrated to areas as diverse as North and South Africa, the Middle East, India, and later to the Mediterranean countries of Spain, Italy, Portugal, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey) where, according to Marks, they use the three main products mentioned in the Bible – grains, wine and olive oil.

As for the traditional Ashkenazi foods, Marks suggests substituting yogurt for sour cream in blintzes, kugels and borscht; using olive oil instead of schmaltz for chopped liver, and even eliminating the liver altogether by substituting vegetables such as mushrooms, onions and string beans. Instead of stuffing chicken with oil-laden bread cubes, he suggests apples and spinach, both traditional for the New Year.

His pièce de-résistance for the High Holidays is his Whole Wheat Challah, which leaves out the eggs and extra fat, using whole wheat, wheat germ and honey to provide moisture. He also suggests sweetening dishes with fruits such as bananas and apples instead of sugar. But he cautions, "You've got to be smart with substitutions. Don't serve a dish just because it's low fat. Experiment until you find the flavour you like. It's actually a very creative process."

Judy Zeidler, author of *The Gourmet Jewish Cook* and *The 30-Minute Kosher Cook*, both (William Morrow) emphasizes eating light on Yom Kippur because it's easier on your system after fasting all day. She serves a plethora of salads, many of which combine fish with fruits and vegetables. One of her favourite combinations is smoked fish with cucumber; it's refreshing and it replenishes salts lost by fasting.

Other favourites are beet salads, and chopped herring or sardine with apples and onions. She also serves cold fruit soups with orange juice at their base, or vegetable soups such as fresh tomato and basil, which, if you get the ingredients at their peak of flavour from the farmers market, is a delight, Zeidler says.

HONEY WHOLE-WHEAT CHALLAH

Source: *The World of Jewish Entertaining* by Gil Marks, Simon & Schuster

Note: If you use dry yeast, the water should be slightly warmer than for fresh yeast.

2 1/4 oz. packages active dry yeast or a 1 oz. cake of fresh yeast
2 1/4 cups warm water for dry yeast
1/3 to 1/2 cup honey
1/4 cup vegetable shortening or oil
1 tbsp. table salt or 4-1/2 tsp. kosher salt
3 1/4 cups whole-wheat flour
about 3-1/4 cups unbleached all purpose flour
1 cup raisins or dried currants (or 1/2 cup raisins and 1/2 cup chopped dried apricots or dates (optional)

Dissolve yeast in 1/2 cup of water. Stir in a teaspoon of honey; let stand until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes. Stir in remaining water, remaining honey, shortening, salt and whole-wheat flour. Beat in enough all-purpose flour, 1/2 cup at a time, to make workable dough. Place on a lightly floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, 10 to 15 minutes. (Lightly oiling your hands before kneading makes whole-wheat dough more manageable.) Knead in dried fruits, if desired. Place in greased large bowl, turning to coat. Cover loosely with plastic wrap or a towel; let rise in a warm, draft-free place until almost double in bulk, about 1-1/2 hours.

Punch down the dough and divide in half or thirds. Shape into rounds, spirals or crowns and place on greased baking sheets. Cover loosely and let rise until double in bulk, about 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 375. Bake until bread is golden brown and sounds hollow when tapped on the bottom, 35 to 45 minutes. Transfer to wire racks and let cool. Makes 2 large or 3 medium loaves.

Continued on page 61

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Spice of Life

Give your meal an Italian touch

Continued from page 60

COLD TOMATO SOUP WITH MOZZARELLA CHEESE

Source: From Judy Zeidler.

This recipe is based on the famous Italian Caprese salad made with tomatoes, mozzarella cheese and basil.

6 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded and pureed (about 3 cups)
2 tbsp. sugar or to taste
1 2 tsp. balsamic vinegar
1 tsp. salt or more to taste
freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 tbsp. minced fresh basil leaves
6 oz. fresh white mozzarella cheese, cut into 1-inch cubes (optional)
1/2 cup diced cucumbers, peeled (1/2 small cucumber)
1/2 cup fresh corn kernels
extra-virgin olive oil, for garnish

Strain the pureed tomatoes into a glass bowl. Add the sugar, balsamic vinegar, salt and pepper. Add the basil and mix thoroughly. Spoon an equal amount of mozzarella, cucumbers and corn kernels into the centre of 6 shallow bowls and ladle some tomato mixture over each. Drizzle with olive oil and serve. Makes 6 servings.

EASY SARDINE SPREAD

It is important to get very high quality sardines for this dish.

2 tins (4 oz. each) sardine fillets, mashed
2 tbsp. sweet red onion, grated
2 hard boiled eggs, grated
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
1 tbsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 tsp. red wine
1/2 tsp. sugar
1 tbsp.fresh dill weed, minced
1 tbsp. fresh chives, minced
pinch of kosher salt and pepper

Combine ingredients and serve with crackers, challah, or fresh vegetables such as cucumber, celery, jicama, tomatoes or Chinese peas.

HOLIDAY VEGETARIAN PATE

1/3 cup shallots, minced
3 plump garlic cloves, minced
olive oil for frying
1 cup mushrooms
1 cup green beans, halved
1/4 cup celery, sliced
1/4 cup Italian parsley
1/4 cup chives
1 cup toasted whole wheat bread crumbs
2 hard boiled eggs, grated
1 tbsp. melted butter
1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp. brandy
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
1 tsp. dried thyme
1/4 tsp. ground cloves
kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Slowly sauté shallots and garlic in olive oil for about 5 minutes. Add mushrooms, green beans, celery and parsley and sauté 5 minutes more or until vegetables are crisp tender. Add the remaining ingredients; mix thoroughly. Turn mixture into a food processor and puree until you like the consistency. Serves 6.

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Spice of Life

Savoury cholent can be a perfect pre-fast meal

By LINDA MOREL
JTA

At a surprise 40th birthday party for a friend, her mother stood at their stove stirring a huge cauldron of simmering stew. The chicken, flanken, potatoes, carrots, dried peas and barley in the pot emitted an aroma that made the offerings prepared by the caterer brought in by my friend's husband pale in comparison.

"This is Lynda's favourite food," her mother said, dipping a ladle into the depth of the pot and asking me to take a taste. I wasn't expecting to swoon.

"What is this?" I asked.

"Cholent, a Sabbath stew," she said. "But in our family, we eat it all the time."

This party, 22 years ago, was the first time I had even heard the word. I immediately asked for her recipe, which I have been making ever since.

With Yom Kippur beginning this year on a Friday, it occurred to me that the best thing to eat before the fast begins would be chicken cholent. Many Jews customarily consume chicken and rice on erev Yom Kippur.

A one-pot meal brimming with nutritious foods, cholent is a traditional Sabbath dish. However, it is usually served for lunch on Saturdays or as a hot meal immediately after the Havdalah service that brings Shabbat to an end.

My friend's mother, who was born in Germany in the 1920s, told me that every Friday before dusk, the Jewish women in their neighbourhood brought pots full of raw stew ingredients to the Jewish bakery. With sundown approaching, the women would place their stew pots in the oven, just minutes before the baker turned off his oven to observe Shabbat.

Over the next 24 hours, the meat, potatoes and barley, which started out swimming in water, turned into a chunky, mouth-watering cholent to be served steaming hot immediately after the Sabbath.

A signature dish of Ashkenazim, cholent can be made from almost anything. One reason is that in the Old Country, Jews were poor and threw any scrap of food they could find into their stews. However, a traditional cholent is made with meat and meat bones, potatoes, beans and barley. More modern recipes for vegetarian cholents dotted with tofu now abound.

Not to be outdone, Sephardim for centuries have prepared spectacular Sabbath stews infused with the most marvelous seasoning.

In Morocco, this style of stew is called tagine, named for the conical pots in which the dish is prepared. Sabbath stews hail from Egypt, Iraq, Syria and any country where Jews have settled.

Jewish women in Morocco traditionally paid a non-Jew to set up a pile of hot coals. Before sundown on the Sabbath, they carried their tagines full of stew ingredients and sunk them into the coals. Guarding against thieves, the non-Jew watched over their food, which barely bubbled on red hot coals that gradually cooled over the course of a full day.

The key to a good cholent, is to gently simmer the medley of ingredients for many hours. Original recipes entailed 24 hours of low-heat cooking. However, many people new to this lengthy preparation are hesitant to keep food on a fire overnight while they are sleeping. Most recipes turn out well after six to eight hours with the right amount of water. Cholent is a flexible and forgiving dish that can be made in crockpots, inside the oven or on a stovetop.

Detractors of cholent, and there only a few, complain that the stews are brown and unappetizing, with ingredients blurring together until they lose their characteristics. Yet, I find the blend of flavours irresistible and have learned that by adding some ingredients with perky colours, such as tomatoes and carrots, you can overcome the potential of ending up with a khaki-coloured meal.

With erev Yom Kippur falling as the Sabbath begins, this one-pot meal is ideal to serve before the fast. A hearty dish that is filling but not fancy, cholent is in line with Yom Kippur's solemn theme. As it can be prepared hours in advance, cholent is a practical dish for home cooks who want to avoid the last-minute rush that often precedes arriving at *Kol Nidrei* services on time.

I suggest serving rice with your stew of choice. It's easy to digest, and rice is a balanced accompaniment to a one-pot meal brimming with vegetables and chicken.

A hearty hot stew on this special night carries the warmth and tradition that our ancestors bestowed on our parents and grandparents as they lit Sabbath candles every Friday evening and once a year atoned for their sins.

A word about water. Most stew recipes do not indicate how much water is needed, which many cooks find maddening. However, it's almost impossible to gauge quantities of water because so many factors influence the result, such as temperature and consistency of the heat and the thickness of the pot.

However, if you add too much water to the pot, you'll end up with soup, which is not a terrible fate. Should this happen, it can be remedied by leaving the pot uncovered and raising the flame to cook off some of the excess water.

If you put too little water into the pot, the ingredients are in danger of drying out or even burning. You can always add more water and stir it to combine evenly.

Keep an eye on the pot to check for water levels. Stir at least once every half hour. Ideally the ingredients in your cholent should yield a thickened gravy. However, it doesn't matter how a cholent turns out because thick or thin, this foolproof dish is always delicious and sustaining.

The following recipes are by Linda Morel.

CHICKEN CHOLENT (Ashkenazi Style)

no-stick vegetable spray, optional
8 skinless chicken thighs
4 sweet potatoes
8 carrots
1 parsnip
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 lb. string beans, cut in half horizontally
1 tbsp. dill, minced
salt to taste
8 tbsp. parsley, minced, optional garnish

Equipment:
Use a large stockpot, preferably of the stick-resistant variety.

Preparation:
If not using a stick-resistant pot, spray its interior generously with no-stick vegetable spray. Rinse chicken under cold water and place in the pot.

Scrape skin from sweet potatoes and cut each into 8 chunks. Scrape carrots and parsnip and cut into 1-in. chunks. To the pot, add the sweet potatoes, carrots, parsnip, onion, garlic string beans and dill.

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Child and spousal support timeline

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 28 years

Question. How long does it normally take from the time of a court date to actually receive payment through the Ontario Government's Family Responsibility Office (FRO)?

Answer. The FRO sends a notice to the employer upon the FRO receiving and registering the "support deduction order" (enforcing the support order). The employer then has 14 days to start making deductions from the next pay period. Employers may remit based on their payroll cycles, which may result in payments being received after the due date specified in the order. If the FRO doesn't know the payer's employer at the time of registration, a pre-authorized payment plan information package is sent to the payer. If the payer returns the form, funds will be taken directly from their bank account on the date they have specified.

Trouble is, if there's a delay in returning the package and the lady who's supposed to be receiving the cash doesn't provide this or other information about income or asset sources, the FRO won't be able to enforce the Order. The FRO does not have an investigative, detective or "forensic accounting" branch that goes out of its way to find someone's source of income or assets. There's no government money for this type of investigative detective work.

Write to your MPP. Until an employer begins deducting support payments or if payments by an employer are interrupted or terminated, it's the payer's direct responsibility to pay. Obviously, the FRO can't forward payments until they've received some information from somebody. It's not public assistance – it's merely a government-run collection agency with little investigative teeth. It will only go after any money that the government might owe the payer, such as for outstanding tax refunds. Or the FRO might stop the payer from driving or travelling outside of Canada by invalidating his driver's license or Passport for non-payment.

Some other reasons why recipients may not receive their support on time include: The employer deducted the payment but had not yet sent it to the FRO; the employer only has to deduct and remit support payments according to its payroll schedule, not your children's feeding schedule; payments sent to the wrong address; payments sent with the wrong case number or misspelled name; direct deposit info for the recipient's bank is invalid; the welfare office takes payments due to the recipient; or money is owed to the FRO because earlier cheques went NSF ("bounced.") Once payment is received by the FRO it is supposed to be sent to the support recipient within 24-48 hours.

On behalf of my family, and all of us at Garfin Zeidenberg, I wish you and your family a happy and healthy New Year.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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Spice of Life

One-pot meals a hit with guests

Continued from page 62

Add enough cold water to just cover the ingredients. They shouldn't slog around in excess water. Gently stir ingredients. Cover the pot and place it on a medium-high flame until the water simmers. Reduce to the lowest possible flame. Let cholent simmer for 6 to 8 hours, or longer if you've got the time, until the gravy thickens. For safety sake, do not leave cholent pot unattended.

Add salt to taste. However, for the erev Yom Kippur meal, use salt sparingly so as not to cause thirst and undue comfort during the fast. Serve over rice in large soup bowls. Garnish with parsley, if using. Yield: 8 servings.

CHICKEN TAGINE (Moroccan Style)

no-stick vegetable spray, optional
8 skinless chicken thighs
4 white potatoes
1 large onion, chopped
1/2 tsp. fresh ginger root, skinned and chopped
1 (28-oz.) can chopped tomatoes
1 (15.5 oz.) can chickpeas
2 or 3 zucchini, diced large
4 tomatoes, chopped
1/2 tsp. ground cumin
2 tsp. ground cinnamon
salt to taste
8 tbsp. cilantro, minced, optional garnish

Equipment:
Use a large stockpot, preferably of the stick-resistant variety.

Preparation:

If not using a stick-resistant pot, spray its interior generously with no-stick vegetable spray. Rinse chicken under cold water and place in the pot.

Scrape skin from potatoes and cut each into 8 chunks. To the pot, add chicken, potatoes, onion, ginger, canned tomatoes, chickpeas, zucchini, chopped tomatoes, cumin and cinnamon.

Add enough cold water to just cover the ingredients, and proceed as with the chicken cholent above.

FOOL-PROOF RICE

3 tbsp. olive oil
2 cups of uncooked rice
4 1/4 cups water
salt to taste

Rice may quadruple in size while cooking, so select a large, deep pot. Heat oil inside the pot on a medium flame for 1-2 minutes. Pour the rice into the pot and stir until each grain of rice is lightly coated with oil.

Add salt and stir to combine. However, for the erev Yom Kippur meal, use salt sparingly so as not to cause thirst and undue discomfort during the fast.

Continue stirring until rice appears translucent, about 2 more minutes. Pour in water and stir again. Cover pot and drop heat to a low flame. Check rice's progress after 10 minutes. If it appears to be soaking up most of the water, add more water 1/4 cup at a time. Stir to combine and cover pot again.

In another 10 to 15 minutes, rice should have absorbed all the water and be ready to eat. Take it off the flame and let it rest for 1-2 minutes in a covered pot. Move immediately into a serving bowl. At the table, spoon rice into individual soup bowls and ladle cholent or tagine on top of it. Yield: 8 servings.

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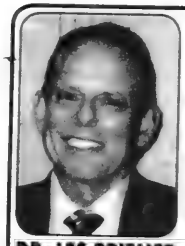
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By HEATHER SOLOMON
Special to The CJN

MONTREAL — It's a cart that looks like no other. Deborah Salmon stacks her books of sheet music in its caddy compartments.

Drawers on one side hold small, egg-like percussion instruments. The other side carries an ocean drum filled with ball bearings that make rushing, wave-like sounds; a tambourine and her flute.

A guitar rides on the front of the cart like a figurehead on a ship, as she pushes the whole contraption down the hallway of the Montreal General Hospital's 10th-floor palliative care unit.

When she stops outside a room, Salmon thoughtfully selects what she feels her patient might enjoy, along with percussion instruments if she or he is able to use them, and she knocks on the door.

It is her job to help alleviate her patients' anxiety, help them cope with their situation, improve their well-being and even regulate their breathing and heart rate.

"I might improvise music in rhythm with their breathing and, if it is quick, slow it down," says the music therapist.

Salmon has been making music for end-of-life patients for 26 years, starting at Montreal's Royal Victoria Hospital where, in the 1960s, Dr. Balfour Mount founded palliative care in North America. When the unit moved to the Montreal General Hospital seven years ago, she followed.

Music has always been her life. Salmon took up piano at age five; the flute in the Wagar High School band and guitar at camp. She pursued the flute seriously at the Conservatoire de musique du Québec à Montréal, where she first met someone who told her about music therapy.

After earning her bachelor of music degree in performance from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, she realized she "didn't like to be alone in a practice room for hours. I missed being with people. I decided to go into music therapy at New York University.

"I wanted the satisfaction of interacting with people who have the emotional and intellectual capacity for insight, able to work with what the music brings up. When this job came along in Montreal, it was perfect."

Salmon will sit at a patient's bedside and ask for requests. She has music for Jewish, Italian, Chinese and various other tastes and encourages family sing-alongs.

Spiritual songs are popular as are tunes from the 1940s and '50s, and timeless classical music. Every patient also has a CD player at her or his bedside and access to a CD library.

Salmon can create an audio CD of the patient talking, improvising music or presenting favourite songs. "They may also want to leave a message for their children or tell the story of their life for their grandchildren, interspersed with music," she says.

Salmon's husband, documentary filmmaker Garry Beitel, has twice involved her in his own projects. She is featured in On Wings of Song, a 43-minute film made in 1999, showing how Salmon works her musical magic. Endnotes, a 51-minute film made for the CBC, is about the palliative unit at the Royal Vic. Excerpts can be seen at http://reframe-films.com/films.html.

"Rather than focusing on the patients' difficulties, I look at what has been precious and meaningful in their life, and music can help take them there. It also stimulates feelings and discussions," she says.

Music therapist Deborah Salmon plays her flute and a range of other instruments to help palliative patients through their last days. *[Heather Solomon photo]*

Salmon is prepared both for music and discussion, since she also has a private practice as a psychotherapist at the Queen Elizabeth Health Complex. She has written scholarly articles and will lecture at a conference in Luxembourg in November.

Qualifications aside, she is able to connect immediately with the patients at the Montreal General Hospital with her gentle manner and the exquisite, soothing sounds she produces on her flute. One exercise Salmon does with them is to help them think of a happy place and, through music, transport them.

She also encourages them to compose their own pieces of music. One woman with ALS, a former musician, picked out a tune using a pointer attached to a headband. Then Salmon played it back fluidly.

Pure joy lit up the woman's face, as she realized her creative productivity was still intact.

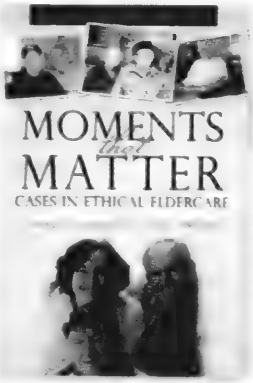
Salmon's music follows through on the one-month and one-year anniversaries after a patient's passing, when she plays for her or his memorial service at the hospital.

"The average patient's stay in the unit is 10 days. When it's a young person in their 20s or a mother with young kids, it's hard for all the staff," says Salmon. "The work can be very sad, but it can be a lot of fun because there's music. We're playing music."

Geriatrician helps families do the right thing

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Dr. Michael Gordon, medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and a *CJN* columnist, wants to help adult children do the right thing for their parents who are in the later stages of life.



In his new book, *Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare*, Gordon uses case histories to provide an ethical framework that family members can use when deciding what is best for their elderly parents.

"A family has to arrive at a place where they can feel at peace with the decisions they've made, and know that those decisions reflect what the parent would have wanted or are in their best interests," said Gordon, who is also a clinical ethicist and professor of medicine at the University of Toronto.

A geriatrician for 36 years, Gordon, whose own father is 98 years old, said he is often asked to get involved with issues that could cause conflict. "I've gotten a wide perspective on what kind of ethical challenges families have to face. It may be the children or spouse of a patient, but certain themes come up again and again."

When families struggle with a decision, he said, "they tell me that they want to do the right thing. When it is all over, they want to be able to live [with their decision.]"

Driving is one of the issues he hears about often, he said. "Most people do not think about the ethics of driving, [but] potential harm to themselves and others overrides personal benefit and convenience."

He has had to recommend that a patient's licence be taken away, he said, "and I'm often challenged about 'why I'm doing this to them.' Like in other public health issues such as the mandatory reporting of certain contagious diseases, society has established the priorities to the public rather than the individual. Safe driving is no different."

It can be especially difficult for family members to report driving problems to the doctor, he said, "but a review of the financial benefits of giving up one's driver's licence and car, and using taxis instead may have some effect on the person."

The matter of driving, he said, is often a prologue to a sequence of challenging decisions.

An often difficult decision is about the best place for an elderly parent to live, Gordon said. "It is not uncommon for a parent to reject help that is suggested by even the closest, most loving children."

He said that one case he dealt with involved a physician's parents who were declining. "The father's problems were primarily physical, for which a great deal of assistance was required for dressing and bathing.

"His wife was developing progressive dementia and refused all help in the home, and would not consider moving."

It was only when the wife fell and required hospitalization, said Gordon, that the husband was admitted as an urgent respite case to a retirement home for a short term while the wife recovered.

He said that when it became clear that the wife needed permanent long-term care, the husband joined her at the same facility.

"Repeated offers of help sometimes change the person's acceptance of what is required, [but] on occasion you can only wait for a crisis to occur, which forces a care situation that resolves the problem for the parent."

Gordon said that one of the most "difficult conundrums you and members of your family might face is what might be perceived as life-maintaining treatment.

"One way around the terrible guilt [of making such a decision] is to decide before initiating such treatment, whenever possible, the framework by which the treatment will be discontinued."

Gordon said he attributes much of his interest in geriatrics to growing up with his grandmother in Brooklyn, N.Y. "She had a profound influence on my life. My deep affection for seniors is due to her impact.

"I always want to hear their stories. I can make a connection with them within a few minutes. I believe in people's stories. It makes them who they are."

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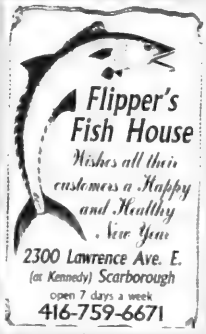
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Iran stages anti-Israel rallies amid peace talks

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JERUSALEM — Egypt has cancelled a visit by Iran's foreign minister to protest comments in which he accused Arab leaders of betrayal for attending the new round of Mideast peace talks in Washington.

Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki had been scheduled to visit Cairo this week for a meeting of Nonaligned Movement members.

Iran has an uneasy relationship with U.S.-allied Arab nations, which have watched Tehran's growing influence in the Middle East with concern because of suspicions over its nuclear program and its support for radical Islamic groups like Hamas and Hezbollah.

Mottaki said Arab leaders who attended the relaunch of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks in Washington this week were "betraying their nations."

"Some leaders... who follow America's orders must understand that they are betraying their nations," Iran's Fars news agency quoted him as saying on Tuesday.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordanian King Abdullah II attended the talks.

Egypt's Foreign Ministry said it summoned Iran's charge d'affaires in Cairo to notify him it was cancelling this week's visit and postponing the Nonaligned meeting.

Iran severed ties with Egypt after it signed a peace deal with Israel in 1979 and provided asylum to Iran's deposed Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Iran called last week on all Iranians to attend nationwide anti-Israeli rallies as direct peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians were launched in Washington.

The late supreme leader of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, grand ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, declared the last Friday of the fasting month of Ramadan as Quds (Jerusalem) Day and called for mass rallies against Israel and in support of the Palestinians.

The rallies this year, which were to be held last Friday, coincided with the first direct Middle East peace talks in almost two years, held in Washington, where U.S. President Barack Obama was hosting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad predicted the talks in Washington would once again fail, because the main demand of the Palestinian people – an end to the Israeli occupation – was once again not being considered.

Iran doesn't recognize Israel's sovereignty and says the only pragmatic option to resolve the Mideast conflict would be a referendum for all Palestinians, including the millions of refugees, to determine their fate.

Suspect arrested in L.A.

JTA

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles police have arrested a suspect in the shooting deaths of three members of the city's Iranian Jewish community.

Harold Yong Park, 31, of Los Angeles, was in possession of several pounds of marijuana when he was arrested last week, according to the *Sacramento Bee*.

Investigators from the L.A. County Sheriff's Department believe that Park stole the marijuana from Pirooz Moussazadeh, 27, and his brother, Shahriar Moussazadeh, 38, and Bernard Khalili, 27, who were shot on the night of Aug. 25 at the brothers' apartment.

Park was arrested during a traffic stop near West Hollywood and booked for possession of marijuana for sale. After interviews with detectives, he was booked for murder and ordered held without bail, according to the *Bee*.

"Our community is shocked by the needless murder of three members of the Iranian Jewish community," Pooya Dayanim, president of the Iranian Jewish Public Affairs Committee, told the *Beverly Hills Courier*.

The men all moved to the United States as young children, Dayanim told the Associated Press.

They were not wealthy and had no criminal pasts, he added.

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Israel Briefs

Four killed, two wounded

Two Israelis were wounded in a West Bank shooting attack Sept. 1, a day after four Israelis were killed in a similar attack. The attack on an Israeli car occurred at the Rimonim Junction east of Ramallah. The couple, in their 30s, was able to get out of the car and hide in a ditch, according to reports. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack and said it would continue its "operations of resistance," Reuters reported. Hamas' armed wing also claimed responsibility for the Aug. 31 shooting attack. Earlier on Sept. 1, hundreds attended the funerals of the four Israelis killed the previous day by a Palestinian faction reportedly trying to scuttle the start of peace talks. Yitzhak Ames, 47, and his wife Tali, 45; Kochava Even-Haim, 37, and Avishai Schindler, 24, all from Beit Hagai in the southern Hebron Hills, were buried on Sept. 1. The Ames couple were the parents of six children ranging in age from 1-1/2 to 19. Even-Haim had an eight-year-old daughter. Palestinian Authority security forces arrested more than 200 Hamas-affiliated suspects in the Hebron area in connection with the shootings. PA President Mahmoud Abbas condemned "all acts that target Palestinian and Israeli civilians," adding that the attack was meant to "disrupt the peace process and can't be regarded as an act of resistance."

NBA players visit Peres

Ten past and present NBA players visited Israeli President Shimon Peres at his Jerusalem office last week. The visit by the hoopsters, under the auspices of the America Israel Public Affairs Committee, generated much excitement in the halls of the President's Residence, with staff members vying to take photos with the players. "We're here to stand in support of Israel," Allan Houston, a former star with the New York Knicks and now in the team's front office, told Peres. Omri Casspi of the Sacramento Kings, the first Israeli to play in the National Basketball Association, was part of the delegation. AIPAC brought the players to Israel to educate them about the U.S.-Israel relationship, since they are influential with the American public, an AIPAC official told the *Jerusalem Post*. Other delegation members included Jerome Williams, David Wood and Dwight Howard Sr., the father of Orlando Magic all-star Dwight Howard, as well as Memphis Grizzlies general manager Chris Wallace.

File from JTA

Anti-Semitism conference set for next month

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The first-ever conference on contemporary Muslim anti-Semitism will be held in New York City next month.

Set to take place at the Doubletree Hotel on Oct. 2 and 3, it is sponsored by, among others, the Middle East Forum and a newly founded publication, *The Journal for the Study of Antisemitism*.

Steven Baum

Steven Baum, the journal's co-editor and author of forthcoming book, *Anti-Semitism Explained*, described it as "the first conference of its kind with top scholars on the subject from around the world."

Among the participants will be Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a Somali writer and lecturer who has denounced Islamic radicalism; Bruce Bawer, the author of *Surrender: Appeasing Islam, Sacrificing Freedom* and Daniel Pipes, the director of the Middle East Forum.

The topics to be discussed run the gamut from Jews and Islam to jihad on the university campus.

Baum said the scholars in attendance share a belief that anti-Semitism is "a social pathology that must be eradicated."

Calling Muslim anti-Semitism "a very serious problem," he claimed that most of the anti-Semitic attacks recorded in Canada last year by B'nai Brith Canada were "Islamist-based."

Some occurred at York University and the University of Toronto, he noted.

Saying that anti-Semitic attacks are on the rise globally, Baum said they tend to increase when Israel launches a military operation.

He claims that the media devotes little attention to anti-Semitism.

"No one wants to hear about it as long as the plight of the Palestinians is on the map," he said in an interview. "The media does not have the capacity for too many morality tales."

If the media really paid attention to anti-Semitism, the massacres in Darfur would take precedence over "Israeli misdeeds" in BBC coverage, he added.

Baum, a United States-based psychologist who grew up in Windsor, Ont. and completed his internship at Sunnybrook Hospital, said he and co-editor Neal Rosenberg conceived *The Journal for the Study of Antisemitism* after a mainstream British magazine rejected an article on Muslim anti-Semitism he had submitted.

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Aussie Jewish leaders sever ties with paper

JTA

SYDNEY, Australia — Jewish leaders in Melbourne have severed ties with the city's major broadsheet newspaper over its treatment of Israel.

Jewish Community Council of Victoria president John Searle and Zionist Council of Victoria president Dr. Danny Lamm issued a joint statement late last month accusing *The Age* newspaper of pursuing a continued "war of words against Israel" and a "clear and consistent vilification of the world's only Jewish state."

The leaders of Victoria's major Jewish bodies said they had addressed the newspaper's "strident line" against Israel on several occasions with Paul Ramadge, the editor-in-chief, but to no avail.

But in an e-mail Aug. 24, Ramadge said because of the complexities of the Middle East conflict, his paper would never be able to report "in a way that pleases both sides all of the time."

While Searle and Lamm said there was no one incident that triggered the severing of ties at this time, the paper's coverage of a Turkish-flagged ship's attempt to break the blockade of Gaza in late May was the final straw.

The newspaper had a correspondent and photographer aboard the flotilla when the Israeli Navy intercepted it on May 31, leading to the deaths of nine Turkish passengers. A subsequent front-page article in *The Age* said the Israeli naval commandos "hunted like hyenas" before "tightening the noose" – language described by the Jewish organizations as "incendiary."

Ramadge said his staff "reported what happened accurately, fairly and to the best of their abilities."

Searle and Lamm said the problem dated back to Ramadge's predecessor, Andrew Jaspan, adding that *The Age's* alleged bias also had the "hopefully unintended by-product of legitimizing anti-Semitism in this country."

"We believe that *The Age's* record speaks for itself," they said. "Quite simply *The Age* is not a friend of our community."

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Jews circumspect about Sarkozy's crackdown

By DEVORAH LAUTER
JTA

PARIS — With a preponderance of voices from the international media, human rights groups, the French clergy and some politicians denouncing French President Nicolas Sarkozy for fuelling negative ethnic stereotypes with his new immigrant-focused security crackdown, many Jewish community representatives in France are taking a more measured stance.

In July, Sarkozy launched some security-related initiatives that included a proposal stripping French nationality from foreign-born individuals who attack police officers and starting a program to rapidly deport Roma – or Gypsy – migrants to Romania and Bulgaria. The French leader also is dismantling hundreds of illegal Roma homes in shantytowns in France.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy

Sarkozy says the government is merely upholding French and European law, not "stigmatizing." But critics say Sarkozy is pitting communities against one another and violating the French constitution. Some have gone so far as to compare Sarkozy's policies with the Nazis' treatment of the Jews, calling it a tactic for gaining support from the far-right National Front Party.

Jewish community organizational leaders have tried to take a more diplomatic course regarding the controversial policies of a president who, as interior minister during a wave of anti-Semitism in France in 2002-04, took a hard line against those who posed a security risk to French Jews.

At first the community leaders sat out what has evolved into a major political storm for the government. Now some are responding, but their divergent responses reflect the divisions among French Jews about the efficacy of Sarkozy's proposals.

France's main Jewish umbrella group, the CRIF, has not put out any statement on Sarkozy's new policies. But in an interview with JTA, CRIF president Richard Prasquier said he supports the idea of expelling illegal Roma from the country and that the idea of denaturalizing certain foreign-born criminals is "understandable" if they are guilty of attacking officers.

Prasquier warned, however, against allowing prejudice to develop against Roma migrants who are French citizens.

"When we become French citizens, it must be merited," he said.

In explaining Jewish reticence to weigh in on the matter, Marc Knobel, the editor of CRIF's newsletter, said that "Jewish institutions are generally more discreet when handling questions that mostly concern the French."

The tepid reaction from Jewish officialdom has upset some Jews here.

"I think it's the role of the Jewish community to be heard," said Patrick Klugman, a member of the CRIF director's committee and co-founder of JCall, a European-wide group that supports pressuring Israel into cutting a two-state deal with the Palestinians.

Jewish leaders traditionally were "reminders of the principles of equality," Klugman said. Now, "I notice that almost all of French society has criticized Sarkozy, except the Jewish community."

Catholic leaders have not been silent as Sarkozy has dismantled Roma shantytowns and deported Roma.

With Sarkozy's security program, "an unhealthy climate has developed in our country," André Vingt-Trois, the archbishop of Paris, told French radio last week.

One Catholic priest returned his national medal of honour to protest Sarkozy's policies.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance said it's "deeply concerned" about the treatment of Roma in France and warned that Sarkozy's "government has taken action stigmatizing Roma migrants" who "are held collectively responsible for criminal offences."

"Government policies or legislative proposals that are grounded in discrimination on ethnic grounds are impermissible and run counter to legal obligations binding on all Council of Europe member States," the commission said in a statement.

France's chief rabbi, Gilles Bernheim, was more circumspect.

"This affair is not easy," he said. "It requires both moderation and firmness."

While Rabbi Bernheim said he hoped decisions on security "are made case by case, and that we never stigmatize a community," he also voiced support for Sarkozy's tough-cop proposals.

"I haven't forgotten that there's a real war that has been established against the police, against the forces of order, and when I see the violence that is exercised against the representatives of public order, I tell myself that we also need firmness to react to that," he said.

Like Jewish officials, most official Muslim community representatives, traditionally reluctant to publicly comment on French policy that does not refer directly to their community, also have stayed quiet about Sarkozy's security plans.

The new security measures were announced following two separate incidents of violent skirmishes between youth, believed to be partly of immigrant origin, and the police, plus a case involving violence by some Roma migrants who appeared to be French citizens.

Sarkozy's new policy proposals include denaturalizing those who attack public officials if they had become French fewer than 10 years before committing the crime, and denying automatic citizenship to immigrant youth approaching the age of eligibility but who are "anchored" in criminal activity.

He is also dismantling Roma encampments that include people of Roma origin who are French citizens and has proposed legislation that will make it more difficult for deported Roma to return to France.

Roma have been subject to discrimination throughout Europe for decades, and hundreds of thousands were exterminated in Nazi death camps. Roma rights groups say Sarkozy's new policies paint them as criminals.

Alain Finkielkraut, a leading French Jewish intellectual, said the attacks against Sarkozy's policies are politically motivated and overreactions.

"I'm happy that for the moment the Jewish community has refused to give in to this critical rush of enthusiasm," he said, adding that the current media storm had "lost sight" of Sarkozy's intention: to curb crime.

Teacher suspended over Shoah lessons

JTA

PARIS — A French high school teacher was suspended for spending too much class time on the Holocaust.

History teacher Catherine Pederzoli, 58, was suspended for four months after inspectors reported that she spent too much time teaching the Holocaust and organizing school trips to former concentration camps in Poland and the Czech Republic.

The district's general inspection report for the Henri-Loritz public high school in the northeastern French town of Nancy said Pederzoli "lacked obligations for reserve, neutrality and secularism," and "exploited students" by "brainwashing." Her focus on the subject of the Holocaust and planning trips to concentration camps took time away from teaching other subjects, according to the report.

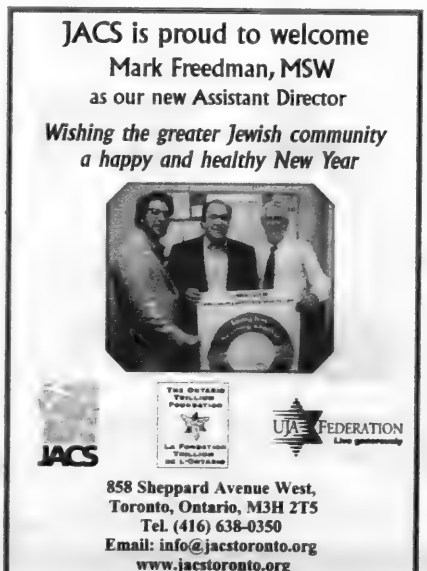
Pederzoli's lawyer, Christine Tadic, filed a complaint Tuesday to block the school district's decision, and told the French media her client is the victim of anti-Semitism.

"Isn't the fault this teacher committed is that she is Jewish?" Tadic told the French news agency AFP.

District authorities requested an inspection into Pederzoli's teaching practices following a protest by her students, who demanded that the number of people allowed to participate in school trips to concentration camps not be reduced as planned by school authorities, according to French reports.

The inspectors criticized Pederzoli in their report for using the word "Shoah" 14 times, "whereas the term that is both neutral and judicially sound, 'genocide,' was only mentioned twice, as if in passing." AFP obtained the report.

The school district for the towns of Nancy and Metz based their decision to suspend the teacher on the report, but claimed in a statement Tuesday that the suspension "had no relation to the subject of teaching history and the memory of the Shoah, to which national education is very attached."



And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Fashion graphic designer moonlights as an entertainment reporter in L.A.

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

Some five years ago, a Thornhill, Ont., native took a huge leap. Sheri Nadel, a fashion graphic designer, had been working for companies such as YM Inc., which owns Stitches and Urban Planet, and Fairweather, when she decided that she was up against a brick wall.

Sheri Nadel

"As a fashion person, you're like, 'Now what?' It's either New York or Los Angeles," said Nadel, 31, a graduate of Ryerson University's fashion and marketing program, where she learned to design prints and textiles for clothes. "I started applying to companies in New York, because L.A. was too far. I have family in New York."

While applying for jobs, Nadel went to a job fair, where she interviewed with everyone and anyone, including BCBG Max Azria, a clothing company whose global headquarters are located in Los Angeles.

"They said, 'We'll fly you in for an interview.' I went, and I got the job. They said, 'The job's yours if you're here in three weeks. I did not know one person in L.A.... I'm so close to my parents and my brother, it was hard," she said.

But Nadel knew that she had to take the risk.

"I said, 'Forget it. I'm just going to go... you live once. That's why you do it," she said.

Nadel designed prints for BCBG for about three years. Her job included tracking down the latest fashions in Paris, Hong Kong or Vegas.

"I shop the market, see what's hot. I'm shopping for my company," said Nadel, adding that she combines her natural fashion instincts with research and foreign shopping to stay on top of current styles.

Nadel eventually left BCBG to work for a private label, where she's a fashion graphic designer/stylist.

But fashion wasn't enough for the Canadian. Since childhood, Nadel had been interested in acting. In high school, Nadel studied theatre and dance, making sure to participate in any school fashion show she could.

"I wanted to go to acting school, but my Jewish mother was like, 'You need a backup degree.'"

So Nadel did acting on the side, auditioning for roles in Los Angeles whenever she could. Every now and then, the auditions would pay off. Nadel has had roles in *Relic Hunter, Style by Jury* and *Electric Circus*, in which she was a dancer. But, as the designer learned in Los Angeles, nothing pays off more than networking.

"You can be pretty smart, but if you're not good at networking, you'll have a hard time."

Nadel learned this at a fashion show, where she noticed a few entertainment reporters and started up a conversation with one. At the end of the conversation, she got a business card for Real TV Films, an entertainment company that posts celebrity interviews online. Eventually, Nadel sent the organization a demo reel and was asked to come in for a group entertainment-reporter audition.

"I did about five interviews live on camera... the first time, it's nerve-racking," she said. But Nadel got past her nerves.

"I [thought], 'I'll just be myself. I'll talk to these people like they're my friends," she said of the celebrities she interviewed.

And it paid off. Right now, Nadel works as a fashion graphics designer by day and a freelance entertainment reporter/host for Real TV Films at night. She's interviewed Sylvester Stallone, Adrien Brody, Vivica A. Fox and Eric Roberts. Some of them have been a little intimidating.

Sheri Nadel, a freelance entertainment reporter, recently covered an event for Fox News 11.

"We've been to the big red carpets and interviewed the big A-listers. It can be nerve-racking... Some are friendly, some aren't. You have to know how to break them down," she said.

Nadel has to walk a fine line while interviewing celebrities.

"You have to watch what you ask...[but] as a reporter, I'd like to say I'm in control. It's my job to redirect them. They're the star, but you have to know where to cut them [off]," she said.

One of Nadel's most difficult experiences on the red carpet happened when she interviewed Samuel L. Jackson.

"I prepared for him, I looked him up on IMDB," she said. "He comes rolling down the carpet, he seems talkative, but when I tried to break the ice, I got one-word answers. I'm thinking, 'Oh my God, you're on camera. There's press everywhere.' You have to be quick. I'm like, 'I gotta make this guy laugh.'"

So, thinking on her feet, Nadel reached for an easy question.

"[I thought] we're two people, let's just talk... I asked, 'Who are you wearing?' He's like, 'Who are you wearing?' I said, 'Speechless [a fashion label] because I like to make people speechless.'" And he laughed.

"He was really cool after that. He was a hard one to crack," Nadel said.

Through her Hollywood connections, Nadel has walked red carpets as a guest, been to magician Harry Houdini's house and partied at the Playboy Mansion.

"I've been way too many times. Usually, if it's a big party, girls have to submit pictures of themselves – head shots and full body shots," she said.

Most recently, the entertainment reporter worked for Fox News, even though she only found out about the opportunity the day of the event.

"I got the call at 4:30. They said, 'We need you here in two hours.'"

This was a problem. Nadel was at work at the time, an hour away from the event.

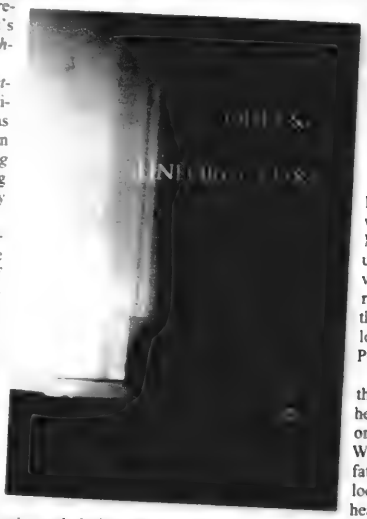
"I had to make it happen. I drove an hour home, got ready and I was there 7 p.m. on the dot," she said. "Everyone came to me because I had the Fox News mike in my hand."

For more information about Nadel, visit her blog at www.thegossipjunkie.com.

Tales of mystery and imagination

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Sylvia Maultash Warsh, the author of three mystery novels, now deftly turns her pen to a literary novel about a student in Toronto researching her thesis on E.J. Pratt's epic poem *Brébeuf and His Brethren*.



Although *The Queen of Unforgetting* is not a whodunit as her previous acclaimed works are – she has won an Edgar Allen Poe Award – in a way, *The Queen of Unforgetting* is still a mystery novel, exploring secrets that lie buried in the murky waters of the protaganist's past.

The novel begins with Mel Montrose nervously approaching the University of Toronto office of famed literary critic Northrop Frye to see if he would be her thesis adviser. With his assent, Mel then decides to spend the summer working at the reconstructed fort at Sainte-Marie Among the Hurons in order to research the life of the Jesuit missionary Jean de Brébeuf..

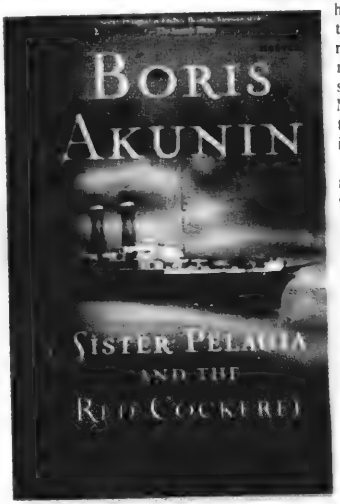
But Mel brings a lot more baggage with her than her typewriter and scholarly notes. The fort is located close to her hometown of Midland, Ont., where her parents, whom she's been estranged from, still live. And she's being stalked by fellow student Hugh, whom she briefly dated. Hugh has become obsessed with her and threatens to reveal a secret about her that could destroy her academic career.

At first things go well. She rents a room at a house away from her parent's neighbourhood. She enjoys her work as a tour guide at the fort and has plenty of time to work on her thesis outline. She also finds herself the object of attention of Jonathan, a tall, handsome man who's playing the role of Brébeuf in a historical play being put on at the fort.

But to her dismay, Hugh follows her to Midland and finds out where she's boarding. Mel is forced to take refuge at her parents' home, where we find out Mel is really Malka Rosenberg, the daughter of two Holocaust survivors from Poland.

When she brings Jonathan home, her father says he reminds him of someone he knew in the war. When Jonathan presses, her father begins to reveal Holocaust stories Mel never heard before. Like her, both her parents have long-repressed secrets and guilt buried in their past.

There is another narrative in this book. Occasionally, Mel puts aside her thesis to write her own version of the Brébeuf tale. Much of the historical evidence that exists from this period is based on the letters the Jesuits sent back to France. These letters don't tell the whole truth, since they were written with a positive spin so the people back home would continue their financial and moral support of the mission. As a diversion from her thesis, Mel decides to rewrite the story the way she imagines it happened.



Her tale of the missionaries, who were known as Black Robes, their hardships and eventual martyrdom deep in Huron territory is described in full grisly detail and is an interesting side plot. The massacre of the Hurons at the hands of the Iroquois neatly parallels the destruction of the Jews in Warsaw.

As a literary novel, and one about an English graduate student, this book is full of obvious literary devices including symbolism, foreshadowing, mixed metaphors, water imagery and pathetic fallacy. An English teacher's wet dream.

The Queen of Unforgetting (Cormorant Books) is a well-told story that reveals its secrets slowly, with everything coming to a head in a fast-paced climactic, bloody and, of course, highly symbolic ending.

***

Boris Akunin is the pen name of Grigory Chkhartishvili, a popular writer from the Republic of Georgia, the son of a Jewish mother. He's written dozens of novels in Russian, some of which have been translated into English.

Akunin is primarily known for his classic-style mystery novels that take place in late 19th-century Russia. Imagine Dostoevsky writing Agatha Christie novels. There are currently two series of books translated – the Fandorin mysteries and the Sister Pelagia books. Although Judaism is hinted at on occasion in some of these books, Israel and Judaism play a major role in the last of three Sister Pelagia books, *Sister Pelagia and the Red Cockerel* (Random House).

Sister Pelagia is a Russian Orthodox nun with a penchant for solving crimes, often in disguise and with a pair of deadly knitting needles hidden beneath her clothes.

In *The Red Cockerel*, a Russian Messianic figure is murdered on a boat to Jerusalem. Sister Pelagia's trail of a strange cult that converts Russian Orthodox worshippers to Judaism takes her to Palestine, where she travels the length and breadth of the Holy Land.

From Russia, she sails to the Port of Jaffa and then rides on to Gaza. From there she hires a coach to take her across the Judean desert to Sodom, where a bizarre Zionist cult has set up a colony and finally on to Jerusalem and the climax at the Mount of Olives.

Russian nationalist anti-Semitic groups are featured prominently in the plot.

Sister Pelagia and the Red Cockerel is a funny, clever mystery novel written in 19th-century Russian style. Akunin's fiction will appeal to lovers of Russian literature as well as those who enjoy mystery novels.

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Arts & Travel

Humour first, magic second for Toronto magician

Jason Palter

By CARA STERN
CJN Intern

At a time when the economy is at a low point, entertainment is especially important, says magician Jason Palter.

"My feeling is that it's especially in these times that you don't want to skimp on these entertainments," says the award-winning performer, who prides himself on his ability to make people laugh in addition to "mystifying" them with his tricks.

"I'm a firm believer that anybody could do the trick," he says, but not everybody can pick up the microphone and make people have a good time.

"Even if you figure out everything I did, my first response will be, 'Well, did you have fun? Did you laugh?'" he says. "Most magicians baffle first, entertain second, but I think entertain first and mystify second."

He started a business called Mystivate, a combination of mystify and motivate, which essentially defines his company's goals.

"They're being mystified while they're being motivated, so they're being mystivated," he says, with much enthusiasm coming through in his voice.

He performs for private events, as well as corporate gatherings, product launches, trade shows and anything else that involves entertainment. He stresses the importance of providing good entertainment.

"The next week, people are not talking about the food," he says. "They're talking about the entertainment, and they're talking about the speaker of wonderment."

Palter is a winner of the Canadian Event Industry Entertainer of the Year Award. He speaks energetically, seeming to get excited over everything he talks about. He says he absolutely loves his work and has much fun performing.

He recently performed at a fundraiser for Markham Stouffville Hospital and its expansion at the Markham Theatre. He says at one point, he had an audience member on stage whose comments made him laugh during his performance.

He says one of the things he loves about magic is the fact that it transcends language barriers because it's so visual.

"It doesn't matter which language you speak, that card you just picked has appeared in the deck, or those ropes that you just cut have reappeared," he says. "It doesn't matter what language it is, you're going to laugh."

These kinds of tricks spice up an event and seem quite unique for formal events. For example, he said at a wedding, he might chop the bride in half.

His magic ranges from close-up magic to stage magic, and he has also coached actors on how to do magic in their movies and television shows.He worked with Al Pacino in *The Recruit* and Alec Baldwin in *Thomas the Magic Railroad*.

With Baldwin, there wasn't enough time for the actor to master the trick, so it's actually Palter's hands in the movie doing the trick.

He credits his background in acting, as well as his major in radio and television at Ryerson University, as giving him a leg-up in the field because he understands what it takes to film a scene, since the lighting and camera angles create new challenges for making the trick look natural.

"Magic has to look like Harry Potter," he says. "Sure, he waves his wand, but it's supposed to happen, that it's a natural law. It just occurs, it's magic."

Palter became hooked on magic when he got his first magic set when he was nine years old. At 10 years old, he performed his first paid show – for $3.

"It was fun! I love the reaction, and I love the sense of wonderment," he says. Since then, he has continued to perform, and it has taken him through university, buying a house and paying his bills.

It's the comedy and entertainment aspect of a show that makes him stand out.

And in the end, magic is an art, and art is subjective, he says. "My style of doing the art is laughing, it's making someone laugh, and that's what I've always liked."

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Widely travelled musician is comfortable on the road

By CARA STERN
CJN Intern

It took four years for Dave Borins to reach his 100th gig, but only a year and a half to play 150 more.

"I think I gained a lot of confidence that night," Borins, 27, says of his 100th performance, which took place at Hugh's Room in Toronto in January 2009.

He's done all of this, as well as released two albums. He said his do-it-yourself mentality can make recording and performing difficult but also really exciting. He's a big believer in working hard, and he has learned that he can choose what he wants to do, and that his decisions directly affect his life.

"If I put a lot of work into a project, it's going to turn out," he says.

He performed solo at Hugh's Room until his 100th concert, when a six-piece band joined him on stage, an addition that has continued at his Toronto shows since.

"Since [the 100th show], I've been on the road a lot, which has changed everything," he says. "If you sit on your ass at one place, you don't get anywhere."

And he's definitely not one to stay in one place. He's travelled to many countries – never to Europe, but to the less commonly travelled countries, such as Indonesia. As a child, he often travelled with his father, Mel, a family and holistic doctor, musician and travel writer.

"He loves travelling," Borins says of his father. "He took us to God-knows-where, anywhere that's not normal."

These experiences shaped him as a person in ways that are extremely beneficial to his career.

"It sculpted me in that I'm totally comfortable on the road and meeting new people," he says. "I try to book things with enough time to stop and check out [the area] or do a hike."

He loves to be outdoors and spends a lot of his time camping. When things are at a slower pace, he says, he can get much more thinking done. It also becomes easier for him to connect with people, including himself.

It's even better if he has to walk or paddle, he says, adding that it gives him a feeling of being very alive.

He spends a lot of time outdoors especially in the summer.

"I hate being in the city in the summer," he says. "All of the rough stuff going on, it's a drag, and I need to be by a lake or in the woods."

In addition to travelling, Borins' father influenced his songwriting. His father wrote music as a hobby and would routinely go to a studio to work on his music.

"That's how I learned a lot of folk songs and songs he'd play around a campfire," Borins says.

Additionally, his brother played guitar, so songwriting was never a foreign concept to his family.

Borins knew he could sing but had to learn enough about guitars to "catch up" to his singing skills.

"I don't consider myself a natural," he says. "I consider myself an absolute obsessive music fan."

He describes connecting with the Jewish idea of the wandering tribes, going hand in hand with the image of a wandering minstrel.

He also says it was the Jewish community that largely supported him at the start of his musical career, although he describes himself as more culturally Jewish than religiously Jewish.

Dave Borins

"I'm pretty well read in Jewish history and theology, just out of curiosity about knowing where I come from," he says, adding that he enjoys teaching others about Judaism, particularly when he comes across people who have never met a Jew before.

He has taken his music across the country, touring and meeting friends all around, which has allowed him to create a network of musicians that he can call on when he's in their neck of the woods.

He has been through most of Canada's provinces, except Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and has found Newfoundland to be the most welcoming and musical place out of anywhere he's been to in Canada.

"The impression you get from the stereotypes really doesn't tell the whole story," he says, describing Newfoundland as an incredibly beautiful place with very friendly people.

"They know how to have a good time, and they don't get hung up on the negatives," he says.

In October, Borins will perform two concerts to be recorded for a live CD at Hugh's Room. Visit www.daveborins.com for more information.

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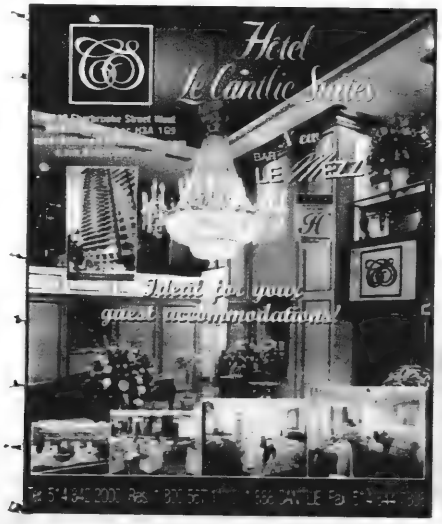

Nazi war criminal TV series starts Sept. 13

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Since the defeat of Nazi tyranny in World War II, Nazi hunters have kept busy hunting down war criminals who eluded justice.

History Television's eight-part series on this perennially chilling topic, *Nazi Hunters*, starts Sept. 13 at 8 p.m.

Judging by the first two episodes, *Nazi Hunters* should keep viewers glued to their seats.

Each episode contains archival clips from wartime Europe, interviews with surviving pursuers and dramatizations to heighten the effect.

Episode one focuses on Herbert Cukurs, the so-called Hangman of Riga, who was supposedly instrumental in the murder of 30,000 Jews.

Cukurs was living quietly in Sao Paulo, Brazil, when the Mossad, Israel's intelligence agency, decided to apprehend and kill him.

The Mossad agent assigned to track him down was Anton Kuenzle, a German Jew whose parents were murdered during the Holocaust.

Kuenzle, who appears on screen in disguise, presented himself to Cukurs as a wealthy Austrian businessman and former Nazi party member and *Wehrmacht* veteran.

Insinuating himself into Cukurs' life by appealing to his greed, Kuenzle hooked him by enlisting him in an investment scheme in Brazil. Falling for the story, Cukurs invited Kuenzle to his house to inspect his gun collection.

After gaining Cukurs' trust, Kuenzle lured him to Uruguay, where a Mossad team was ready to spring into action. The events unfold in 1964 and 1965.

Episode two, to be broadcast on Sept. 20, zeroes in on the capture of Adolf Eichmann, one of the key cogs in the Nazi machinery of death.

Among his other "accomplishments," Eichmann was responsible for shipping hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz in 1944.

Like Cukurs, Eichmann resided in South America, living in Argentina under the assumed name of Ricardo Klement and working in a Mercedes car plant.

Interestingly enough, a blind Jewish piano tuner who had dated his daughter "outed" Eichmann.

Having discovered Eichmann's address, the Mossad dispatched a team to Buenos Aires to bring him to Israel for a show trial.

Rafi Eitan, a seasoned Mossad operative, headed the team. Since Eichmann was a creature of habit, returning to his home by bus every night at the same hour, he was easy prey.

In May 1960, the Mossad agents activated their plan. After a brief struggle, Eichmann surrendered, saying he was resigned to his fate. Later, at a safe house, he admitted his real identity.

The special El Al plane due to fly him to Israel was delayed by a week, causing intense anxiety in the ranks of the agents. Finally they were able to fly him to Israel.

Like the first episode on Cukurs, the Eichmann segment is informative and well worth watching.

Being Erica character resonates with Toronto Jews

By RENEE GHERT-ZAND
JTA

A young woman with long auburn hair sits surrounded by friends and family in her mother's living room while holding a tiny baby on a pillow in her lap. She's the *sandek* at the brit of her cousin's son, having agreed to take on this honorary role – the one who holds the baby – to please her father, a Reform rabbi who is the mohel.

But just as her father is about to perform the circumcision, the young woman faints. Her father moves in just in time, grabbing the newborn before she falls to the ground.

Meet Erica Strange, a bright and attractive Jewish woman in her early 30s living in a hip neighbourhood in downtown Toronto and working in book publishing. Erica is the fictional, time-traveling, eponymous lead character played by Erin Karpluk in the hit series *Being Erica*, which begins its third season Sept. 22 on CBC Television.

With much of the character derived from the life experience of the show's creator and executive producer, Jana Sinyor, this fictional 30-something Toronto Jew is resonating with many young Canadian Jews who see in her something of themselves.

"Erica is Jewish like I'm Jewish. It's not in your face, but at the same time it's not just by the way," said Ramona Carmelly, a professional opera singer in Toronto. "You really feel her Jewishness, even though *Being Erica* is not a Jewish show."

But some Jewish viewers are irked by the Jewish portrayal of Erica. One, Torontonian Pearl Gropper Berman, said the laissez-faire way in which the show treats Erica's dating non-Jewish men and her sister's intermarriage is not representative of Canadian Jews.

"I believe the daughter of a Toronto rabbi would be more engaged in the Jewish community," Gropper Berman said. "Toronto's Jewish community is much more conservative, and the decision-making surrounding dating someone non-Jewish would be more prominent."

Regardless of how accurate a portrait *Being Erica* paints of the contemporary Canadian Jew, it gives the larger Canadian viewing public some idea of what it's like to be young and Jewish in Toronto, and that has inspired pride even among many of the show's Jewish critics.

Rabbi Erin Polonsky of Temple Sinai in Toronto said she watches *Being Erica* despite her disappointment with how the show handles certain Jewish topics.

Gropper Berman also admitted to liking the show despite its Jewish shortcomings.

"It's very cool to have a character on TV who is Jewish but also smart, pretty, complicated and funny," she said.

Sinyor, Erica's creator, said this was intentional. "I purposely make characters as specific as possible in every way in order for them to be universally appealing," Sinyor said.

Jana Sinyor

"Everyone comes from somewhere, and I chose to make Erica Jewish because that is where I come from and what I know best."

On the show, Erica deals with the ups and downs of romantic relationships, dramas with friends and lots of family *mishegas*. She sees a therapist who, rather than prescribing Prozac or employing standard psychoanalysis, uses time travel to treat Erica, sending her into the past, future and alternate realities to work through her issues.

Several episodes in the first two seasons of the show had heavy doses of Jewish culture, from one set on Yom Kippur to another that flashes back to Erica's bat mitzvah. The way Erica's Judaism is woven into her identity is typical of modern Canadian Jews, some fans say.

Moshe Saadon, a sound technician in the film and TV industry who also happens to be a cantor, is one of several religious advisers Sinyor has used to help her stage Jewish scenes and episodes.

Saadon arranged for his historic Beach Synagogue to serve as a location set, supplied religious items, and played a gabbai and a rabbi in two different episodes. In one, he officiated at the intermarriage of Erica's sister.

Saadon said he's impressed by the earnestness with which the show's actors take on the Jewish aspects of their portrayals. Jewish cast members have helped other actors with Hebrew pronunciations.

Sinyor emphasized that she is "not speaking for Jews as a whole," but she said the show purposely addresses Jewish issues, such as interfaith dating and opposition to circumcision.

In the brit episode, Erica tells her father in an emotional outburst, "It's awful! You're cutting a baby without anesthetic for no good reason. I don't get it! I should never have agreed to participate."

Sinyor counts herself among the small percentage of Toronto Jews who refused to have their sons circumcised.

Marci Stepak O'Connor, a Jew from Toronto now living in Montreal and married to a Catholic, says she's a fan because Erica isn't complacent about her Jewishness, or anything else in her life.

"Being Jewish means constantly questioning," she said.

Being Erica is distributed in the United States and 85 other countries through BBC Worldwide.

Erin Karpluk in *Being Erica*

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Eye on Arts

By BILL GLADSTONE

JEWS AND BASEBALL IS A NEW DOCUMENTARY FROM TORONTO-BASED FILM PRODUCER WILLIAM HECHTER

A new documentary by a Toronto-based film producer explores the connection between Jewish Americans (and at least one Canadian, **Shawn Green**) who have gone into professional baseball.

Soon after the idea for *Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story* came to Winnipeg-born, Toronto-based producer **William Hechter**, he had assembled his dream team, including director **Peter Miller** and narrator **Dustin Hoffman**. "Making this film was a thrill," Hechter said. "I was inspired from start to finish, and every day was like being at the seventh game of the world series."

More than a film about sports, it is a story of immigration, assimilation, bigotry, heroism, and the shattering of stereotypes as it highlights standout Jewish baseball players from the 1860s to the present. The documentary includes interviews with fans (including **Ron Howard** and **Larry King**), writers, executives and players such as **Al Rosen**, **Kevin Youkilis**, Green, **Norm Sherry**, **Ron Blomberg**, **Bob Feller**, **Yogi Berra** and **Sandy Koufax**. The film ends with a stunning rendition of *Take Me Out To the Ball Game* sung by **Sophie Milman**.

Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story opens in Toronto at the Cineplex Sheppard Grande on Oct. 1, and the same day at Montreal's Cineplex Odeon Cavendish Mall.

* * *

***Paint Your Wagon*:** The Civic Light-Opera Company presents *Paint Your Wagon*, the rarely produced Broadway musical about the California gold rush. The score by Lerner and Loewe includes *They Call the Wind Mariah*, *Wand'rin' Star*, *I Talk to the Trees* and *I Still See Elisa* – all of which were major songs on the hit parade of their day. The show features an orchestra and full cast headed by **Eric Botosan**. Fairview Library Theatre, Sept. 8 to 25. $25 for all performances. 416-755-1717. www.CivicLightOperaCompany.com

* * *

Camp for Children with Special Needs: *One Summer at Camp Winston*, a documentary produced and directed by **Karen Shopsowitz**, focuses on a Muskoka-area camp that accepts children with complex neurological disorders, including autism, Tourette syndrome, Asperger's syndrome and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The film introduces us to the children and the staff who take care of them, some of whom struggle with disorders of their own. Their stories often intersect as campers learn to deal with one another, while the staff discover inner strengths they never realized they had. The doc premières on the Documentary Channel, Sept. 14, 6 and 9 p.m

* * *

Names in the News: Joseph Mapa, president and CEO of Mount Sinai Hospital since 2001, says that "humour, insight, provoked conversation, entertainment and a high-quality product" are key elements that persuaded him to accept the position of chair of Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre's board of directors.

Teatron's board includes its artistic director **Ari Weisberg**, as well as **Rimma Mouzika**, **Arnie Zweig**, **Marty Mehr**, **Tamar Ehrlich**, **Lyon Wexler**, **Gilbert Sharpe** and **Kivi Shapiro**. Teatron's upcoming season begins in November and features the comedy *Kosher Lutherans*, the romantic drama *Hard Love* and *A Hamburger in a Pita*, a comedy by Toronto playwright **Nina Shenhav**. www.teatrontheatre.com

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Works of acrylic on canvas by **Heeny Levy** explore the contrast of nature and technology. A portion of sales go toward Gulf restoration. On view at the Annex Gallery, 1073 Bathurst St., Sept. 19 to 26. Opening reception Sept. 21, 7 to 9:30 p.m. 416-516-0110.

• BBK Showstoppers is a dance theatre group of young dancers from aged eight to 14 who audition for the opportunity to perform at local charity events, fund-raisers and galas. Auditions are scheduled for Sept. 12 at the Koffler Centre of the Arts. www.bbkshowstoppers.com

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Punk Jews do it differently

By DAVID SILVERBERG
Special to The CJN

Three New Yorkers want to introduce the world to *Punk Jews*. No, it's not a band name but a documentary series the producers hope to bring to TV.

So, what are Punk Jews? "They are Jews expressing their spirituality in unique unconventional ways," producer Evan Kleinman, 28, explains in a conference call. They challenge their identity and fly in the face of staid tradition, he adds.

To get a sense of who they profile, the *Punk Jews* trailer offers a glimpse into these creative Americans: Cholent is a weekly gathering held inside at a New York City synagogue, where a diverse group of Jews gather to sing, dance, rap, share art and have fun. Y-Love is a Puerto Rican-Jewish rap artist who mixes Torah lessons with anti-racist messages in his rhymes. Rivka Karasik is a 34-year-old mixed media artist known for blending tzitzits and mezuzot in her artwork. Levi Okunov is a former Chassid who uses Hebrew symbols and Jewish-inspired designs to create saucy women's clothing.

What Karasik and Okunov are doing may be considered sacrilegious in some Jewish circles, but Kleinman says these progressive artists are honouring Jewish symbols with their creativity – more of an ode than an insult.

"This is a new story that hasn't been told before," says Jesse Mann, 30, director of *Punk Jews*. "These are challenging ideas, but they're turning people onto Judaism."

Mann and Kleinman point out the series also breaks down stereotypes, and "builds bridges to form community," similar to Cholent's motivation in New York.

The series is broken up into 10 episodes, each profiling a unique Punk Jew. They recently raised $11,000 in a fundraiser to film another season, although they have to yet to find a home for the documentary.

"We'll get this on TV one way or another," says a determined Mann.

So far, the team has been looking around New York for their next round of stories. They've entertained the idea of going up to Canada to find more Punk Jews, but for now they're sticking to their area code because they have a limited budget.

As their website indicates, the Punk Jews team is already filming the next few episodes. Profile subjects include "a yoga Jedi Jewish contortionist from space" and Rabbi Simcha Weinstein, known as the Comic Book Rabbi and the author of *Up, Up and Oy Vey*.

For more information on the series, visit PunkJews.com

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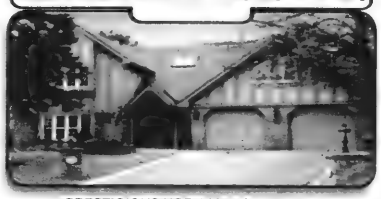

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Best Value for this gracious family home in Forest Hill. Recently reno'd w/style & flair. Features 6 bdrms., 6 baths, 3 fireplaces, exquisite family room. Move in condition. Private yard. ***Betty Cohen**

CRICKET CLUB – $1,895,000.
Exceptional centre hall home. Gorgeous 4 bdrm., 5 bath residence boasts lavish finishes & SOLD workmanship. Features custom kitchen, 3 fireplaces, high ceilings, main flr. family rm. w/dble. French dr. walk-out to large cedar deck, circular drive.***Richard Sherman/*Corinne Pencer**

LYTTON PARK – $1,769,000.
Wonderful Georgian home on a bright, south facing 50'x170' lot; 4+2 bdrms., main floor fam. rm. & office, eat-in kitchen w/granite counters & w/o to deck & deep, private garden oasis; large master w/5-pce ensuite & w/o terrace; 3 frpl., hrdwd flrs., pkg for 8 cars. ***Sabrina Kaufman /**Richard Sherman**

LESLIE / YORK MILLS – $1,465,000.
Exceptional south ravine property on quiet, child safe, cul-de-sac siding onto Greenbelt. Bungalow w/4+ 1 bdrm.& fin. lower level incl. family rm., rec rm., den, on lushly landscaped, huge, pie-shaped lot with 7 walk-outs to a nature lovers' dream oasis. ***Richard Sherman**

YONGE / BLOOR – $879,000.
Exclusive Boutique building. Gorgeous 2 bdrm. + den corner suite boasts over 1800 sq.ft. of luxurious living. Beautifully reno'd w/ SOLD custom kitchen, s/s appliances, 60 ft. balcony, sunny south & west views. Parking. Locker. 24 hr. sec. Walk to Yorkville & subway. ***Irena Elina / **Richard Sherman**

YONGE / ROYAL ORCHARD – $739,000.
Beautifully updated 4 bdrm. 3 bath home in demand Thornhill location. Elegantly design SOLD sidence features gleaming hardwood flrs., large principal rms., eat-in kitchen w/walk-out to stunning deck, built-in 2 car garage & gorgeous landscaping. ***Darren Slavens / *Ruth Kaufman**

MT. PLEASANT / EGLINTON – $619,000.
Beautiful 3 bdrm. freehold SOLD home features an open concept, hardwood flrs., kitchen w/granite countertops, gas fireplace, walk-out; deck, garage, & a 3rd flr. Master retreat. ***Richard Sherman**

RICHMOND HILL – $479,900.
Nestled in the prestigious "Fountainbleu" community, this stunning executive townhome features a gourmet kitchen w/granite countertops, breakfast area w/walk-out; 4 baths; 2nd flr. laundry. Finished lower level w/walk-out to yard. Double garage. Also for rent @ $2500./mo. ***Richard Sherman / *Elliot Gordon**

"SKYMARK ZENITH" – $379,000.
Fabulous corner suite with breathtaking views. Bright & spacious 2 bdrms. + solarium & family rm. Master has 2 w/in closets + dressing area & 4pce ens., & walk into solarium. Ensuite laundry & locker. Approx 1800 sq.ft. Incredible value. ***Marlene Federman**

BATHURST / LAWRENCE – $1,800/month
Bright 2 bedroom, 2 bath unit in elegant Menkes building. Balcony w/sunny south view. Parking & locker incl. Exceptional amenities -Grand hotel style lobby, Sabbath elevator, card/rec rm.,exercise rm., landscaped outdoor pool & patio., 24 hr. conc.***Ron Chichora**

*Salesperson **Broker

CJN EARLY DEADLINE NOTICES

September 29th Issue
DISPLAY
Mon. Sept. 20 - 12:00 noon
CLASSIFIED, ORGANIZATIONS
Fri. Sept. 17 - 12:00 noon

October 7th Issue
DISPLAY
Tues. Sept. 28 - 12:00 noon
CLASSIFIED, ORGANIZATIONS
Mon. Sept. 27 - 3:00 p.m.

October 14th Issue
DISPLAY
Wed. Oct. 6 - 12:00 noon
CLASSIFIED, ORGANIZATIONS
Tues. Oct. 5 - 3:00 p.m.

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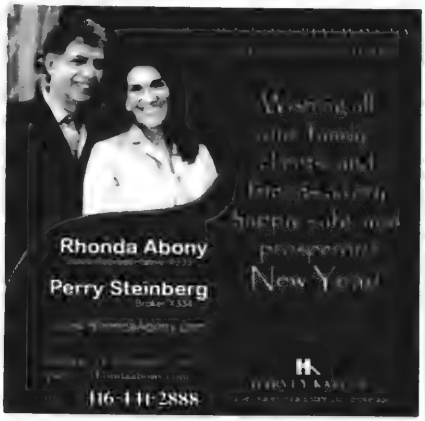

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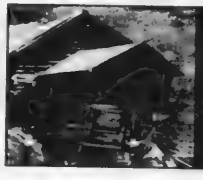

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Sports & Leisure

Girls grab bronze in JCC Maccabi event

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

There were plenty of tears and disappointment on the field in Baltimore as a close-knit team of girls saw their hopes for a soccer gold medal at the JCC Maccabi Games crushed in the last four minutes of overtime.

Despite being the tournament's top playoff seed, the under-16 Toronto girls allowed two late goals and relinquished a 2-1 lead to lose to Boca Raton, 3-2.

The loss, though heartbreaking, didn't completely deflate the girls. They went on to beat Baltimore Red 3-0 in the bronze medal game, said Alex Voihanski, Toronto delegation head. Boca Raton went on to win the gold medal, defeating a team from Virginia Beach in the title game.

The loss was hard to take, said Voihanski, particularly since the girls played so well in the round robin, defeating Boca Raton 5-2 in the opener, crushing Houston 6-1, tying Baltimore Red 2-2 and defeating Baltimore White 7-0.

Entering the playoff round against Boca, Toronto knew they were in for a tough match. Despite handling them easily in the opener, Boca was considered one of the top teams, and in the playoff, Boca jumped to a 1-0 lead. Toronto tied the game in the second half, and regular time ended in a 1-1 draw.

The teams played two halves of overtime before Toronto got the go-ahead goal with only about four-and-a-half minutes to play.

Soccer team loses in overtime

But "the girls let down and Boca Raton scored twice in the last four minutes," Voihanski said. Both were quality shots, neither were "cheap goals," he added.

"We lost one game in six. That lapse for three minutes cost us a gold," Voihanski said.

The team was led by the strong goaltending of Carly Galantz, who lives in St. Catharines, Ont., and by the team's leading scorer, Zoe Stein, who put 10 shots past opposition goalies.

Lauren Clarfield scored the winning goal in the bronze medal game.

Voihanski, who with partner Jeremy Blustein operates JCC Chai Sports and runs sports leagues for the Prosserman JCC, said "transition" issues and coming late to the project meant only one team was taken to the youth games. Future games should see greater Toronto participation, he added.

Confusion at the JCC was apparent last week when letters went out to families with children in the centre's sports programs saying the relationship with Voihanski and Blustein was being severed as of the end of August. Later, the Prosserman JCC said Voihanski and Blustein would continue to manage the centre's sports activities.

"Over the weekend, additional efforts were made by all parties, including some generous program sponsors, to assure that the excitement of JCC Chai Sports continues. We are pleased to let you know that Alex Voihanski and Jeremy Blustein will continue to manage JCC Chai Sports," stated a follow-up letter signed by Sherry Kulman, the Prosserman JCC's acting executive director.

"It's a healthy, happy relationship," said Voihanski. "There was a miscommunication. Someone jumped the gun on something that shouldn't have happened."

More than 1,000 youngsters and adults have participated in various JCC sports over the past year, including basketball, hockey, baseball and soccer, he added.

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Sports & Leisure

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Favre's return consigns Rosenfels to sidelines – again

By HARVEY ROSEN
Special to The CJN

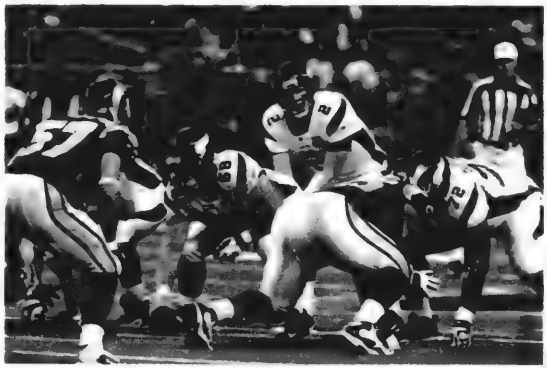
WINNIPEG — With the the 2010 National Football League season kicking off with a game on Thursday, Sept. 9, between Minnesota and New Orleans, Vikings' quarterback Sage Rosenfels must have shed more than a few tears when the soon to be 41-year-old icon Brent Favre made his annual dramatic but tardy entrance to training camp in mid-August.

The Jewish backup signal-caller probably knew when the Vikings lost their opportunity to reach the Super Bowl last year in a last-minute playoff loss that Favre's fear of retirement – plus a giant ego – would motivate him to return one more time.

Consequently, Rosenfels, 32, will automatically fall to second or third on the team's depth chart, where he will once again, clipboard in hand, patrol the Vikings' sidelines like a loyal scout wondering what might have been had the QB legend been a mere mortal.

Drafted out of Iowa State by the Redskins in the fourth round in 2001, Rosenfels lettered in football, basketball, baseball and tennis. He's already had stops in Washington, Miami and Houston. When he came to the Vikings, he had to give up his chai (18) number and was ironically given uniform number 2, which in itself speaks volumes since, he so often has missed out on being a starting signal-caller. As for his name, Sage, that's somewhat suitable, too, in that he is a member of the National Honor Society in football, having earned high marks in the classroom.

With the upcoming Super Bowl to be held in Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, on Feb. 6, a pair of Jewish stalwarts, both starters with Dallas, won't have to travel far if their team manages to make it to the final.



Sage Rosenfels, seen here taking a snap, was hoping to be Vike's No. 1 QB. *[Minnesota Vikings' photo]*

Defensive right end Igor Olshansky, the first Russian-born player in the NFL, previously played six seasons with the Chargers in San Diego. The 28-year-old, who stands 6-6 and tips the scales at 315 pounds, is in the second year of an $18-million (US) pact and earns every bit of it.

Last season, the onetime Oregon standout played in all 16 games and started 14. He's known as a blue-collar worker who flashes occasional bursts of pressure and is a steady run-stopper while shielding off blockers. Proud of his heritage, Olshansky sports two Star of David tattoos on his body.

An interesting thing happened to Olshansky last year in his inaugural training camp with the Cowboys, when he discovered another Jewish player, Kyle Kosier, an offensive left guard who hails from Arizona State and is now in his 10th year in the league and his fifth in Dallas.

Not unlike Olshansky, Kosier at 31, is a giant of a man at 6-5 and 307 pounds. He's described by observers as being rock solid, not terribly athletically gifted, but smart and dependable and a hard worker. He is one of those under-appreciated types, but it's been said that the offence struggles when Kosier isn't out there. Last year he started and played in all 16 games, and Dallas had a respectable record of 11-5.

In a specialty role, there is 17-year veteran long snapper David Binn, 38, who played at the University of California Berkeley, where he was also a linebacker. He is 6-3 and weighs 228 pounds, and because of his speed he can also cover on punts. The son of a Jewish father, he's the last remaining player from the San Diego Chargers' Super Bowl cast and is the team's all-time leader in career-games played.

Adam Podlesh, 27, is back as punter with the Jacksonville Jaguars and possesses a strong leg. The 5-11, 200-pounder played his college ball with the Terrapins at Maryland and appeared in all of his team's 16 games last year. His kicking average in 2009 was 41.9 yards, just below his four-year career average of 42.2.

Offensive left tackle Geoff Schwartz of the Carolina Panthers is a 6-6, 331-pound offensive left tackle who is only 24 and in his third year with the club. The Panthers drafted him in the seventh round in 2008. He's known to be nasty and works hard to finish his blocks. An all-round athlete, he excelled in baseball and basketball as well as football at the University of Oregon. A political science major, it has been said he could have chosen baseball as a career considering the number of scouts who followed him at the amateur level. Schwartz is rated second on the depth chart at his position with a team that has one of the top-rated offensive lines in the NFL.

Considering the fact that wide receiver Julian Edelman, 24, out of Kent State, was selected in the seventh round of the 2009 Draft, he was a real find for the New England Patriots. In his rookie season, he played in 11 games, starting in seven. Only 5-10, despite what the program might say, he's only 198 pounds. Julian appears more suited to the Canadian Football League. Nonetheless, in his rookie campaign, he latched on to 37 Tom Brady passes for 359 yards. He also caught a pair of TD strikes in the Patriots' 33-14 playoff loss to Baltimore. Interestingly, he was a three-year starter in college as a quarterback, where in his final year he suffered a broken arm.

In the rookie department, the San Francisco 49ers drafted Taylor Mays, a free safety from the University of California who is an African-American Jew. His dad is Stafford Mays, a one-time defensive lineman in the NFL, and mother Laurie Mays (nee Black) is a Nordstrom executive. Taylor made it big in college, where he won All-Pac10 honours twice and was also an All-American three times after a college career in which he played in 48 of 52 games. He was chosen as one of the top three finalists for the Jim Thorpe Award as the nation's best defensive back.

The Seattle-born player was raised Jewish and had a bar mitzvah. In his college yearbook, he commented on that significant event in his life. "I don't think at the time I really understood what it meant. Now that I am looking back on it, I feel like I have come a long way in regards to maturity and becoming an adult."

Hopefully he will go a long way, too, as a pro in the NFL.

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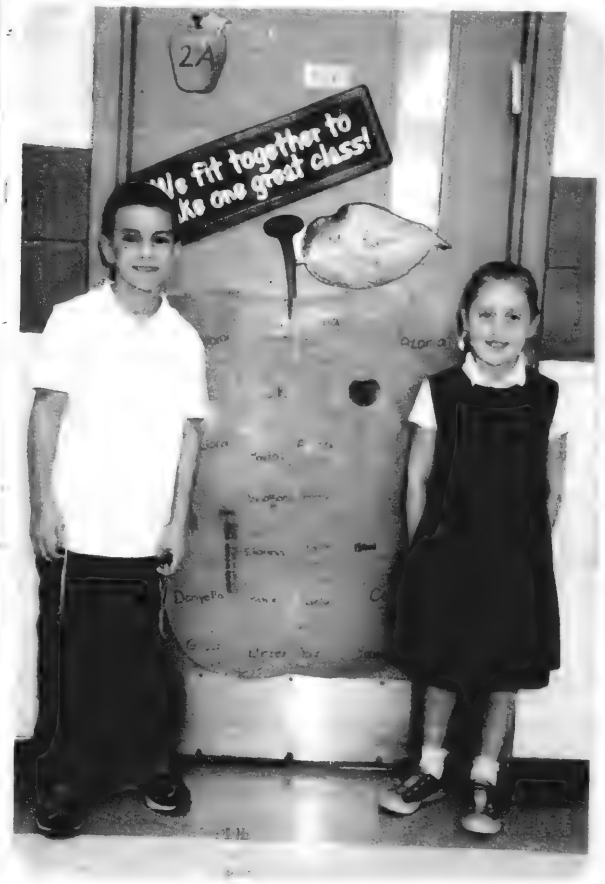

AN APPLE A DAY: Netivot HaTorah Day School students start school early this year to get a head start on learning about Rosh Hashanah. Pictured with the class's apples are Grade 2 students Josh, left, and Maytal.
[Rebecca Ansel photo]

APPLE GLAZED CHICKEN

2 whole chickens
1 6 oz can frozen apple juice concentrate, thawed
1/4 c packed brown sugar
1/4 c ketchup
1 tblsp cider vinegar
1 tsp thyme
1 clove crushed garlic
dash hot pepper
2 green apples, cored, cut into wedges
2 onions, peeled, cut into wedges

Preheat oven to 325° F Spray a large roasting pan with cooking spray. Lay chickens breast-side up. Combine remaining ingredients, except apples and onions. Brush half the sauce over chicken. Tuck onion and apple wedges around chicken. Bake, uncovered, 1 hr., 15 mins. Carefully turn chicken over; brush remaining sauce on chicken. Bake an additional hour, or until golden brown and juices run clear.

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About Life

Dear Ella,

This past year has been a hard one. I lost my mother, who was also my best friend, after going through a rough period with my youngest son who was diagnosed with ADHD. My marriage has taken a big hit as well. We're not quite separated, but we might as well be. We are living like strangers in the same house.

I'm not a religious person at all, but I found myself praying to God on more than one occasion, seeking help to get through this. I actually went to the synagogue near my house last week and bought myself a High Holiday ticket. Now I feel like the biggest hypocrite. I'm struggling with all kinds of emotions and feeling a bit ridiculous. Did I think it would solve all my problems?

Turning to Faith

Dear Turning to Faith

Faith is a very individual concept. There's no right or wrong. There's only what's right for you as an individual. Some people are born into an observant lifestyle, and they practise their beliefs from Day 1. Others come to religion for different reasons, such as marriage, spiritual fulfilment, tradition, search for peace etc. Whatever the reason, it makes no difference. In your case, it may be the pursuit of hope. What you've been through is too much for you to handle on your own, so you're searching for help. Praying is a sort of meditation. It gives you the time and permission you need to think and dig down deep into your soul for answers, for peace and for strength. You're turning to religion to find that, as so many people do. There's no need to question your motives.

Rosh Hashanah is an excellent time to start being introspective. It's the "beginning," the start of a new year, as well as new thoughts, ideas and changes. It's a time to look back and see what we could have done differently and bring those positive changes with you into the future so that you can make a better life for you, your family and those around you.

Spirituality isn't ridiculous. It's a way of accessing your inner being. Don't fight it, I think it's a journey you won't be sorry you took.

I would like to wish all my readers a very happy and healthy New Year. L'Shanah Tovah Tikateivu V'Taichatemu.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *e-mail: eb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional*

Play the 'bounce back' game

Life Coach Corner

By JUDY SIBLIN-LIBRACH

What do you do when you have a major setback in your life?

There are those who play the blame game and blame someone else for the fact that things are not turning out the way they wanted them to. People like this often spend their lives blaming others for their own misfortunes and mistakes instead of taking responsibility for their own life, Karen Salmansohn writes in *The Bounce Back Book.*

"I suggest that instead of becoming a member of the 'Blame Culture,' you sign up for membership in the 'We Bounced Back Impressively Culture,' and become one of those who really worked to overcome a major life setback," Salmansohn says.

There are people like Oprah Winfrey, Helen Keller and Lance Armstrong "who transformed their greatest challenges into their greatest triumphs, nobly and joyously inspiring others to strive for greater joy, peace and fulfilment," she says.

Taking personal responsibility for yourself is the only way to become a happy, healthy and well-adjusted person, and it's a wonderful example to set for your children.

When you don't accept personal responsibility, it can lead to chronic stress and unhappiness, Brian Naszaly writes in his weekly insights column on SixWise.com.

"Harbouring negative emotions and anger means you are living with chronic stress, the type that eats away at you little by little. Chronic stress is the type of stress that has been linked to fatigue, back pain, stomach upset and headaches, along with more serious illnesses such as heart disease, cancer, depression, autoimmune diseases and reproductive problems."

Signs that you are avoiding personal responsibility are that "you almost never believe you are wrong, you dwell a lot on the past instead of looking toward the future, you believe life is unfair and often feel sorry for yourself."

Actually, apologizing when you're wrong is a powerful way to show your inner strength.

Other ways to take the high road, Naszaly says, include: "learn to forgive, be open to the ideas and opinions of others, identify the things in your life you are not happy about and do something to change them. Practise saying, 'I am responsible,' and eventually you will start to believe it, adopt a positive outlook on life and recognize and embrace your own shortcomings, and the next time you're tempted to blame someone else, accept responsibility yourself. Then experience how much better you feel."

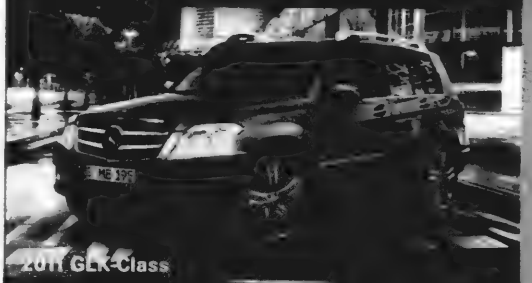
When you are dealing with a painful situation, try to not blame others, and instead, work on accepting the situation. This will help you get through your unhelpful preconceptions and find peace.

In the book *Loving What Is*, Byron Katie talks about how to turn your thought around and how to use four questions that can change your life. The questions, when applied to a specific problem, allow you to see what is bothering you in a different light.

"It's not the problem that causes our suffering, it's our thinking about the problem," Katie says. With these questions, you can undo much of the unnecessary suffering you create for yourself and find more happiness and peace.

Another great way to bounce back after one of life's setbacks, is to make a "to be" list instead of a "to do" list. What would that list look like for you?

Your assignment would be to make a list of adjectives that will help you be where you want to be. Words like kind, patient, direct, open-minded, forgiving, flexible, optimistic and brave might be some that will help you become the person you want to be.



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The Canadian Jewish news

Section B

Women you should know

Only a few readers, if any, will be able to identify all of the women whose portraits are above, especially since some of the portraits are renderings of an artist's imagination. But all of them are identified in the pages of this supplement.

All are women you should know.

All are women of strong character.

All are women of striking courage.

All are women of stirring heart.

All were inspired by a profound sense of who they were (or are still), as women, as Jews, as members of a wider humanity that is always and ever in need both of mending and affirming.

We have highlighted merely 15 women. We could have highlighted 1,500 or more. The group is far from being comprehensive. Nor does it adequately sweep across the wide panorama of Jewish history. Nor could it.

The women we have selected have left their marks in the worlds of arts, literature, academics, scholarship, politics, social action and communal life.

The starting point for our selections is Dona Gracia Nasi who lived 500 years ago. Her story is simply remarkable, a testament to the highest qualities in a human being that God seeks for us.

Above all and connecting all the women whose lives we feature was Dona Gracia's paramount, ever-present sense of belonging to the Jewish people and of committing herself to the values and purposes that are our people's intergenerational and forever heritage.

Our purpose in publishing the stories of the lives of these quite exceptional women is to bring to readers an awareness of a rich, resplendent history that some may not know.

Our hope, however, is that some of the stories at least may also inspire readers through an immutable knowledge that we are all connected.

Perhaps this is the most beautiful of all inspirations or lessons that these stories might impart.

Across the ages, in different times, on different continents, in different lands there will always be those among us, *because of us*, who act for the sake of their people and their world.

Readers interested in reading about other remarkable Jewish women are directed to the following superb sources.

• Jewish Women's Archive at http://jwa.org

• Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia, a CD-ROM originally published by Alice and Moshe Shalvi of Shalvi Publishing Ltd., and edited by professors Paula Hyman of Yale University and Dalia Ofer of Hebrew University of Jerusalem. For more information, visit http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/cdrom

I wish to express our thanks to professors Michael Brown, Sara Horowitz and Hindy Najman for assisting us in preparing the supplement.

Enjoy the supplement. Enjoy the holidays.

May these stories help make the holidays more meaningful.

– The editor

EDITORIAL

From a secret to a fiercely proud Jew

[Dona Gracia Nasi]

Imagine a Jewish woman who, in 2010, is considered New York's wealthiest, most powerful and most influential person, to the point of being able to organize, almost single-handedly, the boycott of La Guardia Airport. She can also control the stocks, monopolize the software and hardware business and successfully engineer a huge underground network to save Jews in danger.

Hannah Mendes or, as she was more commonly known, Dona Gracia, was such a woman. Born Beatrice de Luna in Lisbon circa 1510, Dona Gracia married Francisco Mendes, head of the Mendes banking house, and a secret Jew like her, in 1528.

By Sarah Carlen

When Francisco died eight years later, he left her a huge fortune. In 1536 Lisbon was not safe for secret Jews. With her young daughter, sister and two nephews, Dona Gracia left Lisbon for Antwerp.

Antwerp was then the commercial and financial centre of northern Europe, where the spice trade, one of the family's specialties, proved to be such an enormous source of profit that European kings and queens often borrowed money from them.

Dona's sister, Brianda, married Diogo Mendes (Francisco's brother), known as the spice king of Europe. His wealth and social position made it easier for them to live as secret Jews in Antwerp. Diogo and Dona organized and maintained an underground network that allowed the Spanish and Portuguese Jews to leave their country and find a safe haven elsewhere.

When Diogo died in 1542, Dona had to manage one of Europe's "greatest fortunes and greatest businesses." Many nobles were now courting her daughter and Dona, not wanting her to marry a Christian, decided to move on.

She went to Venice, however she did not stay too long. The papal legate decided her daughter should be brought up in a nunnery and Dona was placed under arrest. Money bought her freedom but she decided to leave Venice and head for Ferrara. Here, she and her family openly reverted to Judaism and she was able to continue helping secret Jews escaping from Spain and Portugal.

She became known as Dona Gracia Nasi — Hannah to her family and friends — no longer a secret Jewess, but a fiercely proud one. In Ferrara, surrounded by the rich atmosphere of the Renaissance, Dona Gracia was able to indulge in her love for the arts. As well, she financially helped with the printing and publishing of Jewish writings, in particular the Ferrara Bible, which was dedicated to her.

Continued on page B3

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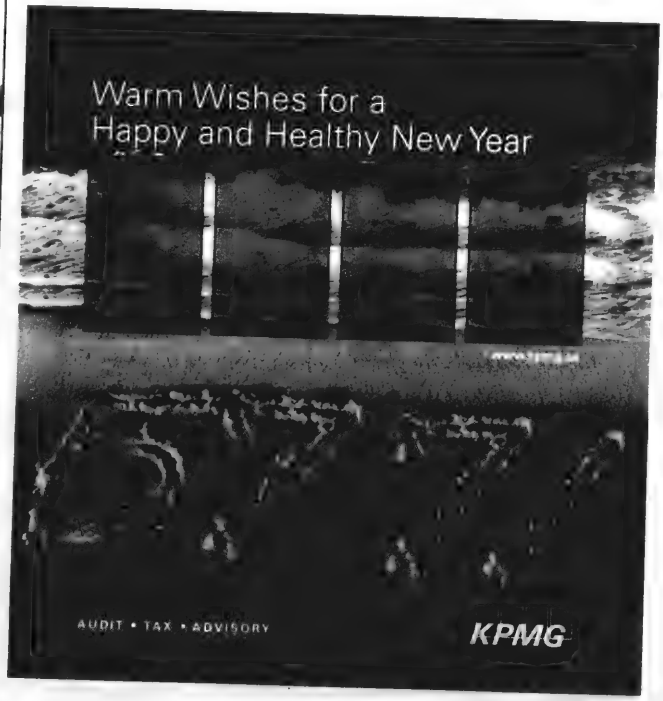

She fed the poor and the hungry every day

Continued from page B2

With the founding of the Jesuit òrder in 1540 and the strengthening of the Inquisition, even Ferrara was no longer safe and Dona Gracia felt compelled to leave again. She did so in the summer of 1552 with her family and her huge staff, this time going to Turkey. Here the sultan, Bajazet II, welcomed all Jews, in particular rich and famous ones.

Dona Gracia continued to feed 80 to 100 poor people at her table every day, as she had started to do in Ferrara. She managed an overseas business in spices, wool, grain, cloth and textiles so huge that she had her own ships to carry the goods. There were branches of her business all over the Balkans and the Archipelago, in Ragusa (today Dubrovnik), Belgrade, Sarajevo, Naxos, Italy and France, especially Lyons.

In 1554, Joseph Nasi, her nephew, joined his family in Constantinople. From then on, nephew and aunt worked very closely together in all branches of Dona Gracia's business. Secure and powerful in Turkey, she now felt she had to keep a promise she made to her husband: to have him buried in the Holy Land. There are no details about this extraordinary and extremely dangerous enterprise, but she managed to have his remains exhumed from a churchyard in Lisbon and taken to the valley of Jeoshaphat in Jerusalem.

Dona Gracia controlled Jewish life in the Ottoman Empire, and even beyond, until her death. She is the only woman who did this in the history of the Diaspora.

She was known among the Jews of the time as *La Senora*, or *Ha-Giveret*, the lady. The most important of her activities, and by far the most dangerous, was the rescue of the Marranos, who continued to trickle out of Spain and Portugal and for whom she spared no effort or money.

Dona's charity knew no bounds. She built and maintained schools, hospitals and roads all over Turkey. She took care of needy Jews in Palestine and redeemed Jews enslaved by the Knights of Malta or kidnapped by pirates. In 1554, 1556 and 1561, epidemics of pestilence plagued the empire, and she generously opened her purse to help Jews and non-Jews.

Continued on page B4

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'The heart of her people'

Continued from page B3

She founded a yeshiva in Constantinople, where, according to Sephardi tradition, half the time was devoted to religious study and the other half to secular subjects: at the time mainly mathematics, medicine, philosophy and astronomy.

She built synagogues wherever there was a need and interest. In Salonica she founded a Midrash (as it is called in Sephardi communities, as opposed to Bet-Midrash in Ashkenazi communities) and a talmudic academy in Tiberias.

Her work, devotion to her people, courage and faith were recorded by contemporaries such as Rabbi Moses di Trani, who paraphrased King Solomon's verse: "Many daughters have done virtuously, but Hannah has excelled them all."

The ex-Marrano chronicler, Immanuel Aboab, described her "excellent virtues and noble deeds, regarding which it would be possible to write many books." The physician Lusitanus wrote that she was "adorned by all the virtues." Rabbi Almosnino of Salonica called her "The Lady, crown of the glory of goodly women." Rabbi Soncino described her as "the crowned Lady, chaplet of grace of the hosts of Israel... who built the House of Israel with holiness and purity with her wealth and treasure."

The Portuguese poet-chronicler Samuel Usque summed up all these praises when he called her "the heart of her people," and described her in the following way:

"...who has seen revived the intrinsic piety of Myriam, offering her life to save her brethren? The great prudence of Deborah, in governing her people? That infinite virtue and great sanctity of Esther, in helping those who are persecuted? The much praised strength of the most chaste and magnanimous widow Judith, in delivering those hemmed in by travail?

Such has the Lord sent to you in these days from the most supreme rank of his armies, embodying them in a soul of His which, by high chance and your happy lot, is installed in the most proper womanly body of the fortunate Jewess Nasci...In brief, the wide pinions and outspread wings of this eagle have saved a great part of your sons in their flight from the cruelty of the Portuguese, so that she thus imitated the Lord at the time of the exodus from Egypt."

The power and influence of Dona Gracia are nowhere more evident than in the famous boycott of Ancona, a seaport in the Adriatic coast of Italy where the Inquisition organized a series of *auto-da-fes* during which 25 Jews were found guilty of heresy. They were strangled and burned in front of a jeering crowd.

Continued on page B5

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She died before she realized her greatest dream

Continued from page B4

This pained and infuriated Dona Gracia tremendously. A woman of action, she decided to vindicate the murdered Jews in order to prove to the world that "all Israel are sureties the one for the other." With the consent of the Turkish sultan, she organized an international boycott of the port from which ships and cargoes were diverted to Venice, causing great risks not only to the Ancona traders but also to the traders from the papal states.

This showed uncanny vision for the time because she was able to go beyond the traditional response of the Jews which was "suffering in silence." Instead she demonstrated that they could and should improve their lot not just by bribing and praying, but by actually fighting on the economic and political fronts.

Unfortunately, two influential rabbis opposed the boycott on communal and religious grounds: first, the aging and insecure Rabbi Moses Bassola of Ancona and later on, Rabbi Joshua Soncino of Constantinople.

Dona Gracia was devastated. This terrible blow led her to leave for the Holy Land earlier than she had planned.

> *'Never perhaps in the whole of Jewish history... had a woman's death been so profoundly mourned'*

She had a mini-palace built for her in Tiberias, where she intended to create an independent Jewish settlement thanks to the privileges that the Sultan had granted her in exchange for 1,000 ducats a year.

Unfortunately, she died before she realized what seemed to be her greatest dream: to reclaim the land of Israel for the Jews and to be buried besides her husband. We do not know where or when she died, the best guess being early summer of 1569.

At her passing, Jews all over the world mourned her. Elegies, poems and *kinot* were written and read in synagogues where memorial services were held.

Royalty in the Christian and Muslim worlds, Jewish communal leaders and scholars from all over the world, needy people who had shared food at her table and many others all felt the loss of this great woman.

As was written at the time: "Never perhaps in the whole of Jewish history, since the days of Salome Alexandra, the Hasmonean queen of Judea 16 centuries before, had a woman's death been so generally and so profoundly mourned. No other woman in Jewish history has been surrounded with such devotion. No other woman in Jewish history, it seems, has deserved it more."

Dona Gracia Nasi honoured in Israel

Let us continue to remember the heroism and triumph of Dona Gracia's extraordinary life.

Sarah Carlen is program chair of Sephardi studies at York University. She teaches, lectures and writes about the history and culture of Sephardi Jews

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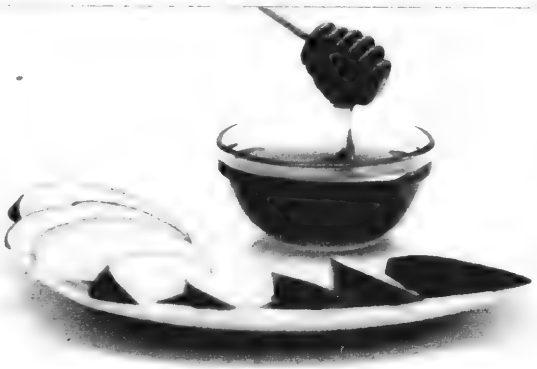

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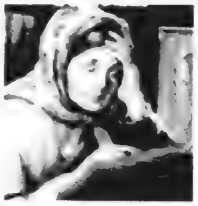
Rosh Hashanah Greetings 5771

A 'holy woman'



Jacket cover from *They Called Her Rebbe, The Maiden of Ludomir* by Gershon Winkler

[Maiden of Ludmir]

Even her name is uncertain. Today she is known as Hannah Rachel, but some records say Rachel Hannah or Haya Rachel. Her family name was Verbermakher, or Zilbermakher. She was the daughter of Monesh, or Zalman, a merchant or weaver, and a mother whose name has been forgotten. She was born in 1806 or 1815. She died in 1888 or in 1905 and is buried in Jerusalem, or Safed, or in her hometown in Ukraine, Volodymyr-Volynskyi, called in Yiddish Ludmir.

Through these veils of uncertainty, this holy woman is remembered because her courage and spirituality broke through all the limits and expectations of her society.

Jewish Eastern Europe was not devoid of spiritually powerful women. Many a grandmother knew how to give a blessing or remove an evil eye. There were wise women and women healers. There were women who led Yiddish prayers in the women's sections of their synagogues. There were women visionaries who could see secrets and foretell the future. From her youth, Hannah Rachel combined all these roles in her own powerful self.

By Justin Jaron Lewis

At the same time, Hannah Rachel conducted herself like a rebbe, a chassidic spiritual leader. To this day, this is a male role. Hannah Rachel was not the only chassidic woman to aspire to such heights.

A chapter in my book *Imagining Holiness* is devoted to her contemporary, Eydl of Brody, called Eydele the rebbe. She was known for her healing power and storytelling. There were only a handful of these women, however, and their lives were not easy. Eydl, according to one account, was subjected to an exorcism to drive out the possessing spirit that made her act as if she were a man.

While Eydl was the daughter of a great rebbe, Shalom of Belz, Hannah Rachel became a spiritual leader without any family ties to male rebbes. Even for a man, this was practically unheard of, and Hannah Rachel seems to be the only woman who ever attempted it.

Finally, unlike almost any Jewish woman in her time or any other, Hannah Rachel sought to live a celibate life, devoting herself not to a spouse and children but to God and a community of followers. It is this choice that gave her the titles by which she is remembered, the ambiguous *di ludmirer moyd* – the maiden, or the "old maid," of Ludmir, and the positive, though seemingly un-Jewish *di heylike bsule*: the holy virgin.

The definitive biography of Hannah Rachel is *The Maiden of Ludmir: A Jewish Holy Woman and Her World* (University of California Press, 2003), by Nathaniel Deutsch, a brilliant young scholar who devoted several years of his life to finding out everything possible about her.

Deutsch's compelling study is my source for this article. Here is the story of Hannah Rachel's unique path in life, pieced together from the often contradictory written and oral accounts and archival records gathered by Deutsch.

A great rebbe, Motl of Chernobyl, promised a child to a barren chassidic couple, and the blessing came true. The baby was not, as usual in such stories, a son, but a daughter, who remained an only child.

Her loving and wealthy parents gave Hannah Rachel a strong Jewish education, which her brilliant mind absorbed eagerly. She began to pray three times a day, wearing a tallit, taking on practices traditionally reserved to males. When her parents objected at first, the little girl declared, "why do people make such a great difference between men and women? I will tear down the fences!"

While still a child, Hannah Rachel revealed, through supernatural knowledge, that a local Jewish butcher was selling non-kosher meat – thus saving her town from further transgressions. When she reached 12, the age of bat mitzvah, she began to put on tfillin, another practice traditionally reserved to men.

At age 13, two crises shook her life. She fell passionately in love with a young man and won her parents consent to become engaged to him — a choice as radical in her social context as her "male" religious behaviour. The same year, her mother passed away. Hannah Rachel prayed often at her mother's grave, a traditional practice of pious women. On one of these visits to the graveyard, she fainted and fell into a coma.

Continued on page B7

She became known throughout the region

Continued from page B6

When she awakened, she declared that she had been granted an additional, lofty soul, and she broke off her engagement. She devoted herself to prayer and study, and people began to seek her out as a healer. Rebbe Motl of Chernobyl told her worried father, "Monesh, your daughter is going on a new path. Leave her alone."

When Hannah Rachel was 19, past the regular age of marriage in her society, her father died and left her a large inheritance. She said *Kaddish* for her father as a son would have and used some of her inheritance to buy a building in the centre of Ludmir. There she established her own place of prayer and study, called the *gornshtibl*, the upper-storey prayer house. Enough money remained to support her for the rest of her life.

Now she could immerse herself in the spiritual consciousness which led her to teach, "a person who does not see God everywhere does not see God anywhere".

Reaching out to others with the *gornshtibl* as a home base, Hannah Rachel became a spiritual advisor and teacher, judge in questions of Jewish law, prayer leader, travelling preacher, healer, exorcist, visionary and miracle-worker and leader of Shabbat meals and other chassidic gatherings.

She drew a following mainly of women and working-class men. Unlike male rebbes, she did not ask for donations from her followers, who were known as the Maiden of Ludmir's Chassidim. Some of them lived into the 20th century, still revering her memory and telling her stories.

Various other people in Ludmir, however, treated Hannah Rachel with indifference, or mocked her as crazy, or spread the terrifying rumour that she had not been granted a high soul, but possessed by a *dybbuk*. Still, into her mid-20s, she was the major chassidic spiritual figure in Ludmir. She eclipsed the only other chassidic leaders based there, the relatively uncharismatic son and grandson of the great Rebbe Shlomo Karliner. Her travels as a preacher and the stories told about her made her known throughout the region.

Gradually, the opposition to her coalesced into pressure to become a wife and mother. Rebbe Motl of Chernobyl took it on himself to convince Hannah Rachel to get married. The discussion between them was long and stormy; yet, being argued with as an equal by a renowned spiritual master, her parents' rebbe, was an honour in itself to Hannah Rachel.

In the end, temporarily convinced by Reb Motl's arguments, or succumbing to pressure, Hannah Rachel agreed to marry a pious man. But the day after the wedding, she left him without consummating the marriage. Some say that her husband saw the *Shekhinah* as a fiery wall keeping him from her.

After this interlude Hannah Rachel continued her spiritual work, but something had changed. Among both her opponents and her Chassidim, some felt that agreeing to marry had shown she was just a normal person. She was less confident in her own path, more reluctant to give advice or blessings. Teasing children chased after her in the streets.

There are scarcely any stories about her from the next 25 years of her life. Perhaps it was during this time that she taught: "A person accompanied by holy thoughts on their life's journey is not alone and wretched, for the noble thoughts shelter them from loneliness."

Continued on page B8

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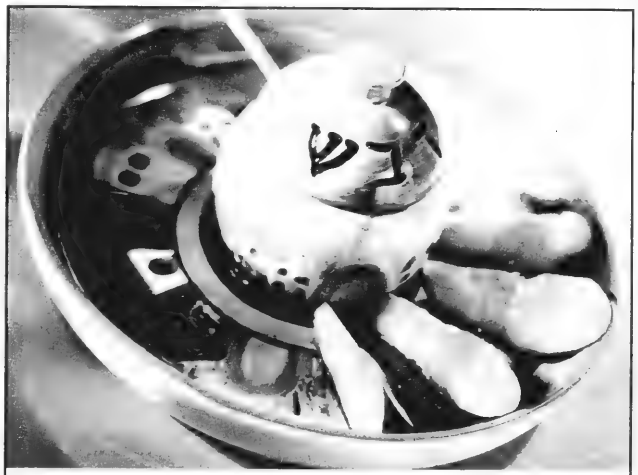

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Grasping the heart's 'pure thought'

Continued from page B7

When she was over 50 — in her day, old age — Hannah Rachel left Ludmir and undertook the arduous journey to the land of Israel. Seeing that she was leaving them, Ludmir's Jews, even the many who had been her opponents, felt the greatness of their loss. They gave her *kvitlekh* (notes with written prayers) to take with her to the holy places.

She accepted the *kvitlekh*, but, she said, "only as a simple Jew". She added, "perhaps in the Holy Land I will regain my powers."

She gave her prayer house to the community. It was used for prayer and study by the followers of the descendants of Rebbe Motl of Chernobyl until the Nazis destroyed it.

Many versions of the biography of the Maiden of Ludmir end here. But there are stories of her life in the land of Israel based on eyewitness accounts by people who vividly remembered her: grey-eyed, short in stature, still beautiful, with an inner glow.

Hannah Rachel did regain her powers in the Holy Land. She settled in Jerusalem among other chassidic Jews from her region (Volhynia), who knew her as a righteous and learned woman. Many Jews in 19th century Jerusalem were elderly, people who had journeyed there late in life to devote themselves to spirituality and to die in the Holy Land. Hannah Rachel particularly reached out to elderly women – Yiddish speakers like herself, but also Yemenite women and even Muslim Arabs.

She led gatherings around her Shabbat table like a rebbe. Reversing the custom of male rebbes, however, the followers gathered around Hannah Rachel's table were all women, while chassidic men listened from a separate room. On weekdays, she would pray at the Kotel in tallit and tefillin, surrounded by men and women seeking her blessing.

Every Rosh Chodesh, she would lead a group of women to Rachel's Tomb. There she would lead "a magnificent prayer service with greatly impressive rituals." Each Simchat Torah she led a women's service where she made the symbolic rounds with the Torah scroll — carried before her by a male assistant — as women gathered around and men watched from the "women's balcony." All that day she invited women to approach and kiss the holy scroll.

Not every detail of Hannah Rachel's career in the land of Israel was happy. Legend has her trying in vain to force the coming of the messiah through kabbalistic rituals. At least one ritual was supposed to be conducted with a male mystic who let her down and did not arrive; he had been distracted by Elijah the Prophet, because the time was not yet right. Some had the impression that "she greatly missed the good old days" in Ludmir.

Although Hannah Rachel continued on her unique path of holiness and leadership until the end of her life, there is no indication that her death was particularly noted. On the other hand, there are reports that for decades afterwards women would light candles and pray at her grave. And at home in Ludmir, well into the 20th century, women would respond to crises in the Jewish community by wishing that the Maiden would return.

In 2004, with information from Deutsch's research, Rabbi Ruth Gan Kagan, working with the traditional burial society, organized the building of a new tombstone on a gravesite in Jerusalem identified, by a mixture of evidence and guesswork, as Hannah Rachel's. Women and men are again lighting candles and praying there.

Today, many of us who know the story of Hannah Rachel seem to think that her life would have been easier in our time, in our own communities. Lubavitchers claim her as proof of the spiritual potential of women in Chassidism. In the Jewish Renewal movement, she is considered a trailblazer of feminist spirituality.

But would any of us really have been at ease with a woman who, from childhood on, was so immersed in old ways, so indifferent to convention and so confident in her unique path? I suspect that we, too, are too limited to comprehend the path on which her own desires guided her. As Hannah Rachel taught, "the intellect is completely unable to grasp a pure thought that flows from the desires of the heart."

Justin Jaron Lewis, of the University of Manitoba, is the author of Imagining Holiness: Classic Hasidic Tales in Modern Times *(McGill-Queen's University Press.)*

Businesswoman, diarist, 'learned woman'

Portrait painted by Leopold Pilchowski (1869-1933) Bertha Pappenheim posed as Glikl.

Glikl of Hameln

Glikl bas Judah Leib of Hameln (1646-1724), also known as Glückel of Hameln, wrote the earliest surviving autobiography by a Jewish woman.

Her remembrances were recorded to drive away the melancholy that came with the death of her first husband, and to acquaint her children with their ancestry and family ideals.

This engrossing and entertaining document, written in western Yiddish (also known as Judaeo-German), interweaves pious tales and moral messages with Glikl's accounts of events in her own life and those of her family and larger social circle. It is a major historical source for the lives of Jews in early modern Central Europe.

By Judith R. Baskin

Glikl was born in Hamburg into the prosperous milieu of Court Jews, who provided goods and financial services to Central European rulers. She was well-educated and well-read in vernacular Jewish literature. She may also have had some knowledge of Hebrew and German; her memorial notice characterizes her as "a learned woman" (*melumedet* in Hebrew).

Betrothed at 12 and married at 14, Glikl was the mother of 14 children, 12 of whom survived to adulthood. Glikl, who was active in business (mainly precious stones and jewelry) and pious in religious observance, married her children into prominent families across Europe, from Prague to London.

Hayyim Hameln, Glikl's beloved husband, died when he was 44. Glikl later remarried and suffered grave financial and emotional injuries when her second husband, Cerf Levy of Metz, became bankrupt.

Glikl's business activities reflect the growing economic participation of Jews in the non-Jewish world in the early modern period, while her religious and secular learning speaks to the broader horizons and new educational opportunities available to some 17th century Jews, including women.

Glikl's literacy is not surprising, since most Jewish women in late medieval and early modern Central Europe were taught to read and write in the vernacular for their business undertakings. However, literacy did not mean that women had access to books.

Prior to the 16th century, there were few literary texts in Yiddish and they would not have been widely available. The advent of printing changed this dearth of reading matter by making the production of popular literature inexpensive and profitable. Vernacular books for the non-learned segments of Jewish society were readily available by the 1530s. They had an important role in expanding the horizons of many Jews, including women.

Rabbinic injunctions against women's learning were believed to apply to Talmud study, but not to the Bible or legal rulings concerning women's domestic activities. Thus, translations and paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible were among the first vernacular printed books. They often included homilies on the weekly synagogue readings from the Torah and Prophets, as well as stories, legends and parables drawn from rabbinic literature, mystical writings, histories and travel accounts.

Continued on page B10

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She contributed to genre of Jewish ethical wills

Continued from page B9

Ethical treatises, known as musar books, which discussed proper conduct and women's religious and marital obligations, were also popular. Printed Yiddish texts included translations of the Hebrew and Aramaic prayers of the synagogue liturgy; these were necessary for men with weak Hebrew skills.

Far more central to women were the *Tkhines*, vernacular supplicatory prayers which were intended for female use in the synagogue and elsewhere. Printed collections of such prayers began to appear in the 16th century. They demonstrate what women prayed about and offer insight into how they understood their spiritual lives (see *Voices of the Matriarchs: Listening to the Prayers of Early Modern Jewish Women*, by Chava Weissler).

Glikl's memoir indicates her familiarity with such works: it is imbued with a deep feeling of connection to the Jewish community and a strong sense of religious conviction. In writing about her experiences, Glikl not only informed her children about important events that had affected their prosperous and eminent connections scattered across Europe, but she also contributed to the medieval and early modern genre of Jewish ethical wills.

Authors of ethical wills expressed pious advice to their children on how best to live in the world and often included autobiographical details. Glikl was well acquainted with such literature, and refers to several of her contemporaries who left admirable ethical wills for their children, including at least one woman.

Glikl's chronicle, however, goes far beyond the limited boundaries of the usual ethical will in its length and its literary expansiveness. Certainly, there is much in Glikl's piety that is formulaic. She begins her memoir by reminding her children that "the Torah is like a rope which the great and gracious God has thrown to us as we drown in the stormy sea of life that we may seize hold of it and be saved; in the holy Torah we may find and learn all that we need for our journey through this world to the world to come."

Glikl advises her sons and daughters to adhere to the kernel of the Torah: to love their neighbours as themselves. She also tells them to put aside a fixed time for Torah study; only then should they go diligently about their business, "for providing your wife and children a decent livelihood is likewise a commandment of God." Above all, she emphasizes that they must be honest in money matters with both Jews and gentiles, lest the name of Heaven be profaned.

Glikl also transcends conventional wisdom; as historian Natalie Zemon Davis has shown, she makes original use of stories she culled from her voluminous reading, incorporating them into her narrative to provide challenging moral and religious commentary on difficult events in her own life.

In utilizing this rhetorical model, Glikl is following the pattern of rabbinic sermons that used literary materials from both secular and religious sources to enhance and drive home elevated moral lessons.

I would suggest as well that what made it possible for Glikl to demonstrate her piety by writing so eloquently and confidently was a lifetime of reading that allowed her to see herself and her experiences in a larger literary and ethical context.

Thus, Glikl begins her personal history with a problematic fable about the respective duties of parents and children. This story about a bird and its three offspring makes the point that children will never repay their parents' efforts directly, no matter what promises they make along the way. The only parental recompense is to hope that offspring will do as much for their own children as their parents have done for them.

As Glikl writes, "We should, I say, put ourselves to great pains for our children, for on this the world is built, yet we must understand that if children did as much for their parents, the children would quickly tire of it."

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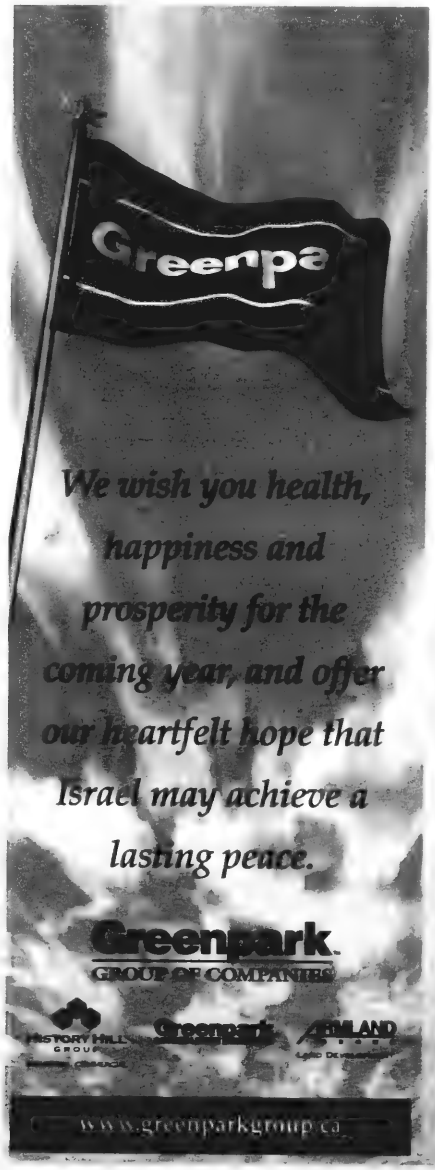
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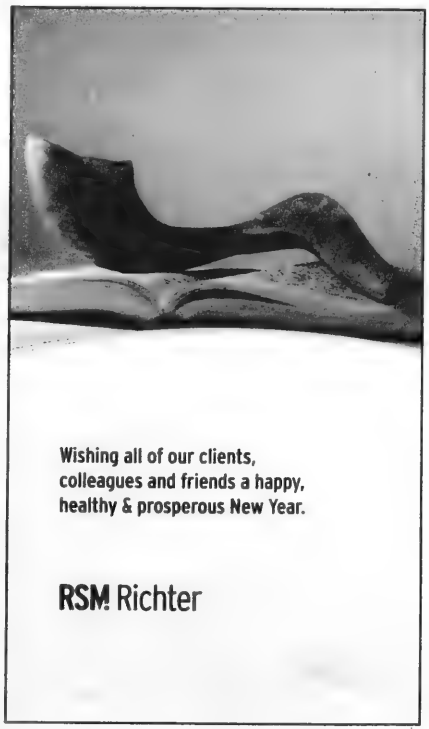


Piety through writing

Continued from page B10

She connects this tale with her own sinful state and the reasons why she is not as good and pious as she would like to be: "No dear children, I am a sinner. Every day, every hour, and at every moment of my life I have sinned nearly all manner of sins. God grant that I may find the means and occasion for repentance. But, alas, the cares of providing for my orphaned children and the ways of the world have kept me far from that state."

With this, Glikl's voice is clearly heard: she has spent a lifetime sacrificing herself and her higher aspirations for her children's benefit. She realizes they will never fully appreciate her efforts. Her only comfort is that they too will extend themselves to the utmost for their ungrateful offspring.

Couching her feelings of disappointment and abandonment in the language of piety and acceptance, Glikl demonstrates that the experience of reading has taught her to speak on several levels at once. Moving beyond the world reflected in Yiddish ethical guides and the *Tkhines*, Glikl seems to see life as essentially a mystery in which people, despite their many individual grievances, will find their only anchor in faith and in raising and launching children into the world as hostages to the future.

Glikl also recounts a life shaped by the inescapable consequences of gender. At one point, she writes: "Even if our sages say, 'It is better not to be born,' meaning that men have so much to endure in this sinful world, still I thank and praise my Creator that he made me according to His will, and beg Him to take me under His holy charge."

When Glikl thanks God for making her according to the divine will, a reader familiar with Jewish tradition hears the daily prayer a woman recites thanking God for making her according to His will, in place of the male version thanking God for not having made him a woman. Yet we sense Glikl's pain and anger at the restrictions imposed on her by Jewish tradition.

When her husband was on his deathbed, other family members embraced him, but Glikl herself, in a state of *niddah*, was unable to do so. As she writes: "I said to my husband, 'Dearest heart, shall I embrace you, for I am unclean.' For I was then at a time I dared not touch him. And he said, 'God forbid, my child — it will not be long before you take your cleansing.' But, alas, it was then too late."

At the same moment, when a friend came to ask Hayyim Hameln if he had any last wishes, Glikl records that her husband said, "None. My wife knows everything. She shall do as she has always done." In this highly ironic juxtaposition, Glikl's remembered anger is palpable. The equal partner with her beloved husband in all their personal affairs and business ventures, Glikl was nonetheless separated from him at the most tragic moment of their lives together because she was female.

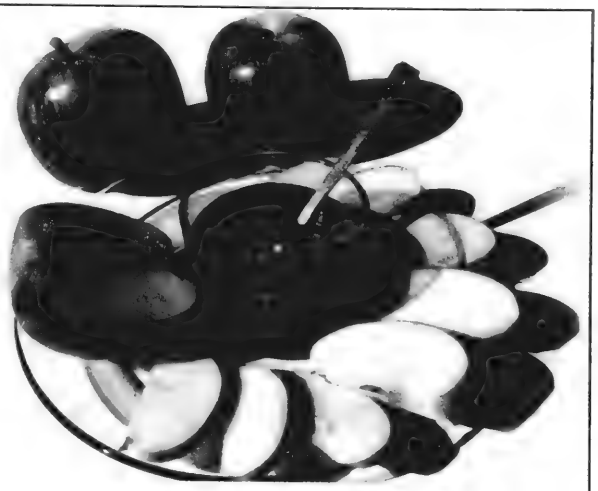
Glikl was an exceptional individual who gives us the missing voices of centuries of Jewish women. The new technology of printing led to the proliferation of Yiddish books that allowed her to be a reader.

Her extensive and deeply engaged reading, together with her immense energy and strong sense of self, empowered her to express her piety and connection with God by becoming a writer.

Inscribing her life in a vernacular language considered appropriate only for women and uneducated men, Glikl produced something new. Her radical expansion of the traditional genre of the ethical will into the realm of autobiography signalled the major social, political and religious changes that awaited Central European Jewry as they entered modernity.

All translations of Glikl's memoirs in German, French, Hebrew and English omit significant amounts of the actual text. Two English translations are *The Life of Glückel of Hameln, 1646-1724*, written by herself and translated and edited by B. Z. Abrahams. There is also *The Memoirs of Glückel of Hameln*, translated by M. Lowenthal and used in this article. For further reading I strongly recommend *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives*, by Natalie Zemon Davis.

Judith R. Baskin, knight professor of humanities at the University of Oregon, is the author of Midrashic Women: Formations of the Feminine in Rabbinic Literature. *Her edited works include* Jewish Women in Historical Perspective *and* The Cambridge Guide to Jewish History, Religion, and Culture *(with Kenneth Seeskin).*



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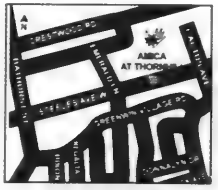

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First modern female Hebrew poet

Rachel Luzzatto Morpurgo

By Howard Tzvi Adelman

Although in writing history, the term first must be used advisedly, Rachel Luzzatto Morpurgo (1790-1871) of Trieste was the first modern female Hebrew poet, actually one of the first modern Hebrew poets and one of the few women Hebrew poets in Jewish history. Her life and writings, consisting of both poetry and letters, show the influence of the European Enlightenment, specifically the Hebrew version of it — the *Haskalah* — which involved the revitalization of Hebrew literature.

Rachel Luzzatto, like most Jewish women with any education, never attended school and acquired all her learning at home from private tutors and family members, including uncles from both sides of her family.

She and her younger cousin, Samuel David Luzzatto (1800-1865), born in the same house as she, studied Hebrew language and literature together. They studied Torah, Rashi's Bible commentaries, several tractates of the Talmud, among them Megillah, Bahya ibn Pakuda's *Hovot Halevavot*, Isaac Aboab's *Menorat Hamaor* and Elijah de Vidas' *Reshit Hokhmah*.

She also read the classic and complex text of Kabbalah, the Zohar, which her cousin Samuel purchased for her at her request in 1817, although, ever the rationalist, he did not approve of her studying it. They also followed the Hebrew periodical literature, the major vehicle of communication for enlightened Jews throughout Europe

Rachel polished her Hebrew skills in correspondence and conversations with Samuel. In 1816, he wrote a Hebrew poem that chided her for disliking every young man whom her parents suggested to her for marriage ("every good young man and doer of valor is contemptible?").

She responded in Hebrew, mimicking his metre, form, content and even vocabulary, describing how she had found a young man, but her parents did not approve of him. This modern Hebrew poetic dialogue was like earlier Hebrew literary dialogues about the virtues and vices of women found in the Bible and in Hebrew literature from medieval Spain and Renaissance Italy; their dialogue, however, was about men.

Finally, in 1819 when she was 29, her parents relented and allowed her to marry the man of her choice: Jacob Morpurgo, a businessman from Gorizia, which like Trieste was under Austrian control.

Nevertheless, after her marriage, because her husband disapproved of her studying and writing, she was no longer able to devote much time or energy to it. In a poem she wrote five years after her wedding, with either prophetic premonition or ironic hindsight, she expressed the hope that "no longer will I remain silent."

As Jewish tradition had urged for centuries, despite some exceptions she served him, did housework, turned a lathe and sewed, making most of her own clothes. She reared children, three sons and one daughter, none of whom ever married. The only time she found for writing was in moments stolen from housework, late at night and on the first day of each Hebrew month, Rosh Chodesh, a day when Jewish women traditionally did no work.

Her cousin, Samuel David Luzzatto, known as Shadal, became a prominent figure in modern Jewish thought and Hebrew literature and served as her confidant and patron in Hebrew writing. He credited her with a major role in influencing his love for Jewish learning in general and for Hebrew poetry in particular.

In 1847, 30 years after her original poetic exchange about men with Shadal, he had it published in a journal devoted to modern Hebrew literature and enlightenment (*Kokhavei Yitzhak*). As a result, she received much public recognition of her talent, and even her husband was now proud of her writing.

However, some enlightened readers of the journal, a few of whom wrote Hebrew poems in her honour, had difficulty accepting that a woman actually wrote them. Some claimed that a man using a female pseudonym had really written them.

Calling her Queen of the Hebrew Versifiers, several authors observed that she had left the way of women, whom they characterized as being without understanding and whose wisdom was in making veils and scarves, but nevertheless they praised her for rising above other women by pursuing her studies and acquiring wisdom. Others lamented the long silence of women's voices and the absence of their poetry. One compared her to the contemporary French Jewish actress of the same name, Eliza Rachel Felix (1821-1858).

Rachel Morpurgo expressed a sense of ambiguity about gender in her writing. On the one hand, in a letter to Shadal she invoked the matriarchs as well the patriarchs: "...may he who blessed our ancestors (*avotenu*) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel, bless the entire community of the congregation of Israel and may we merit and live and go up to offer paschal sacrifices upon the altar..." Such a comment also reflects the keen interest during the 19th century in not only a return of Jews to Palestine but also in the rebuilding the Temple and a return to offering sacrifices in it.

As earlier Hebrew wedding invitations and poetry written by men were often about the relationship between men, such as the groom and his father-in-law, the groom and his teacher, or the two fathers-in-law, Rachel wrote a wedding poem for a cousin, also named Rachel Luzzatto, about her relationship with the bride, *For the one for whom my desire will be called* (*Lezot yikareh heftzi-bah*):

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Men's ambivalence hampered her

Continued from page B12

Rachel with Rachel is bonded
like a necklace on the neck
your love for me is an ornament
on my head you are a crown.

Her poetry and letters in Hebrew and Aramaic showed an awareness of contemporaneous Hebrew literature, including comments about the accomplishments of other literary Jewish women. These included the Rabanit Tamar Luzzatto, wife of Mordecai Samuel Ghirondi, and Flora (1824-1910), the daughter of Meyer Randegger (1780-1853).

Flora, who with her sister Teressa ran a girls school in Trieste, made an Italian translation of the Haggadah (*perush*) that Flora's father published in an edition of the Haggadah in 1851. In the first edition of this Haggadah, however, Flora's father did not mention her name, rendering her educational and literary accomplishment invisible. However, Rachel's public acknowledgement of Flora's work might have been the reason that Flora's name appeared in the second edition of the Haggadah.

In 1855, when on their way to Palestine, the philanthropists Moses Montefiore and his wife Judith stopped in Trieste, Rachel expressed her desire at the age of 65 to accompany them there as a servant, a request that left no record in Montefiore's travel account.

In her ability to write in Hebrew, her passion to rebuild the Temple and her desire to travel to Palestine, Rachel presents the growing enthusiasm by some European Jews to live in Palestine. In her poetry, Rachel also recorded other themes, such as the burden of raising her children, the delivery of an anti-Jewish sermon and the *Tur*, a code of Jewish law.

On the other hand, despite her accomplishments, in a letter to Mendel Stern, editor of *Kokhavei Yitzhak*, Rachel wrote, "The truth is that it is not for a woman to come forward . . . but I feared that you would cast me into the depths of the sea when you saw that there was nothing substantial in my words but the way of women..."

Similarly, in 1847 when she learned about the praise that her work was receiving in the Hebrew periodical literature, she wrote a poem that included not only references to her fears of humiliation, but also citations of traditional expressions against women, such as "women are simple-minded" and "there is no wisdom for woman except the spindle."

Rachel Morpurgo regularly signed herself as The Worm, or Rimah the initials of Rachel Morpugo Haketanah, meaning, Little Rachel Morpurgo, expressions of seeming modesty, but often employed by prominent rabbis. Indeed, because her initials began with the letter *resh*, they have the appearance of referring to a rabbi.

Poems from Rachel Morpurgo's collection of poetry and letters, *Ugav Rahel*, published in 1890 and 1942, both now rare, were translated into several European languages, included in a few anthologies of modern Hebrew poetry and remembered in some of the histories of modern Hebrew literature. The emphasis, however, was often on her novelty and her uniqueness as the first female modern Hebrew poet, a unicum, rather than on her literary merits.

Unique or not, the first or not, the life of Rachel Luzzatto Morpurgo shows that one woman's literary accomplishments were highly charged because they could both reflect favourably on the status of the entire family in the community or could hurt their honour.

At each step of her literary accomplishments, from learning to read, to writing, to publishing, men's ambivalence or outright hostility hampered her progress. Advanced educational and literary accomplishments for Jewish women were unusual, but not impossible and, like those of Christian women, constituted a private, domestic matter and a testimony to the effectiveness of private instruction.

Jewish women could enter intellectual activity at home, in correspondence, at literary gatherings and in publications. The Jewish community had the same dilemma as Christian society, namely that while literary pursuits would draw women away from their domestic responsibilities, at the same time women's illiteracy would be counter-productive for the family and the community.

The generally poor state of Hebrew knowledge among Jewish women, however, was part of the wider lack of knowledge of Hebrew on the part of most, but certainly not all, Jews. As Hebrew education in the Yishuv and then the State of Israel made it possible for greater Hebrew literacy among all Jews there, Jewish women gradually joined the ranks of Hebrew writers.

Howard Tzvi Adelman is the director of the Jewish Studies program, Queen's University.

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From small town Lancaster to Philadelphia

Painting by Thomas Sully

[Rebecca Gratz]

By Jessica Lang

Rebecca Gratz, born in 1781, was the seventh of 12 children born to Michael Gratz and Miriam Simon. Michael Gratz was raised in Langendorf, Silesia. After the death of their father, the Gratz children, only teenagers, were largely cared for by their oldest brother, Hyman. In order to better his professional prospects, Barnard Gratz, Michael's older brother, arranged to join his cousin's exporting business in London. While there he developed a close working relationship with a Philadelphia merchant.

By the mid-1750s, Barnard moved to Philadelphia to pursue business opportunities and arranged that Michael should take his place in his cousin's business in London. In 1758, acting on his brother's invitation, Michael moved to Philadelphia.

During his first years in Philadelphia, Michael worked closely with his brother and successfully cultivated known business contacts. The two brothers bought land in western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. They developed a supply business for settlers moving west and imported and sold British and Caribbean products.

One important business associate of the Gratz brothers was Joseph Simon, of Lancaster, Pa. Simon, an observant Jew who had immigrated to Lancaster around 1740, built a series of highly profitable partnerships with merchants who supplied traders and peddlers selling their supplies west.

On June 20, 1769, Michael Gratz married Miriam Simon, one of Joseph Simon's four daughters. They wed in Philadelphia in a ceremony that was well attended and considered an event of significant social importance. A year later, and every 18 to 36 months thereafter, Miriam gave birth to another child.

Rebecca Gratz was born in Lancaster, Pa., a small town where her maternal grandparents lived, approximately 70 miles from Philadelphia.

Continued on page B15

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'Gifted with language'

Continued from page B14

When the British occupied Philadelphia in 1777, the Gratz brothers, who actively worked to supply American troops with a range of supplies, took refuge in Lancaster, where they were well-connected professionally and personally. Rebecca and her older sister Sarah were both born during this time.

The Gratz family returned to Philadelphia in 1782 and became immersed in building a new larger synagogue, Kahal Kadosh Mikveh Israel, an institution that became central to Jewish communal life in Philadelphia and one that the extended Gratz family, Rebecca in particular, devoted themselves to developing.

Rebecca was raised in a family that was committed to the Jewish community, both locally and internationally — her family sent funds back to family members struggling in Silesia.

She was also raised in a strongly federalist community and as such taught about the importance of a virtuous citizenry, one that was highly influenced by the role of women as Republican mothers, responsible for inculcating and passing on the values of the republic to the next generation.

In many ways, as the Gratz family illustrates, commitment to Jewish life and adherence to the national ideology of the late 18th and early 19th century overlapped with and reinforced one another.

As with many women who came from families of means and who came of age in the post-revolutionary era, Rebecca Gratz's education consisted of both formal and informal elements. Formal education for women who came of age in the years prior to the revolution, if offered at all, focused on ornamental instruction largely devoted to handiwork, musicality, dance and French.

In contrast, post-revolutionary leaders advocated for women to be a more informed part of the citizenry, knowledgeable in literature and able to write, speak and spell and proficient in mathematics, bookkeeping and home economics.

As Benjamin Rush, a signatory of the Declaration of Independence and a Philadelphia physician and educator, noted, women should be "able to instruct their sons in the principles of liberty and government."

While little is known about Rebecca Gratz's formal education, she likely attended an academy for girls where she was taught literature, rhetoric, politics, mathematics and home economics. In addition to this, her informal education consisted of the many books and manuals in her parents' library, many of which would have been devoted to the instruction and intellectual development of children. As well, Rebecca had access to a range of Jewish texts, including Jewish liturgy, explanations of Jewish ritual and practice, Jewish history and Jewish philosophy.

By 1800, Rebecca had already tried her hand at poetry but, as she wrote to her sister Rachel in 1800, "...had long since given up all attempts" at it, citing her efforts as "poor nonsensical stuff."

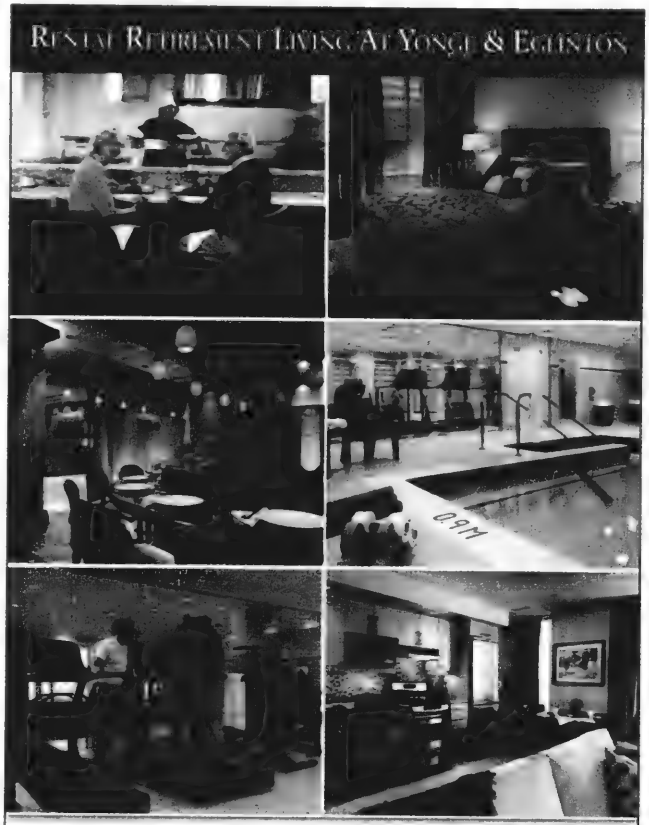
While she returned to composing poetry later in her life, none of her poems were published. Instead, Rebecca turned to writing as a means to explore her own thoughts and ideas about topics such as romance, family, illness, duty, spirituality and community responsibility.

In 1800, when she was 19, presented specific reasons to engage in regular letter writing: two sisters were away from home on prolonged visits to family and friends and Michael Gratz suffered a stroke from which he never completely recovered. Rebecca gradually assumed the majority of nursing care for her father in spite of finding the work "agonizing" and a "trial," as she confided in a letter to one of her sisters.

While the entire Gratz family devoted considerable time to correspondence, both in order to conduct business and to reach friends and family, Rebecca, as many of her correspondents recognized, was exceptionally gifted with language. Her friend Maria, impatient with her own writing sensibility, wrote to Rebecca in 1801 "How I wish for that easy stile [sic] you possess."

Rebecca herself admits that writing and reading letters served as an important emotional support system. In 1800, while nursing her father, she wrote to her sister Sarah, "[letters] prevent anxiety — and give me the pleasure of conversing with you — therefore I write." Two years later she said in a letter to Maria that, "when my spirits are uncommonly depressed I fly to my desk and [re]read [your letters]."

Continued on page B16



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Co-founded charities for needy

Continued from page B15

Rebecca spent much of her life nursing various family members through illness, childbirth and old age. In 1823, after the untimely death of her sister Rachel, Rebecca brought her six nephews and nieces home with her to raise. The many letters exchanged between Rebecca and her family and friends detail her despair of the sickroom, her compassion and her commitment to her family. Faith is a topic increasingly addressed as more and more of her loved ones die.

In spite of these somber events and descriptions, Rebecca's letters also include references to men, love, and "attachments." While Rebecca never married, she enjoyed the friendship and attention of a number of men, many of whom became regular correspondents and visitors.

Because of Rebecca's status as the daughter of a wealthy businessman, and because she was known for her beauty and intellect, she was at the centre of Philadelphia society and engaged socially with visitors such as authors Washington Irving and Catherine Sedgwick.

FHBS first of its kind nationwide

She was introduced to Thomas Sully, a then relatively unknown painter who later painted several portraits of Rebecca. She met with Joseph Bonaparte when he visited the city and eventually became a correspondent with Maria Edgeworth, the British author.

In 1801, Rebecca took her first formal action to work on behalf of the needy in Philadelphia by creating, with 22 other women (one-third of whom were Jewish), a charity called The Female Association for the Relief of Women and Children in Reduced Circumstances (FA). The goal of the group was not to help "the needy indiscriminately, but for those whose circumstances were reduced." Assistance came in the form of funds and education for children in the families.

The founders of FA wanted to help those who, for accepted reasons (such as the failure of the family's business or illness or death of the family's breadwinners), suffered a reversal of fortune.

The FA founders believed that such women were virtuous and, consequently, worthy of assistance without suffering the ignominy of public aid.

In keeping with the Jewish tradition of anonymous giving, the FA never publicized the names of fund recipients.

The second organization Rebecca helped found, in 1815, was the Philadelphia Orphan Asylum. Guided by a Christian ethos and led by primarily Presbyterian women, she remained on the board or working as a fundraiser for both groups for more than 30 years.

Of all her sisters, Rebecca remained closest with Sarah who, also unmarried, shared the many responsibilities towards the extended family.

Sarah's death in 1817 marked a changing point in Rebecca's life, one that was further compounded by the death of her sister Rachel in 1823 and by the loss of a number of nieces and nephews. Rebecca withdrew from Philadelphia society and became committed to the study and practice of Jewish ritual.

In 1819, Rebecca, with a number of other women from Mikveh Israel, the congregation to which her father and uncle had contributed, created a charitable society for needy Jewish women.

The Female Hebrew Benevolent Society (FHBS) was the first of its kind nationwide. As with the FA, FHBS directors wanted to give needy families the opportunity to educate their children, specifically with an eye towards Jewish rituals and practices. They also wanted to be sure to award help to those who were pious but needy, virtuous but suffering from compromised circumstances not of their own doing. In this way, both organizations sought to counter a belief that charitable foundations promoted laziness, malingering, or other forms of "immoral" behavior.

Continued on page B17

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'Crowning happiness' was association with teachers

Continued from page B16

Simultaneous with her work in creating the FHBS, Rebecca began working on perhaps her single most lasting contribution to American Jewish life, the creation of the first Hebrew Sunday school.

While the personal losses that Rebecca suffered led her to reaffirm her connection to Judaism, a national movement of Christian evangelism gained momentum during these same years.

The FHBS was partly inspired by Rebecca's devotion to her community, but also by a recognition that missionaries often targeted the poor. This same confluence of personal identification and public awareness resulted in the founding of the Hebrew Sunday school in 1838. The founding of it was officially an action of the FHBS, but one that came directly from Rebecca's urging to address "the mental impoverishment of those who are rising to take their places among the thousands of Israel scattered throughout the families of the earth."

The FHBS acknowledged Rebecca's wishes by founding a Sunday school, one modelled in many ways on the Protestant Sunday schools that had been established in Philadelphia since the 1790s. Protestant Sunday schools offered, through catechistic teaching, the opportunity for poor children to acquire literacy.

Rebecca's school, which adopted books published by the Christian American Sunday School Union (she carefully modified inappropriate content), was set to meet on Sundays, a non-holy day for Jews, in order to teach Jewish ritual, practice and liturgy. At the same time, Rebecca emphasized the importance of spending the Sabbath with family.

Rebecca was elected the Sunday school's first superintendent and served in this capacity for more than 25 years. The school's teachers and administrators were all women, the first time women played such a prominent role in Jewish education.

One of their goals was accessibility to the Philadelphia Jewish community. To achieve this, Rebecca and the FHBS determined that the school would be co-educational and that classes would be taught in English. The curriculum was devoted to biblical stories, Jewish philosophy, Maimonides' 13 Principles of Faith, Jewish values and Jewish law.

In one of her final reports, Rebecca said that the "crowning happiness of my days has been my association with my beloved companions [the teachers and managers of the Hebrew Sunday school] in the duties we have shared together."

Rebecca made concerted efforts to train other women around the country in Jewish community organization. The result was that her example inspired the founding of charitable institutions, many of which were Jewish, in cities nationwide. The Philadelphia institutions she helped establish had a long and rich life.

Rebecca Gratz died on Aug. 27, 1869, at age 88. She had outlived all but one sibling and many friends, nieces and nephews. In 1986, the Sunday Hebrew school merged with the Talmud Torah Schools of Philadelphia and to this day continues to educate Jewish students.

Jessica Lang is associate professor of English at Baruch College, City University of New York. She specializes in early American literature, Jewish American literature and women's fiction.

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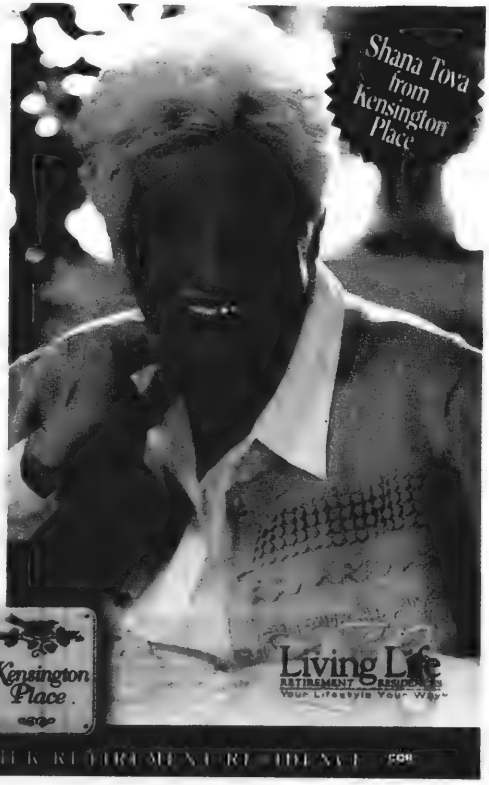

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An icon of selfless devotion

[Henrietta Szold]

If you were to ask a Jewish woman in the 21st century to name the most prominent Jewish woman of the 20th century, the odds are that her response would be a single name: Golda Meir.

Though surely not wrong, the answer is obviously incomplete. Most especially it omits the commanding and equally vital figure in Jewish history, Henrietta Szold (1860-1945). Both women have become icons of their time in the sense that they are readily recognizable symbols with powerful cultural significance for the Jewish people.

Meir is a symbol of the Zionist woman's indomitable will to achieve her ideals in the hitherto male public realm of Israeli life and politics; Szold is a symbol of the Zionist woman's compassionate determination in her utterly selfless devotion to the healing of the sick, to the advance of modern medicine and to the rescue of thousands of children from the ravenous Nazi craving for Jewish blood.

By Carole Kessner

Because Golda's work was in the public sphere, especially in her role as the first female prime minister of the State of Israel, it is obvious why today her name would be the first to come to mind. But in her time, Henrietta Szold, too, was revered, respected and renowned. Her work, however, was in the less public realms of Jewish intellectuals, social justice activists, and fighters for human rights. Hers was the caring heart and will that created Hadassah, and hers was the anguished heart that created Youth Aliyah.

Szold's story begins in 1860 in Baltimore, Md., a year after her parents had emigrated from their native Austria-Hungary. Having been newly appointed as the rabbi of Baltimore's Congregation Oheb Shalom, Benjamin Szold and his wife Sophie arrived in the United States in 1859. Their daughter Henrietta, was born on Dec. 21, 1860, the first of eight daughters — two of whom would die in infancy and one at the age of 26.

She was born at a crux in American history: six weeks before her birth, Abraham Lincoln had been elected the 16th president of the United States, and on Apr. 12, 1861, the Confederate army under Gen. Pierre Beauregard opened fire on Fort Sumter in Charleston, S.C., and the civil war began.

Later in her life, Szold could still stir up memories of the nation's shock at the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. At age four, Henrietta had heard the sad whistle of the train that carried the body of the martyred president as it stopped in Baltimore. She had been among the throngs that watched the mournful funeral procession as it passed through the grieving city, transporting the flag draped casket to lie in state before resuming its last journey to Lincoln's burial place in Springfield, Ill.

Yes, Henrietta Szold was born at a moment in American history that would forever stamp her as categorically American. And yet, Szold, who died six months before the end of the Second World War, on Feb. 13, 1945, at the age of 84, would experience in her long and active life transformative events that would make significant claims on her American identity.

Eleven years younger than Emma Lazarus (1849-1887) and 38 years older than Golda Meir(1898-1978), Henrietta Szold's long life not only reflected the genteel worlds of Lazarus's victorian America and German-Sephardic Jewish heritage, but also Golda Meir's immigrant Russian Jewish world in America and her life in the Palestinian Yishuv.

The first influence on the young Henrietta Szold was that of her parents. Rabbi Szold was that quintessential German-Jewish intellectual who had been influenced by the enlightenment of Moses Mendelssohn. German, not Yiddish, was Rabbi Szold's language of conversation and sermon. He earned his smichah(rabbinical ordination) at the Presburg Yeshiva and had a secular education at the Universities of Vienna and Breslau.

While a student at Vienna he had participated in the revolution of 1848 and had been exiled from the city with fellow liberal students when the revolution failed. Rabbi Szold's congregation, Oheb Shalom, was drawn from the large German-Jewish immigrant community which, at the time, comprised one-fifth of Baltimore's population.

He was revered as a compassionate and deeply devoted spiritual leader and was widely acknowledged as a superb scholar of Judaism, but his social liberalism did not carry over to his insistence on strict traditional religious practice or to his opposition to the burning Jewish topic of the day, reform radicalism.

Continued on page B19

Henrietta joined Hebrew Literary Society

Continued from page B18

Henrietta's mother, Sophie Schaar Szold, the daughter of a well-to-do Hungarian landowner and brewer, had been tutored at home and was accomplished in the Hungarian and German culinary and cultural arts. In Baltimore she ran a tight but elegant domestic ship, the better to create continuity and comfort for her husband, as well as exemplary domestic instruction for her daughter.

Rabbi Szold's first born daughter Henrietta was his true intellectual heir. From him she received the attention and education that customarily was given to an oldest son. Benjamin Szold was quick to recognize her ability and intellect.

From him, Henrietta learned German, English, French and Hebrew as well as a range of secular studies, but most importantly he gave her a rigorous grounding in Judaism. Perhaps his decision to educate her Jewishly was an unconscious redress of those German women of a half century earlier, the famous salon Jewesses, who were provided with excellent secular educations, but denied Jewish education and later embraced assimilation and often conversion.

Meanwhile, her feisty mother taught her the domestic arts of cooking, sewing and gardening, imprinting on her daughter's psyche the conviction that primacy for a woman was marriage and motherhood. Much later in Henrietta's life, this counsel would have painful repercussions, but it also would provide the channel for sublimated creativity.

Henrietta was so gifted a student that by the time she reached her teens she had become her father's amanuensis, his editor, his translator and his right-hand girl. Her complete deferential devotion and scrupulous attention to her father's scholarly pursuits, however, set in place an emotional pattern that had great effect on the events of her life.

After her comprehensive home schooling, Henrietta Szold attended Western Female High School; it has since been reported that her record there has never been equaled. Upon graduation in 1877, she was instantly offered a job at the fashionable Misses Adams's academy for girls, teaching French, German, mathematics and botany.

Simultaneously she taught at the Oheb Shalom religious school and gave adult classes in Bible and Jewish history. Meanwhile, Szold enhanced her own education by attending lectures at the newly established Johns Hopkins and the Peabody Institute. As if she were not sufficiently occupied, she began a writing career of her own, serving as the Baltimore correspondent of the *New York Jewish Messenger*, signing her articles Sulamith.

By the time Henrietta Szold was in her 20s, the Jewish community had experienced a sea change. The draconian discriminatory Russian May Laws of 1881 drove masses of Jews to seek passage across the ocean to North America.

The port of Baltimore was a popular destination for the fleeing Jews who almost overnight created a Baltimore Russian Jewish immigrant ghetto. There were intellectuals and Hebrew scholars among the new immigrants, who not surprisingly gravitated to the Szolds' circle and soon formed a Hebrew Literary Society, which Henrietta joined. In turn, they sponsored Henrietta's unique idea for a practical experiment in adult education: night school for immigrants. Henrietta taught and administered the school until 1898 when the city took it over. Szold's night school became the main model for the absorption of immigrants in America, later so comically depicted in Leo Rosten's classic *The Education of Hyman Kaplan*.

The arrival of so many Russian Jews played a key role for Szold in another way. Though these Russian Jewish intellectuals had fled to the United States, they referred to themselves as *hovevei Zion* (lovers of Zion) and were passionately committed to the idea of a physical and spiritual return of the Jews to their ancient land in Palestine. Though they did not emigrate there themselves, they raised money, advanced the cause of Hebrew language and literature and did everything they could to promote interest in Eretz Israel and help support those who did live there.

These proto-Zionists profoundly inspired Henrietta Szold, and although her father did not espouse the cause, affection for these Russians turned his daughter into a lifelong Zionist. It was at this time too that Henrietta was given the chance to turn her love for Jewish scholarship into paid professional work.

She became the secretary of the Jewish Publication Society, in which capacity she translated many books, did the major part of the work for the first *American Jewish Year Book* and was sole editor of the 1904-1908 volumes. Szold also took a major role in assembling the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

In 1902, Rabbi Benjamin Szold died. This was a traumatic loss for Henrietta who not only had adored him, but for so long had selflessly subordinated her own intellectual inclinations to his. She was now 42 years old and unmarried. She had made many close male friends within the Szold intellectual circles, but unlike her sisters, who all would marry, Henrietta apparently never had developed any romantic attachments. She was, however, now free to pursue her own intellectual interests.

Continued on page B20

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Appalled by poverty and disease in Palestine

Continued from page B19

In 1903, Henrietta and her mother moved to New York City. Having taken the most unusual step of making application to the recently established all male Jewish Theological Seminary, she soon learned from her friend, Cyrus Adler (later the chancellor of the seminary), that she would be accepted as a special student. She was the first and only woman admitted.

At the seminary she studied Hebrew language and texts while continuing her work for the Jewish Publication Society. The Seminary, however, proved to be the backdrop for the most devastating and humiliating episode of Henrietta Szold's life: she would finally experience love.

At the seminary Szold met, studied, and worked with the brilliant German-Jewish scholar, the author of the monumental *Legends of the Jews*, Professor Louis Ginzberg. Though he was 13 years her junior, she became infatuated — indeed obsessed — with him.

Once again she assumed the role of amanuensis, editor, collaborator and translator. And once again she willingly subordinated her work to his. They became inseparable and were thus observed by the close-knit German- Jewish social circle of the JTS. The relationship carried on for five years.

Henrietta, by this time 48 years old, continued to believe that Ginzberg would propose marriage — out of timid inexperience and her customary Victorian decorum, she kept her feelings to herself. Thus, a massive shock sent her into a profound physical and emotional depression when Ginzberg returned from a European trip in the summer of 1908 and informed Henrietta that he was now engaged to a young woman he had met only three times. The powerful story of Szold's unrequited love is fully described and documented in Baila Shargel's superb book: *Lost Love: The Untold Story of Henrietta Szold.*

Sophie Szold, a most practical woman, countered her daughter's breakdown with plans to go abroad. Taking a six-month leave, Henrietta and her mother embarked on a destiny changing trip to Europe and Palestine.

During her sojourn in Palestine, Szold was enchanted by the landscape and inspired by the spirit, but appalled by the widespread conditions of poverty and disease. Equally aghast, her mother exclaimed, "here is work for you. This is what your group ought to be doing."

When Henrietta returned home in 1910, at the age of 49, her true vocation began. She would devote the rest of her life to Zionism and the health, education, and social welfare of the Yishuv.

Willing acceptance of her mother's cautionary charge, and an exasperating experience as honorary secretary of the mostly male Federation of American Zionists, propelled Henrietta Szold into envisioning a national women's Zionist organization devoted to practical projects.

Her dream became reality on Feb. 24, 1914, when the 20 members of Daughters of Zion, Hadassah chapter, met in Rabbi Judah Magnes's Temple Emanu-El, constituting the founding session of the national organization of Zionist women. Magnes himself urged the adoption of the simple name, Hadassah.

Continued on page B21

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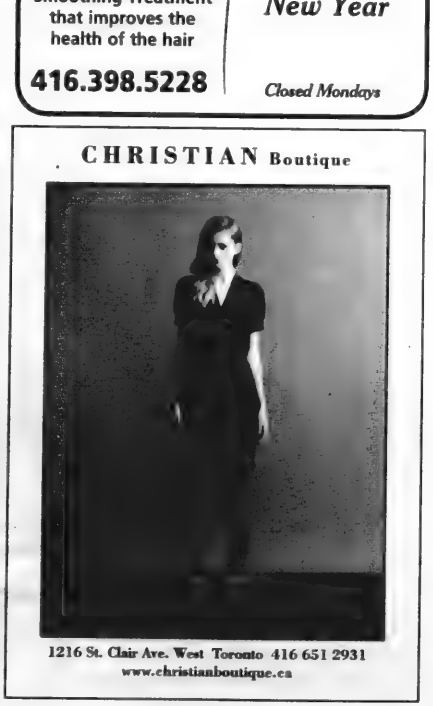

Saving endangered children her greatest contribution

Continued from page B20

At this session Szold outlined her critique of the deplorable conditions she saw in Palestine. A few months later the group began to think of possible projects: an American style visiting nurse service, a maternity hospital, a school for midwives, a baby nursery and more. This was Zionism in a feminist mode — though Szold would resist the label.

The first important project was the establishment of a visiting nurse system. It began on Jan. 18, 1913, when Hadassah sent two American nurses, Rose Kaplan and Rachel Landy, to Palestine. They leased a house and set up shop in Mea Shearim, the orthodox area of Jerusalem. Though expansion was severely curtailed by the First World War, by 1918 Hadassah arranged to send the American Zionist Medical Unit to Palestine, where it established nursing, medical and dental clinics, hospitals and infant care stations. It also dispatched sanitary engineers, equipment, medicine, food and administrators. Thus began the work of the newly named Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO).

In 1920 Henrietta Szold returned to Palestine. Her work in the Yishuv and in America was so successful that in 1927 the World Zionist Congress appointed her to the three member Palestine Executive with a portfolio for health and education. Adding to her tasks in these two fields, Szold worked to bring American scientific social work ideas to the Yishuv.

From 1931 to 1939 she held the social welfare portfolio of the Knesset Yisrael, using her authority to establish the Social Services Department of the Knesset, to set up social service agencies in the major cities and to establish the first school of social work.

Throughout her varied activities and experiences in the Yishuv during the '20s and '30s, Szold's faith in the justice of the Zionist cause never wavered. She was convinced that it would one day become a self-governing state of the Jews, though despite her first-hand experiences during the continual Arab attacks, disturbances and riots, she rejected the British plan for partition and supported her old friend Judah Magnes's organization Brit Shalom that envisioned a binational state of Jews and Arabs.

Szold died on Feb. 13, 1945. She did not live long enough to learn the full extent of the Holocaust, nor did she witness the establishment of the State of Israel or the wars of 1948, 1967, 1973, the war of attrition and the intifadas. Had she lived longer, she might have altered her view.

Notwithstanding the magnitude of her humanitarian contribution to the Yishuv, Szold's greatest contribution to the Jewish people was as the director of the newly formed agency Youth Aliyah. The calamitous Nuremberg Laws, enacted just after Hitler's election as chancellor of Germany, had placed Jewish children in dire circumstances — Youth Aliyah was a plan to save the endangered children from victimization.

It was conceived by Recha Freier in Germany in 1932, implemented by Szold in Palestine in 1933 and undertaken by Hadassah in America in 1935. By the outbreak of the Second World War, more than 5,000 children had arrived in Palestine. During the war years the agency rescued over 11,000 and sent them to kibbutzim and villages where they were trained and educated.

Szold had come out of retirement to set in motion a lifesaving process that continued beyond her lifetime to rescue endangered and disadvantaged children through each successive wave of immigration, from war-torn Europe, from the Jewish quarters of North African countries, from Islamic countries of the Middle East and later from Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia. To date, more than 350,000 children have been helped.

Henrietta Szold was a great woman whose first desire was to be a wife and mother, but sadly she never married and never bore children. Nonetheless, out of the pain and passion of unrequited love came the compassionate will to succor the needy, relieve the suffering and rescue the children.

Out of her great intellect and gift for administration came the creation of the largest women's and Jewish membership organization in the United States. In the words of Abba Eban, "Henrietta Szold was held by all in such deep affection that she was known as the 'mother of the Yishuv.'"

Carole Kessner is Professor Emerita, SUNY Stony Brook. Her biography Marie Syrkin: Values Beyond the Self *received the National Jewish Book Award for Biography in 2008.*

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[Israel Sun photos]

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National heroine who resisted the Nazis

Hannah Szenes

When writing his *History of the Middle Ages*, Dutch historian Johan Huizinga was asked why he didn't include Joan of Arc. "Because I didn't want my story to have a heroine," he replied. Yet it is impossible to fully understand the Middle Ages without knowing the history of the women who lived at that time, just as it impossible to fully grasp the history of the Holocaust without focusing upon the girls and women who lived during those years.

A special chapter in the history of that period is devoted to the heroes and heroines who resisted the Nazis and their henchmen, and an even more unique one to those Jews then living outside occupied Europe who returned to enemy lands in order to assist their persecuted brethren. One of these was Hannah Szenes.

By Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz

Hannah Szenes was born as Anna Szenes in Budapest on July 17, 1921, to a wealthy, distinguished and assimilated Hungarian Jewish family. Her father, Bela Szenes, who died when she was a child, had been a well-known writer and dramatist and her mother, Katharine, an elegant homemaker.

Having been given a modern Hungarian education, Aniko, as her family called her, was exposed to anti-Semitism during her high school years, propelling her to learn more about her Jewish origins. It was at that time that she discovered the Zionist movement, joined a Zionist youth movement and learned Hebrew in preparation for immigration to Palestine.

In 1939, after completing high school, Szenes travelled to Palestine to further her education at the girls agricultural school in Nahalal, where she continued penning entries in the diary that she had begun in Hungary. Having completed a two-year agricultural course, Szenes joined the Sdot Yam kibbutz at Caeserea where she worked in the kitchen and in the kibbutz laundry.

Szenes' life was to change in 1943 when officials belonging to the Jewish Agency for Palestine approached her with a proposal: to join a clandestine military project whose ultimate purpose was to offer aid to beleaguered European Jewry. Members of the project would be trained as wireless officers and would be sent to Europe to aid the British armed forces, primarily assisting in getting downed Allied pilots out of occupied Europe and back to their own forces. Simultaneous with their British mission, the Jewish soldiers from Palestine would have a Zionist mission: to assist Jews in various parts of Europe and to aid in rebuilding the Zionist movement in these areas after the war would be over.

Szenes, who became a member of the Palmach (the pre-state fighting forces), joined a British army course for wireless operators and later participated in a course for paratroopers, learning to use the necessary equipment and prepare for parachuting into Europe. Before leaving Palestine for further training in Alexandria, she met with her brother Giora (Guiri) who had just arrived from Europe — the sole surviving member of her immediate family other than her mother — and the two spent the afternoon together on the shores of the Mediterranean, bringing each other up-to-date with personal and family news.

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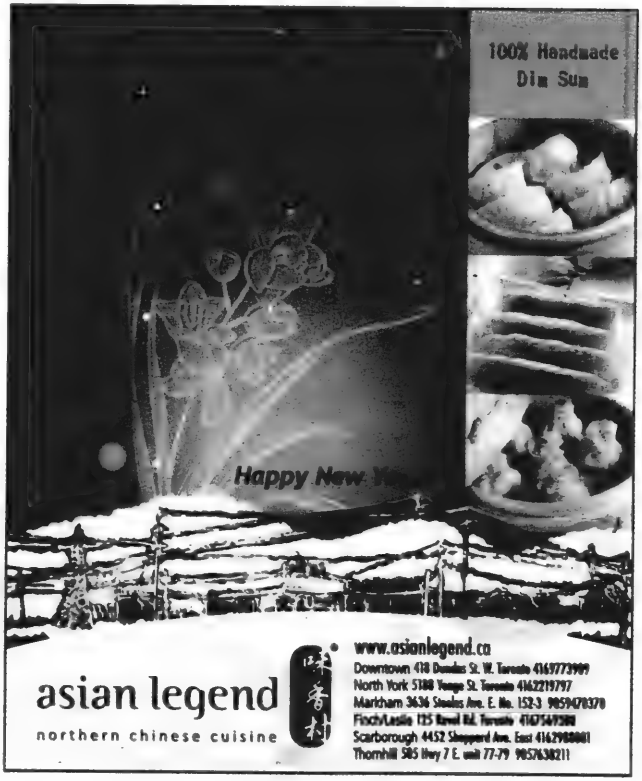
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Captured within hours of crossing Hungarian border

Continued from page B23

Szenes' mission commenced in mid-March 1944 when she and several other Palestinian-Jewish volunteers (most of whom were also of European origin) were dropped into Yugoslavia in order to aid the anti-Nazi forces until being able to enter Hungary. The Nazi invasion of Hungary in March 1944 postponed their plans and during that time the group aided Tito's partisans in Yugoslavia. In May 1944 while in Yugoslavia, Szenes wrote one of her poems which would later become a symbol of the entire Parachutist's mission: *Ashrei ha-Gafrur* (Blessed is the match). The poem would ultimately reach Palestine only in September 1944 when another one of the parachutists from Palestine would bring it back with him upon his return from Europe.

Blessed is the match that is consumed in kindling flame.
Blessed is the flame that burns in the secret fastness of the heart.
Blessed is the heart with strength to stop its beating for honour's sake.
Blessed is the match that is consumed in kindling flame.

Szenes crossed from Yugoslavia to Hungary at the end of May, leaving her comrades with the wish that she hoped to meet them again in her native land. Three years later, one of the other parachutists described the last moments that he spent in the presence of the young woman who would become one of the symbols of Zionist heroism.

After walking together to the edge of the village the two said their last goodbyes. Szenes shook his hand, thanked him for the days and experiences together, and with the words "see you soon in the land of the enemy" parted from him and went on her way.

"I stood in place, my eyes accompanying the girl marching confidently toward an unknown fate, and before the road turned and took her out of our line of sight, she paused, turned, and waved goodbye. Who was to know that I would never see her again..."

Szenes was captured within hours of crossing the Hungarian border and sent to a prison in Budapest where she was tortured by the Hungarian authorities in the hope of receiving information regarding Allied wireless codes. Within days of entering Hungary, her two co-parachutists were also in Nazi hands, unaware of Szenes' whereabouts. Only one of them — Yoel Palgi — was to survive the war.

When the Hungarian authorities realized that Szenes would not be broken, they arrested her mother and the two women met for the first time in almost five years. Katherine Szenes had no idea that her daughter had left Palestine — not to speak of the fact that she was now in Hungary.

Initially shocked at seeing her child — now a young woman with bruised eyes who had lost a front tooth in the torture process — she rapidly regained her composure, conducting herself throughout the meeting with incredible dignity. Both mother and daughter refused to provide the authorities with the performance they expected nor did Szenes give them the intelligence information they had sought.

For three months, the two women were incarcerated in the same prison but were unable to catch more than short glimpses of each other. Following her sudden release in September 1944, Katharine Szenes spent most of her waking hours seeking legal assistance for her daughter, who — being a Hungarian national — was to be tried as a spy.

In November 1944, Hannah Szenes came up before a tribunal and with no legal assistance elegantly pleaded her own cause, warning the judges that the end of the war was nearing and that their own fate would soon hang in the balance. Convicted as a spy, Szenes was sentenced to death; however, the court had decided not to carry out the sentence with alacrity.

Continued on page B25

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In the forefront of modern era's heroism

Continued from page B24

Nevertheless, her poignant speech during the trial was taken as a personal affront by the officer in charge, Colonel Simon, who came into her cell on the morning of Nov. 7 and presented her with two choices: to beg for a pardon, or to face death by a firing squad.

Refusing to beg clemency from her captors, whom she did not consider legally permitted to try her case, Szenes penned short notes to her mother and her comrades and went to her death at age 23 in a snow-covered Budapest courtyard, refusing a blindfold in order to face her murderers at the moment of her death. Her body was buried by unknown persons in the Jewish graveyard at Budapest.

Following her daughter's death Katharine Szenes was sent on the infamous Budapest Death March, from which she managed to escape. Having hid in the Hungarian capital until its liberation by the Soviet forces in January 1945, Katherine Szenes immigrated to Palestine where she joined her surviving child, Giora.

Five years later, in 1950, Hannah Szenes' heroic odyssey came to an end when her remains were brought from Hungary to Israel where they were reburied in the Parachutists section in the military cemetery on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem.

In 1946, the kibbutz movement to which Szenes had belonged — HaKibbutz HaMeuchad — published a book containing parts of her diary, poetry and plays. Since that time, the book has appeared in 15 Hebrew language editions, with an English edition first appearing in 1971.

Hannah's grave in Israel

Szenes' life epitomizes three of the virtues associated with the existence of humanity: family, loyalty and honour. At the same time, it also expresses several characteristics of modern Jewish life: initially, assimilation; as a later response, Jewish nationalism and finally, Zionist sacrifice.

Szenes' initial biography was that of hundreds of thousands — possibly millions — of Jews during the 20th century: acculturation into her non-Jewish surroundings. Similarly, her response to the rise of anti-Semitism was shared by Jews throughout Europe during that period: a renewed interest in a Jewish national movement which would remove Jews from a position of powerlessness. Her ultimate fate, the result of her volunteering for a mission to help her persecuted brethren in Hungary, has been portrayed both in Israel for decades and by Jews throughout the world, as the epitome of Zionist heroism, combining the qualities of family, loyalty and honour, propelling her not only into the Zionist pantheon but placing her in the forefront of Jewish heroism of the modern era.

Prof. Judy Baumel-Schwartz is the chair of the graduate program in Contemporary Jewry and associate professor of Jewish history at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, Israel.

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Holocaust poet and playwright

Nelly Sachs

Although she was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1966 (sharing the honour with noted Israeli writer S. Y. Agnon), Nelly Sachs remains virtually unknown to the English-speaking world.

Two substantial collections of her poetry — *O the Chimneys* (1967) and *The Seeker and other Poems* (1970) — were published in translation 40 years ago, but they have long been out of print. New editions were promised for 2009 but they have yet to appear. Asked to name the woman still highly regarded in Germany as "the poet of the Holocaust," most readers in the West would be forced to remain mute.

The paradox and irony of Nelly Sachs' career is that the great burst of creative energy earning her this title was inspired by Nazi Germany's murder of European Jewry.

Born to a wealthy Jewish family in Berlin in 1891, Sachs spent her early years studying music and dance and writing unmemorable verse. But by 1940, the perilous situation for Jews in Europe was clear. With the aid of an earlier Nobel author, Selma Lagerlöf, she managed to escape with her mother to Sweden, which she adopted as her permanent home until her death in 1970.

By Lawrence L.Langer

Her verse took a more serious turn when she chose the fate of the people of Israel as her theme, and beginning in her 50s — a late date for such a distinguished poet — she produced a series of volumes and verse dramas that evoked in her unique metaphorical idiom the historical moment of the Holocaust.

If there is any doubt about the source of Nelly Sachs' poetic inspiration, we have her own words as testimony: "the dreadful experiences that brought me to the very edge of death and eclipse have been my instructors. If I had not been able to write, I would not have survived. Death was my teacher. How could I have occupied myself with something else; my metaphors are my wounds. Only through that is my work to be understood."

Her first collection was called *In the Dwellings of Death* (1947), its very title inviting her readers on a dark journey based not on an inner poetic vision but on known historical facts. Today, we can name those "dwellings." We call them ghettos and camps, boxcars and barracks, gas chambers and crematoriums.

Continued on page B27

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A sympathetic voice for the mute millions

Continued from page B26

By entering the universe of her art, we embrace the imagination of disaster that defines our post-Holocaust era.

As a postwar writer immersed in the doom of her people, Sachs inherited a dual legacy: an ancient tradition of suffering often in seeming excess of comprehensible cause, but still compatible with spiritual aspiration and a tragic view of existence (the *Book of Job* is a prime example); and a modern experience of atrocity so far beyond comprehensible cause that the "tragic view of existence" collapses beneath its weight, bearing with it the vitality of the language once used to explore it.

One can imagine Sachs the poet picking through the rubble to rescue separate words that may have survived the disaster, maimed by the Germans abuse of familiar language as they carried out their plans of annihilation.

Simple terms that once carried no negative resonance now existed under a shadow of sinister associations: gas, shower, train, transport, selection, roll call, round up, number, chimney, smoke, to list only a few.

Sachs accepted the challenge of being physician to the wounded word, restoring enough health to an injured vocabulary to make it serve her poetic ambitions. Yet the dilemma she faced was not only restoring health to hurt words, but granting the chance that some terms were for the moment beyond curing. "Truth" and "dignity" *(wahrheit* and *würde)*, for example, scarcely appear in her work, while "death" and "night," her two most frequently used nouns, repeatedly draw us into a tangled landscape of yearning and despair that is Sachs' unique poetic domain.

For the pre-Holocaust writer, night was still only an interval between twilight and dawn. But for a post-Holocaust lyric poet like Sachs, burdened by the memories of a murdered past, such dying had permanently altered the symbolic possibilities of night.

The imagery of night and death that bind Nelly Sachs to a particular historical event generates a poetic energy which lures the reader back into that world, even as words try to change its localized pain into a larger human lament.

The crematorium chimneys in *O the Chimneys*, the initial poem in her first postwar volume, are not signposts to the divine but accusatory fingers, each one an uninviting threshold "like the knife between life and death." This menacing image lingers through the later poems, a constant reminder that there will be no easy reunion between the smoke of Israel's body and the mysterious cosmos into whose distant regions that smoke slowly drifts.

Her initial stance is to develop a sympathetic voice for the mute millions who have been victims of Jewish genocide. This requires a stern collaboration from those who join her on her verbal voyage. She guides us through a realm whose gloom abides in memory even as the fragile beacon of her verse sheds dim light on its "margins" and "dens" and displaced heavens, where once accessible spiritual values now conceal the secret of their vanished comfort within a cloud of silence.

Continued on page B28

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A vocabulary of entreaty

Continued from page B27

In *Chorus of Solacers*, one of the last poems from *In the Dwellings of Death*, she condenses into a few lines one of the main themes of her response to the Holocaust: the inadequacy of our verbal and spiritual resources to express and transcend the wounds of atrocity.

The opening strophe defines that burden:

Gardeners are we, who have lost our flowers
No healing herb can be planted anew
From yesterday to tomorrow
The blossoms of solace have budded too small
Do not suffice for the anguish of a child's tear.

Since the atrocity of the Holocaust cannot be undone or forgotten, the challenge is to find a source of consolation to lessen the horror of the loss and to soothe the pain of the child's tear. But there are memories in the soil of Nelly Sachs' metaphorical garden that resist both nurture and watering; the stark imagery of the poem's closing lines remind us that this Eden, where nature does not flourish, has once again lost its innocence:

The lightning bolts of grief do not allow
The field of forgetting to fall asleep.
Who among us may solace?
Gardeners are we, who have lost our flowers
And stand upon a star, that shines
And we weep.

The very images engage in a verbal struggle for victory — blossoms with tear, lightning with grief, star with weep — with no assurance of which will win.

But no single poem speaks for Nelly Sachs; she positions herself on the edge of her created universe and shifts her vantage point not in search of final truth but of multiple visions. She will not permit hope to supplant despair or despair to cancel hope.

Since for her the Holocaust has negated the simple logic of spiritual progress which the religious view of reality has governed for centuries, "yesterday and tomorrow" no longer represent sequence, but simultaneity.

We exist in a world that, with her fondness for noun fusions like "stardeath" *(sternod)* and "blackmoon" *(schwarzmond)*, Sachs might have called "deathlife." This is one feature of her art that gives her voice its contemporary relevance. Like us, she inherited a history whose darkness does not dissipate with the daily rising of the sun. "Death" and "night" are not merely her favorite metaphors; they literally describe the fate of her fellow Jews, defining the terrain the imagination must cross in its efforts to restore to mankind a sense of justice and dignity and support for the continuity of human life.

For Sachs, we survive the memory of annihilation not by avoidance, but only by "seeing" into and through the darkness that surrounds it: the poet's images are indispensable signposts toward such insight.

Bereft of spirit for the time being, her universe is still inhabited by words, though their proper use — or their misuse — is determined only by their users.

In a poem addressed to "peoples of the earth," Sachs warns those who climb into the confusion of language — their legacy from the genocide — "as into beehives/to sting and be stung/in the sweetness." Misplaced optimism is no more serviceable than misplaced scorn, against which she also cautions the "peoples of the earth."

"Do not destroy the cosmos of words/ do not dissect with the blades of hate/the sound, born in concert with the breath."

Experience has caused purity of intention to dissolve into ambiguity; a restored trust in the accuracy of words must precede faith in the human values they express or the benign actions they may inspire: "O that no one mean death," she pleads, "when he says life/and no one mean blood when he speaks cradle..."

Were she alive today, she might add to this vocabulary of entreaty that no one mean "war" when he speaks "liberation" or "dying young" when he says hero or martyr. The alarm about misnaming did not perish with Nelly Sachs or the Holocaust.

Dying always involves a form of farewell between mourner and victim (whether of disease, old age, accident, or some other cause), and there is some solace to be found in the mere presence of both during the final moments of life. In the poem *Parting* (*Abschied*) we respond to "a word bleeding from two wounds," the familiar references just mentioned from the world of Sachs's pre-war "yesterday" and the grim legacy of the Holocaust "departed."

Two hanging tatters /and human hair in a clutching hand /that grasped.

Death by genocide creates a climate of difference for both mourner and victim:

And we who bleed afterwards —
fatally bleeding of you —
We hold your source in our hands.
We legions of those taking leave
who build on your darkness — till death says: be quiet —
yet here is: continue bleeding.

The poem, the last of a cycle called *Survivors*, forces us to consider how closely allied to the survivor's experience is the need to redefine the words used to describe it. If "farewell" in a Holocaust context is a spare, haunting epiphany of rags and clawing limbs, this is only to confess that today's bleeding memories cannot staunch their hemorrhage of pain with yesterday's verbal tourniquets.

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Her verse is a reservoir of human anguish

Continued from page B28

It is as if the soul has gone into hibernation, while the cave that keeps it warm is lined with the unforgettable portraits of victims. Between spiritual vision and historical truth hangs a veil of uncertainty; in such a floating cosmos, interrogation replaces firm belief.

Sachs begins one poem, "who knows where the stars stand/in the creator's order of grandeur/and where peace begins...?" Milton and Dante would not have had to ask such questions. In these epics, divine love and justice exert firm control over the unfolding action, but the ravages of mass murder have reduced their appeal to fragile queries like the following:

If the prophets should stand up
in the night of mankind
like lovers, seeking the heart of the beloved,
night of mankind
would you have a heart to bestow?

Once again, the dark night of the Holocaust looms between extinction and renewal, a negation so pervasive that it threatens to wither the arteries of feeling through which once flowed the ardent blood of faith and affection.

To the end of her life, Nelly Sachs refused to lapse into nihilism or despair, but she insisted that we be absolutely honest about the terms on which we accept our continued existence.

Unlike Dante or Milton, her verse is not a prelude to a more glorious ascension, but a reservoir of human anguish where all immersions of the modern spirit must begin — an uncongenial baptism that taints the promise of transcendence.

Sachs fixes Shai Agnon's bow tie prior to their receiving a shared Nobel Prize for Literature in 1966.

> *To the end of her life, Nelly Sachs refused to lapse into nihilism or despair*

If she continued to yearn for a resurgence of human community, she knew her vision would have to include "the child/who as in play was thrown into the playing flames." The lines are from a poem called *Death still celebrates life*, reminding survivors of their dual inheritance: that they have endured, and what they have endured. The legacy is the reader's as well.

Lawrence L. Langer is the author of The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination and Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory.

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Rosh Hashanah Greetings 5771

Teacher to all

[Nechama Leibowitz]

"There was a woman in the land of Israel, in the holy city of Jerusalem, known as Nechama, a decent and worthy woman. Nechama spent her entire life immersed in study of sacred texts. She was destined to revolutionize the study of Biblical commentaries. This revolution did not take place in the lecture halls of the academy, but rather in classrooms throughout Israel and the Diaspora, eventually engaging the minds of women and men everywhere. For those men and women for whom Mikraot Gedolot *(traditional exegesis) became an integral part of their lives, the name Nechama Leibowitz became synonymous with parashat hashavua."*

By Marla Frankel

Thus did Prof. Saul Leiberman, the great Talmud scholar, describe Nechama Leibowitz, when granting her one of the many prizes she would earn in her lifetime, among them the national Bialik prize (1983) and the illustrious Israel Prize (1956).

Nechama, (as she preferred to be addressed by students and colleagues alike), was a pioneer in her day. Arriving in Israel in 1930 with a doctorate in Biblical studies, a decade of teaching behind her and newly married, she immediately immersed herself in teaching.

Initially, Nechama taught in the Mizrachi Teacher's Seminary in Jerusalem, but her fame grew as she began crafting individual worksheets on the Torah portion of the week, which were mailed to anyone requesting them. These worksheets were tackled by students and teachers, farmers and soldiers, waitresses and nurses, judges and labourers throughout the *yishuv*, as pre-state Israel was called. Subscribers, religious and non-religious alike, enjoyed the weekly challenge and eagerly looked forward to receiving comments from the master herself.

For more than three decades, while teaching in seminaries and kibbutzim, in universities and in small groups in her home, Nechama diligently corrected devotees' answers, never tiring of this weekly personal correspondence.

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Her knowledge was as vast as it was deep

Continued from page B30

Her questions were often provocative, articulating those a modern Jew might raise while perusing the weekly Torah portion. Was Sarai justified in harassing Hagar, who provided Avram with child? What is the true nature of a man of faith? To what extent is man responsible for his fellow man? What were the leaders' roles (and responsibilities) in the sin of the golden calf? Why were sacrifices deemed a valuable form of worship? To what end were the chosen people chosen?

These issues and hundreds more were hammered out through rigorous analysis and close study of biblical, rabbinic and modern exegetical sources. By labouring over Nechama's worksheets, students became acquainted not only with the classic Jewish thinkers and writers of centuries gone by, but also with the thinkers, writers and exegetes who comprised the Jewish and general cultural milieu of her time.

For those who were privileged to know and study with her, Nechama was a giant: a woman scholar whose knowledge was as vast as it was deep; a charismatic teacher who captured one's attention and maintained it easily; a commanding presence whose classroom became her stage. Yet everyone in the classroom had an active part to play and each of her numerous students is convinced of having had his/her own direct relationship with Nechama.

How did a woman of the previous century manage to become the first female link in the chain of traditional Jewish exegetes, gaining a foothold in the world of Jewish scholarship? How did she succeed in teaching people from all walks of life and of different religious persuasions?

Waitresses boasted correspondence with her, but so did retired judges; orthodox teachers felt a kinship but so did the reform and conservative rabbis who gathered in her home on Rehov Hazvi (behind the central bus station in Jerusalem) to study her worksheets and compete for her attention. And finally, how did she become a role model for learned women in Bible studies and in fields far beyond, although she herself denied any affinity with feminist politics, and avoided feminist readings of the Bible?

The answers to these questions have been the subject of two major biographies and numerous scholarly articles. However, in the present context, Nechama's own personal story can shed light on some of these issues.

Nechama Leibowitz was born at the beginning of the 20th century in Riga, Latvia. In the religious Zionist home in which she grew up, the spoken language was Hebrew and not Yiddish, unlike most Jewish households of the period.

Although Riga possessed Jewish schools of various orientations (including an orthodox girls school), Nechama and her brother Yeshayahu, two years her senior, received home schooling throughout their elementary school years. Under the strict supervision of their father, an affluent merchant and scholar, both siblings received private lessons in general and Jewish studies.

Nechama's initiation into Jewish learning was not as occasional or haphazard as it might have been for most women of her generation. On the contrary, her father was committed to providing her with a comprehensive Jewish education, particularly in the area of biblical studies. He was known to engage the children in a weekly quiz that both siblings took very seriously.

In 1917, the Leibowitz family moved to Berlin. Historians of the Weimar period often portray the Jews of Berlin as citizens of the world, who embraced the culture of Europe in all its facets, learning its languages and adopting its discourse. The Leibowitz family, patrons of culture and knowledge, possessed a family library of books and music that reflected this breadth.

Between 1919 and 1927, five Jewish elementary schools were established in Berlin, as well as a Jewish high school for girls. Yet Nechama chose to study in the state gymnasium, receiving a broad general education while her brother, who was destined to become one of Israel's foremost scientists and philosophers, continued to receive private lessons at home until entering university.

Continued on page B32

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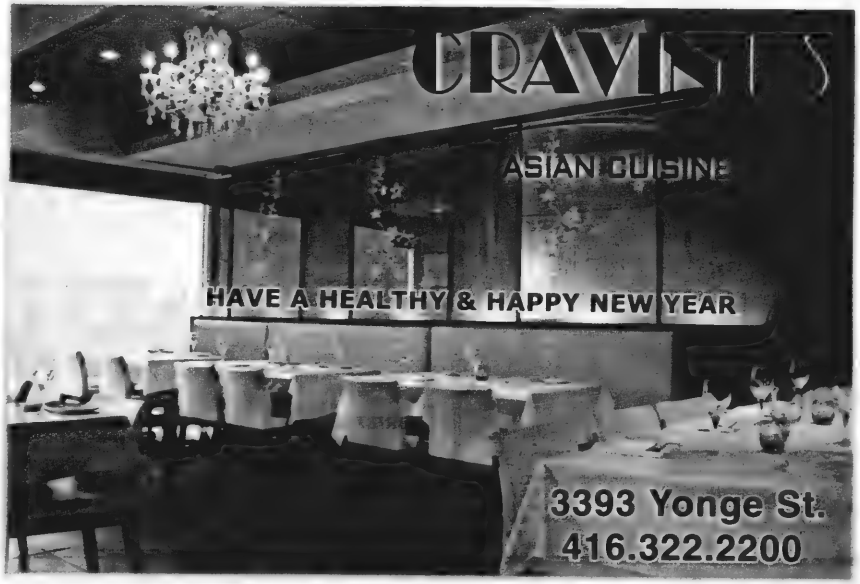

Thousands mourned her and recited the Kaddish

Continued from page 31

During the same period, Nechama and Yeshayahu, were active members of the *Blau-Weiss* (Blue-White) youth movement, popular among middle and upper middle class Jewish families. Many assimilated youth found their way back to Judaism and Zionism through *Blau-Weiss*, furthering their knowledge of the Hebrew language, Hebrew song and Yiddish folklore in the outdoors.

Like many other upper middle class women, Nechama pursued a higher education, studying German and English philology as well as critical biblical studies at the universities of Berlin, Heidelberg and Marburg.

While at the University of Berlin, she enrolled in the Hochschule, an institute for higher Jewish learning and known for its excellence in the area of Jewish studies.

Although founded as a research institute, the Hochschule eventually became a seminar for teachers and rabbinical students. The faculty of the institute reflected a wide range of ideological and religious orientations of enlightened German Jewry, including observant and liberal scholars and Zionist thinkers.

By 1930 Nechama had already completed her doctorate on translations of the Bible in the 15th and 16th centuries into Yiddish.

Nechama's entire education, both at home and at school, is clearly a reflection of the path forged by Rav Samson Raphael Hirsh (1808-1888), who struggled to establish schools that offered equal education for both sexes, as well as a curriculum of general and Jewish studies.

Mordechai Breuer, a scion of the same community, claims that its members walked two paths. Opening the gates to emancipation, they allowed their children to participate unreservedly in the economic and cultural achievements of the modern world outside.

At the same time, they succeeded in providing their children with a religiously enlightened worldview. This allowed them to combine loyalty to tradition with spiritual openness and an ability to discern between the advantageous and the unacceptable in what the outside world had to offer.

Although Nechama straddled both worlds and was clearly a product of European culture and Jewish tradition, she never left Israel after making aliyah in 1930, despite many offers to teach abroad. Her commitment to the state was unrelenting and she beseeched her students to remain in Israel and contribute to the developing state.

Nechama died at the age of 92, giving classes in her home until admitted to hospital for the last time. Thousands attended her funeral and recited the mourner's kaddish in her honour, as Nechama bore no children to do so.

The only epithet she allowed on her tombstone, was the single word, *morah* — teacher.

Marla Frankel is the head of the Bible Department at David Yellin Teacher's College in Jerusalem. She is the author of Toratah shel Nehama Leibowitz: Darkah belimud hatanakh vehorato *(*Teaching the Bible: The Philosophy of Nehama Leibowitz*).*

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Rosh Hashanah Greetings 5771

A mainly forgotten writer

[Adele Wiseman]

Most of us Canadian Jews are recent immigrants or children of immigrants, striving to integrate our roots with this blessed country we now call home. Our Jewish-Canadian writers articulate this balancing act between tradition and modernism, home and exile, Jewish particularism and universal significance.

Michael Greenstein, in *Third Solitudes, Tradition and Discontinuity in Jewish-Canadian Literature*, observes that Jewish authors provide a unique critical perspective on the dominant culture that articulates both an inside and outside view. We have read the most renowned of our writers: A. M. Klein, Irving Layton, Leonard Cohen, and Mordecai Richler. Yet a mainly forgotten writer has captured the Jewish immigrant experience most powerfully and is worth revisiting: Adele Wiseman, who died at age 64 in 1992.

By Merle Gould

She describes in the opening chapter of her 1956 novel, *The Sacrifice*, the arrival in Winnipeg of Abraham, Sarah and their son, Isaac: "No matter what is done to the plant, when it falls, again it will send out the tentative roots to the earth and rise upward again to the sky. The boy was young, the boy was blessed, the boy would grow."

Wiseman was born in Winnipeg in 1928 to immigrant parents from Russia, and was raised and educated in that prairie city. Her first book, *The Sacrifice*, written and published when she was still in her 20s, became a classic almost overnight, and in 1956 won Canada's then-most-revered literary honour, the Governor-General's Award for fiction – our nation's equivalent of the American Pulitzer Prize.

Wiseman is usually not included in the canon of the best writing to come out of Canada because she reluctantly and slowly edited her work, and made the ill-chosen decision to write plays and non-fiction for much of her career – genres in which she never reached the success of her first published, internationally acclaimed work. Could the success of her first novel have flooded her with feelings of "too honoured/ too early/ too fast," which have crippled so many highly gifted men and women in the arts?

Wiseman did continue to create fascinating works throughout her life, even if she never reached the literary heights displayed in *The Sacrifice*. She wrote about her love of writing and struggles to achieve great art as early as 1947 in her correspondence with a close, supportive friend, someone who would become one of the most internationally honoured Canadian writers of the 20th century: Margaret Laurence, of Scottish-Irish, Protestant descent. Laurence's novels, *The Stone Angel* and *The Diviners*, are among the most treasured, widely read literary creations in Canada and around the world.

York University professor and Canadian literature scholar Clara Thomas has written: "The two women had already recognized in each other a total commitment to their careers and, even more remarkable, a total agreement as to a novelist's goals and responsibilities... They were joined by a passionate belief in the social value of art and in its deeply moral basis. In a profound way, they felt themselves as writers to be soldiers in the endless human crusade against oppression, injustice, and unthinking conformism to false values."

Both women suffered anxiety over their careers and lives. In *The Selected Letters of Margaret Laurence and Adele Wiseman* (John Lennox and Ruth Panofsky, editors, University of Toronto Press), it's interesting to read in the hundreds of letters sent back and forth between the two writers that the far less prolific and initially more successful Wiseman became essential to the growing success of Laurence: "One way or another, you're going to have to complete this novel," Wiseman urged her friend, referring to *The Fire-Dwellers*, which would become an important stepping-stone in Laurence's career. Thomas comments: "As Adele often said of herself, she was a natural optimist, with a bubbling sense of humour, and that was one of her major gifts to Margaret, who gradually became able to counter her built-in insecurity with saving laughter." Wiseman's own work is infused with a profound understanding of the complexity of human behaviour, leavened by her lively humour. While Laurence, moved from peak to peak in achievements, to become a giant of Canadian literature, Wiseman kept making wrong turns that prevented her from repeating her youthful breakthrough of *The Sacrifice*.

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Novels take reader into complex world of relationships

Continued from page B33

Wiseman worked laboriously and with far fewer tortured "storms of uncertainty" than Laurence, although both women were equally hampered by what Thomas has described as "the crowding demands of teaching, children, family, friends and, as always, writing." Wiseman worked to support her writing as a social worker in England and as a teacher in Italy, even serving as the executive secretary to the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. There were years of travel and adventure, teaching at Macdonald College of McGill University in Montreal, where she met and married Dmitri Stone, a marine biologist, and happily mothered his three sons and their own daughter.

In Wiseman's latter years, she published an autobiographical work, *Old Women at Play* in 1978, in which she looked at her mother's doll making while speculating on artistic creativity and her own novels. Also in 1978, her play, *Testimonial Dinner*, was published. Her story for children, *Kenji and the Cricket*, was published in 1986. A delightful collection of essays, *Memoirs of a Book-Molesting Childhood*, was published in 1987. Her long play, *Lovebound*, revised by her endlessly, was never professionally published, and had to be printed privately.

Wiseman had difficulty following the suggestions of her editors, and endured years of rejections by publishers and false starts on various literary projects, before her second novel, *Crackpot*, was published by McClelland and Stewart in 1974, a full half-dozen years after the international acclaim she had received with her first book.

Crackpot is an intriguing, poetic, powerful story about an obese prostitute named Hoda. She becomes a legend in her neighbourhood, a canny and ingenuous woman, exuding a wholesome lust for life. It is richly Jewish in plot and theme, as its witty opening paragraph, which was printed entirely in italics, suggests: "Out of Shem Berl and Golda came Rahel. Out of Malka and Benyamin came Danile. Out of Danile and Rahel came Hoda. Out of Hoda, Pipick came, Pipick born in secrecy and mystery and terror, for what did Hoda know?"

For the paperback edition of *Crackpot*, Laurence, wrote an admiring afterword: "Hoda, the protagonist of *Crackpot* – earthy, bawdy, wise-cracking Hoda, is a prostitute. But Adele Wiseman's novel is no more a story simply about a whore than her first novel, *The Sacrifice*, in which the patriarchal Abraham finds himself killing a woman in an agonized parody of a sacrificial act, is a story about a murderer... And as one of the greatest characters of our literature, Hoda helps us more fully to occupy our own past and to inhabit our lives."

Wiseman's second major publication was critically applauded, but it in no way approaches the brilliance of her first. Both novels are on one level political, portraying a whole community, North Winnipeg, with its influx of immigrants, spanning the years from World War I to the aftermath of World War II.

On a deeper level, both novels take us into a complex world of relationships in which the tragic misunderstandings between people allow us to feel the pain and the interconnectedness of humankind enduring the burdens of ancestors and God.

What is so great, then, about Wiseman's most accomplished and acclaimed novel, *The Sacrifice*? Wiseman recreates, through the lives of Jewish immigrants in Winnipeg, the biblical story of Abraham and Isaac. The biblical parallels and echoes of the Jewish holy books in *The Sacrifice* are chosen with perception and used with remarkable skill.

Abraham, his wife, Sarah, and their son, Isaac, fleeing the pogroms of Ukraine, arrive from eastern Europe and settle in the Jewish ghetto of an unnamed Winnipeg, marked by a giant "Mad Mountain" – a physical phenomenon rare in the real Canadian prairies – echoing the Mount Moriah of the original Akedah. Abraham becomes a butcher, symbolically a job involved in daily "sacrifices."

Abraham explains to his grandson, Moses, about the archetypal sacrifice in the Bible: "In that moment lay the secrets of life and death, in that closed circle with just the three of them, with Abraham offering the whole of the past and the future, and Isaac lying very still, so as not to spoil the sacrifice, and the glint of the knife and the glare of the sun and the terror of the moment burning into his eyes... And God Himself is bound at that moment, for it is the point of mutual surrender, the one thing He cannot resist, a faith so absolute. That was the moment that even God could not resist, and so He gave us the future." But Abraham's son, Isaac, dies in rescuing a Torah from a synagogue fire, and later, after his wife also dies, Abraham takes up with Laiah, whom he eventually murders in a sacrifice to his own tortured concept of God.

In a mental asylum at the novel's close, Abraham is visited by his grandchild, Moses, a promising musician, and they reconcile: "When a human being cries out to you, no matter who it is, don't judge him, don't harm him, or you turn away God Himself." Moses expresses his love for his grandfather and they hold hands, linking grandfather to son to grandson, "their hands fused together – one hand, the hand of a murderer, hero, artist, the hand of a man." The immigrant generation has made sacrifices so that the children may prosper. In accepting the mystery of human life, Moses goes down the mountain back into the community, changed and matured, ready to engage in life.

Continued on page B35

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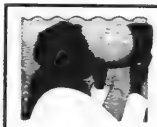
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Wiseman deserves to be read

Continued from page B34

John Moss, in his popular study, *A Reader's Guide to the Canadian Novel*, writes: "*The Sacrifice* overwhelms the reader with an aura of greatness... Wiseman's commanding vision of a devout man's exile from God, parallelled by the travail of immigrant experience in the New World, moves the reader to profound compassion – the whole is an awesome epiphany. As an example of immigrant fiction, *The Sacrifice* is without peer... Wiseman describes life in the ghetto with penetrating insight and a great deal of affection. She portrays the distortion of ancient and Old World traditions, the distress between generations imposed by the New World, the clash of opposing cultures, and the terrible threat and appeal of assimilation. Were there no more to the novel than this, it would be a major document...

In a mixture of dread and beauty, *The Sacrifice* takes in the secret thoughts of a tormented soul, the experience of a displaced people, and the whole of man's relationship with God. It has a spiritual humility as profoundly humbling as any in our literature."

Wiseman has created a complex allegory of spiritual crisis in which the immigrant, Abraham, while embodying the hardships of acclimatizing to Canada, personifies our mysterious relationship with God. For this one great novel alone, Wiseman deserves to be read. Panofsky summarizes, in *Force of Vocation: The Literary Career of Adele Wiseman*, that she was a writer "who doggedly and ambitiously perfected her craft, sought a wide audience for her work, and refused to compromise her writing for marketability."

Merle Gould is a secondary school English teacher and freelance editor, living in Toronto.

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A Jewish 'first lady of the land'

Portrait by Topley, circa 1920 courtesy of the Archibald and Lillian Freiman family fonds. *[Ottawa Jewish Archives]*

[Lillian Freiman]

Only the light of these your days,
Only the warmth of these your deeds,
Eternal sunshine from them speeds;
About them sunshine ever plays.

With these words, Canada's great poet, A.M. Klein, concluded his verse eulogy in 1940 for Lillian Freiman, unquestionably the most prominent Jewish woman in Canada in the interwar period. Five years earlier, when she was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE), the first OBE ever to be conferred upon a Canadian Jew, the *Jewish Standard* of Toronto called her the "Jewish 'first lady of the land,' " and so she was.

By Michael Brown

Today, memory of Freiman has dimmed. Her name lives on in the Lillian Freiman Hadassah-WIZO chapter in Ottawa, whose few members, all of them seniors, no longer meet formally. There is the Lillian Freiman Trophy established by her son and given every two years to an outstanding Canadian Hadassah-WIZO chapter. As well, she is one of seven (possibly eight) Jews on Parks Canada's list of 641 Persons of National Historic Significance.

The list includes some of Canada's foremost personages such as Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Emily Carr, Timothy Eaton and Billy Bishop. And it will grow longer, since people become eligible only after their 25 yahrzeit. But many of those persons of historic significance, like Mrs. Freiman, are now known mostly to history buffs.

In Israel, there are living testimonials to Freiman and her husband. Moshav Havatzelet HaSharon in the Emek Hefer near Natanya bears her name. Across the road is Bitan Aharon, named for Freiman's husband, Archibald Jacob or Archie. The proximity and the location are appropriate. For more than two decades, the Freimans were the power couple of Canadian Jewry, working tirelessly for the cause of Zionism. Lillian headed Hadassah-WIZO until her death, while Archie headed the Canadian Zionist Organization until his death four years later. Their son, Lawrence, also headed the Canadian Zionist Organization for a number of years.

The two were instrumental in raising the funds to purchase the Emek Hefer in the 1920s and to make it available for Jewish settlement. But as I discovered two years ago at a bat mitzvah celebration held in the catering hall of Bitan Aharon, not many in Israel know that the *havatzelet* (lily) was Lillian Freiman or that Aharon was the Hebrew name of her husband, Archie. They deserve to be better remembered, as both are of national historic significance in Canada and Israel.

Continued on page B37

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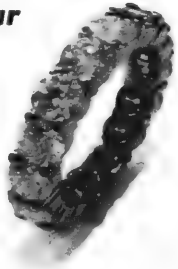

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ALAN GELMAN

She led battle against flu pandemic

Continued from page B36

Lillian was born in 1885 in Mattawa, Ont. Her father, Moses Bilsky, arrived in Canada as a teenager. He spent time in the gold fields of Western Canada and the United States and served as a union soldier in the American Civil War before marrying at age 46 and entering the lumber business in Mattawa.

When Bilsky's business prospered, the family moved to Ottawa where in his later years, Moses was considered the city's pre-eminent Jewish citizen. His wife, Berlin-born Pauline Reich Bilsky, was a homemaker. They had 11 children. One of their daughters, Lucy, married Allan Bronfman, who together with his brother Samuel, built Joseph E. Seagram and Sons, the liquor distillers and marketers, into a Canadian business colossus.

At age 18, Lillian married Lithuanian-born Archie Freiman, one of a very few Jews to found a major department store in Canada (Freiman's, in Ottawa, now a branch of The Bay), a sector of retailing that in the United States and Germany was dominated by Jews.

Ten years later the Freimans and their three children, Dorothy (later, Alexandor), Lawrence and Queene Esther (later, Luxenberg), were living around the corner from Sir Wilfrid Laurier in a grand residence originally built by one of the Ottawa lumber barons. A summer home at Meech Lake near the cottage of Prime Minister Mackenzie King was purchased later. After the First World War, a fourth child, Gladys (later Rozovsky), was added to the family. She was a war orphan whom the Freimans adopted.

Though not yet 30 at the outbreak of the First World War, Lillian quickly established herself as a civic leader in Ottawa. Her granddaughter, Betsy Rigal, says that Freiman worked tirelessly for the Great War Veterans Association, the forerunner of the Canadian Legion.

As a writer in the *Jewish Standard* said in 1934, she never "let the powers-that-be forget the returned soldiers' problems, nor did she cease pleading their case until...the country showed that it had not forgotten...the men that went 'over there.'"

Because of her work with returning soldiers, the Legion awarded her honourary life membership, and she remains the only woman to be so honoured. The first remembrance poppies were made in the Freiman home and she chaired the Legion Poppy Campaign until 1940.

Characteristically, Freiman did not concern herself with Canadian soldiers alone. Lawrence Freiman told of his mother's intervention on behalf of three enemy prisoners of war, deserters who had been interned in Canada. It is a story that resonates today.

After the armistice, the three were about to be deported to their home country where they would have been executed. Freeman pulled strings, using her Great War Veterans affiliation and her government connections, threatening the minister she would accuse the government of murder if the men were deported. She won their release and gave them temporary shelter in the family home.

Freiman also aided the war effort through her work with the Red Cross. A Red Cross sewing circle, which Freiman started in her home, evolved into the Disraeli Chapter of the Daughters of the Empire (IODE). At the same time, the energetic young woman volunteered with the Ottawa Juvenile Court, served as treasurer of the Ottawa Welfare Bureau, as president of the Ottawa Girl Guides Association, the Ottawa Day Nursery, the Perley Home for Incurables and as vice-president of the Ottawa branch of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. She was also active in organizations such as the Ottawa Women's Canadian Club, the Institut Jeanne d'Arc for Catholic Girls, the Protestant Infants Home of Ottawa, the Ladies Auxiliary of Adath Jeshurun Synagogue and the Ladies Auxiliary of B'nai Brith.

Perhaps her greatest wartime contribution came during the flu pandemic that began in March 1918 and claimed 520 victims in Ottawa. Freiman was called upon by Mayor Harold Fisher to chair the city's battle against the deadly disease.

According to Betsy Rigal, Freiman oversaw the activities of some 1500 volunteers and worked with the city medical officer, the press and the municipal emergency services. She was instrumental in establishing an information bank and a registry for patients and volunteers, and she pioneered a press campaign to disseminate vital health care information. Her work brought her national attention.

There are those who believe that philanthropic work in the general community takes precedence, perhaps supersedes, working for one's own ethnic group. Lillian Freiman's love and loyalty and her sense of noblesse oblige were never parochial, but she believed that charity begins at home.

Continued on page B38

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Believed in leadership by example

Continued from page B37

One of her immediate postwar endeavours was the campaign to bring to Canada as many as 2000 Jewish children orphaned during the war and in the fighting in Poland and Ukraine immediately after. Sadly, this effort foreshadowed the difficulties Jews would confront during the Holocaust.

As national president of the Jewish War Orphans Committee of Canada, Freiman ran up against Frederick C. Blair, later the director of the Immigration Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources. It is Blair who is credited with the statement that, regarding Jewish refugees from Nazism, "None is too many."

Blair was already employed at the Immigration Branch, and he was largely responsible for setting the quota for Jewish orphans at 200. In the end, less than 150 came to Canada, including Gladys Rozovsky, who, as noted above, was adopted by the Freimans. Mrs. Freiman believed in leadership by example.

Perhaps it was her experience of the pervasive Canadian anti-Semitism of the day, which, despite their wealth and accomplishments, affected the Freiman family, as well as other Jews, that motivated Freiman to champion the cause of Zionism. But whatever the reason, that movement seemed to arouse her strongest passion.

She attended Zionist conventions in Canada from the earliest days of the Federation of Zionist Societies. When Archie assumed the presidency of the Zionist Organization of Canadian, she became the organizing *generalissimo* of a national group of women Zionists.

Henrietta Szold, the founder of Hadassah in the US, had journeyed to Canada to help establish branch plants. Staunch Canadian that she was, Freiman steered the Canadians away from American Hadassah and towards WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization), founded in England by Dr. Vera Weizmann, the wife of Chaim Weizmann, and others. Freiman felt that a British affiliation was more appropriate for Canadians than an American one, especially since Britain held the League of Nations mandate for Palestine. The Canadians tried to straddle the fence by taking on the name of both organizations of women Zionists. Szold, however, never forgave Freiman for what she considered an act of "treachery." Under Freiman's leadership, Hadassah-WIZO became the strongest Zionist organization in Canada.

Shortly after the war, Freiman helped raise money for the Helping Hand Fund of the new Canadian organization, the aim of which was to aid the struggling settlers in Palestine. Travelling the length and breadth of the Dominion, she raised approximately $200,000, an unprecedented sum in a community of 120,000 Jews, most of them recent immigrants of very modest means.

The campaign was also notable for the success Freiman had in soliciting contributions from non-Jews. During the '20s and '30s, Freiman traveled the country raising funds for Zionism. In 1934 she chaired the Dominion-wide United Palestine Appeal, which was launched by a coast-to-coast radio address by Premier Bennett.

In April 1934, she chaired a one-day appeal to aid German-Jewish refugees seeking to settle in Palestine. Under her leadership, Hadassah-WIZO supported the Youth Aliyah movement to rescue German-Jewish young people and resettle them in Palestine. Youth Aliyah was spearheaded by American Hadassah and overseen in Palestine by Henrietta Szold.

Sometimes Freiman's name alone was sufficient to elicit contributions. In 1935, when she turned 50, she was presented with $50,000 by Canadian Hadassah-WIZO "for the furtherance" of the group's "work in Palestine." On that occasion, the *Jewish Standard* reported that more than 1000 people were expected at a dinner honouring her at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa.

A contemporary of Mrs. Freiman described the progress of Hadassah-Wizo under her leadership:

"Ladies first, in ordinary parlance, has become merely a form of courtesy, a sort of graceful tribute to the feminine frailty of women. But these two innocent looking words take on an entirely different meaning when spoken in certain Zionist circles. [There they]...are a tribute not to feminine frailty but to feminine ingenuity."

Staggering as the organizational energy and activities of Lillian Freiman may appear, her *menschlichkayt*, her concern for individuals, her "still small voice," seem even more impressive.

Freiman was never so busy with her causes that she could not find time for individuals who sought her aid. She always made time to help people in need: a woman whose son was convicted of a crime, people requiring transportation to visit relatives hospitalized in other cities, orphans, demobbed soldiers, enemy prisoners of war, the needy of all sorts. And from all reports there was always time for family, as well.

It is likely that Freiman's multifarious activities, public and private, cut short her life. In her final years, she was often confined to bed, although a bedside telephone (not common in the 1930s) enabled her to carry on despite declining health. At her death in 1940, she was only 55 years old.

Lillian Freiman was, indeed, the foremost Jewish woman of Canada in the interwar period. It would not be exaggerating to say that she is one of the most notable Jewish women of Canadian history, notable for achievements in communal affairs, Jewish and general, but notable most of all for her humanity. Her good works still spread "eternal sunshine," as A.M. Klein put it. We would do well to remember her.

Michael Brown is professor emeritus of Jewish Studies at York University and the former director of York's Centre for Jewish Studies.

Historian whose task is remembrance of the Holocaust

[Rachel Kostanian]

When Rachel Kostanian speaks, the words come tumbling out so quickly one wonders how she has time to breathe. And what this 80-something, fiery-haired historian lives and breathes is remembrance of the Holocaust. Her field is Lithuania, her focal point Vilnius – Vilna or Vilne to the Jews, and Rachel brings the story to life as she describes each alleyway, doorway and window that mask the fate of Vilna's Jews.

By Esther Goldberg

Rachel chronicles each step along the journey. Here is the doorway where the Jews of Vilna gathered to beseech Jacob Gens, the elder of the Ghetto Jewish Council, for the lifesaving slips of paper that qualified the bearer for work, as the colour of the paper changed and the quantity was reduced.

There is the alleyway leading to the prison where Vilna's resistance commander, 36-year-old Yizhak Wittenberg, spent his last night, having given himself up to the Germans in the deceptive belief that doing so would save the ghetto.

Nearby are the windows of the Mefitze Haskole on Strashun Street, where Herman Kruk created a lending library and led the celebration on Dec. 13, 1942, when book number 100,000 was taken out.

Rachel Kostanian has investigated each event and every place. History and geography are woven together as a doorway or a hidden corner inspire a torrent of words in Russian, Yiddish, Lithuanian or English.

In Rachel's voice, the stones themselves cry out. "I feel the shadows of those who perished," she notes. Through her, they come to life.

An only child in a loving and educated Bundist family, Rachel first experienced anti-Semitism when the son of her family's Lithuanian housekeeper greeted her each day with taunts and stones. She was filled with shame, but finally got the courage to shout back at him.

After the June 1940 Soviet occupation, Rachel's father Yosif Zivelchinski, a lawyer, became chief judge for their town of Siauliai (Shavli) and the surrounding areas. With the German advance into Lithuania in June 1941, Rachel and her mother, Bluma, were sent with the families of other officials into the Soviet Union, settling in Gorky. Yosif returned to Shavli. Rachel and Bluma learned later that he was killed by German paratroopers.

In Gorky, Bluma and Rachel survived amid the deprivations of Soviet wartime existence. Rachel was sent to a *kinderheim* in the Ural Mountains, where 200 Lithuanian children, some of whom were Jewish, found refuge.

There, with the help of the Jewish director, the children followed on a large map the advance of the Red Army and escaped into music to forget their hunger, lice and the worry about their families.

At the end of 1944, with the Red Army advancing westward, the children were put on trains to return to Lithuania. Rachel got off in Gorky and was reunited with her mother.

With liberation, Vilnius again became the capital of Lithuania, having been part of Poland since shortly after the end of the First World War.

The murder of Vilna's Jews in the Soviet-dug fuel pits in the forest of Ponar, the murder of the Jews of Kaunas (Kovno) in the 19th century fortresses that ring the city, most notably the Ninth Fort and the 245 mass murder sites throughout Lithuania, were the remains of Lithuania's 600-year-old, devout and enlightened Jewish community. With Lithuania's postwar incorporation into the Soviet Union, the murdered Jews of Lithuania were included in war memorials as Soviet Citizens, not Jews.

Continued on page B40

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'All of a sudden, I found my roots'

Continued from page B39

Reunited with her daughter in Gorky, Bluma was prepared to stay in Russia. It was Rachel who persuaded her that they must return home to Lithuania. Eventually Bluma found work in Vilna as the director of a library and she and Rachel were given a small room in the library corridor. Rachel not only lived in the library, she lived with the library. It was there, she remembers, "the greatest writers in the world became accessible and enriched my mind and formed me."

Rachel finished school and graduated from Vilnius State University having studied Soviet law. She began her lecturing career speaking in barbershops on the Soviet constitution, while working as a cleaner in the library and later as a junior librarian.

Despite her law degree, due to anti-Semitic attitudes she was never able to work in law, except as an aid to the dean of the criminal law faculty.

She spent evenings studying English and qualified to study English at the State Pedagogical Institute, when she met her husband Genrich, an electrical engineer. Like others, he had been sent from the Soviet Republic of Armenia to Lithuania, where there was a shortage of professional engineers.

Genrich had promised his mother to bring his bride to Armenia, so the couple spent four years in Kirovakan. During this time their son was born. Rachel returned to Lithuania for the birth and brought her mother back to Armenia, where Rachel taught English in a music school. "I would dance and sing with the children in English."

Rachel's homesickness for Lithuania won out in the end. In 1960, the family returned to Vilna. Still unable to get work in law, she got a job as a translator in her husband's factory. From 1969, she translated technical journals at a welding institute.

In 1987, everything changed. One day while walking in Vilna Rachel saw a large Magen David on an advertising pole. Her first thought was: "My God, they are taking us to concentration camps again!" It was a horrific moment.

"In a couple of seconds during which I saw trains packed with people, barbed wire on the windows, and so on, I saw — it is a Jewish exhibition! In Kaunas!" On opening day, "the train from Vilna to Kovno was packed with our people rushing to the miracle." The miracle that Rachel found was that she was no longer alone: "All of a sudden I found my roots. Like everyone else, I have a people, a language, a culture."

The exhibition had its origins with Emanuelis Zingeris and his brother Markas, children of survivors from Kovno. Emanuelis was active in the Lithuanian independence movement, and later served for 18 years in the Lithuanian parliament.

At Vilnius University, Emanuelis had written his dissertation on Lithuania's Jewish cultural heritage, a courageous act in those dangerous times. Discovering and promoting that cultural heritage became his life's work.

In 1989, as part of the Perestroika plans for the new Lithuania, the Lithuanian Soviet government asked each minority to set up a cultural foundation and provide a list of its needs. Emanuelis, with other Jewish intellectuals, established a Jewish Cultural Society and asked for the recreation of the Jewish Museum, commemoration of the Shoah, streets named after known Jews, plaques to be put up on former Jewish historic sites and the Jewish cemeteries to be put in order. All these were accepted by the government. Having volunteered to help Emanuelis, Rachel left her translating job and became the full-time scientific secretary of the Lithuanian State Jewish Museum.

Abraham Sutzkever and Shmerl Kaczerginsky, poets in prewar Vilna, had hidden valuable documents and archives in the ghetto and outside it. Having survived with the partisans, in 1944 to 1945, they recovered these archives and set up a Jewish Museum. Within four years the museum was closed by the KGB. Some of the material Sutzkever and Kaczerginsky collected went to YIVO in New York; some was taken over by the Soviet authorities, but still carries a Jewish Museum stamp.

Continued on page B41

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The locals must know

Continued from page B40

In 1989, Emanuelis Zingeris secured a premises for the new Jewish Museum in a small wooden building that had formerly belonged to the Museum of the Russian October Revolution of 1917.

Rachel's husband Genrich designed the displays, which were assembled by Genrikh Agranovski, and with help from survivors Rachel Margolis, Dimitrij Gelpernas, Eugenija Biber and Rachel Kostanian, the Green House on Pamenkalnio Street was established.

The force behind the Holocaust Museum was the survivors. As Rachel says, "we all burnt with a desire to establish an exhibition so the world would know, in particular the locals would know what it was, what was done and what was the result." Today it is known as the Holocaust Exhibit or Catastrophe (*Hurban*).

The Lithuanian government returned two further buildings to the Jewish community: the former Tarbut Gymnasium on Pylimo Street, which today houses the Jewish community offices, museum, archives and a Gallery of the Righteous and the former Jewish Theatre on Naugarduko Street, which today houses the Tolerance Centre. Together with the Green House Holocaust Exhibit, the three make up the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum.

Material was collected for the Green House displays from three main sources, all of which Rachel and her colleagues pored over and which she absorbed as she had absorbed the library in her youth.

They studied Leyzer Ran's three volume history of centuries of Jewish life in Vilna, Jerusalem of Lithuania, based on the photographs he took of several thousand Jewish places and objects after the war.

They collected the memoirs and the memories of survivors "who started to glue to us," who returned to the museum daily to talk of their experiences. Also, the Lithuanian State Archives opened their treasures – documentation hidden up to 1988 – from German, Lithuanian and Polish sources, along with the remains of the Sutzkever/Kaczerginsky collection. The museum staff copied as much as they could, fearing that – like the Jewish Museum after the war – the openness would soon end.

With this archive-based documentation, the seven rooms of the Green House were filled and the museum opened in 1991, 50 years since the German invasion.

Its character shines through in the survivors who accompany visitors. At first, Rachel Margolis did this, then she suggested that Rachel Konstanian take over.

Four thousand to 6,000 people visit the Green House every year; many are moved by Rachel's descriptions of what they are seeing. Some visitors are Lithuanian schoolchildren, some are overseas scholars, some are South African, Israeli, British and North American Jews looking for their roots and the fate of their families.

One woman came to Rachel and said: "Let us go to the forests. I have to find the place where we were shot." As well as the mass murder sites, Rachel and her staff found Jewish tombstones and lobbied for the municipalities to clear and maintain the cemeteries. This was done and monuments were put up at each mass murder site showing the numbers of people killed there.

Great Britain's Lord Janner organized funding to put markers along the highways with arrows pointing to the sites in the forests. With their research and their colleague Joseph Levinson's travels throughout Lithuania, the museum published *The Valley of Sorrows* on the mass murder sites.

Among the discoveries in the forest was a small medal, inscribed in Yiddish to Noah Shneidman to honour his 20th boxing fight, with the date of the fight, May 18, 1943 and the Vilna Ghetto symbol.

Leaving his boxing medal with his family, Shneidman escaped from the ghetto two weeks before its final liquidation, joined the partisans in the forests, and survived. Sixty-seven years later, Norman Shneidman is professor emeritus of Russian Literature at the University of Toronto. His medal has been returned to him.

Continued on page B42

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Teaches with a clear and passionate voice

Continued from page B41

In 2000, Rachel gave a paper at the Remembering for the Future Conference in Oxford. Organized by Dr. Elisabeth Maxwell, it brought together scholars, survivors and teachers, among them Fumiko Ishioka, en route to Theresienstadt to discover the owner and family of Hana Brady and her suitcase and Judy Cohen, who came from Toronto, and was interested in women in the Shoah.

Two years later, Rachel's paper was published as the book *Spiritual Resistance in the Vilna Ghetto*. It describes the areas of health care, culture, art, science, music, sport and religion that helped the Jews of the ghetto overcome and survive the physical and psychological terror.

A discovery by the museum's staff in the Vilna archives of posters of cultural and artistic events in the ghetto led to searches for where the events were held and the fate of those mentioned on the posters.

Rachel's book, *Vilna Ghetto Posters*, as well as the exhibit at the Green House, show the range of cultural activities — including a lottery to raise money for the Winter-Help Campaign, which kept the Jews alive while their food and medicine was scarce and families and friends were being taken away and shot.

For those in the west, the Holocaust took place far away; in Europe, the locations are still there. In Lithuania, a site of the mass murder of Jews may be only a few kilometres from a local school or church.

Lithuania lost as large a percentage of its Jewish community as any country in Europe, yet having been subjected to Soviet rule for 40 years, it is that Soviet-era trauma that is fresh in their minds. They view the Jews as those who met the Soviet occupier with flowers – not unlike the Jewish perception that the Lithuanians met the German occupier with bread and salt. History is still fresh and vivid in that part of the world.

As well as being the story of Jewish death and suffering, the Holocaust is a story of resistance to evil, living in dignity, maintaining civilization amidst chaos and *uberleben* – survival.

Historians such as Rachel Kostanian put a human face on the facts, making the lesson universal. She has twice returned to live in her beloved Lithuania when she was living elsewhere. A Lithuanian patriot and a Jew, she has been behind many of the museum's important works, a historian who teaches with a clear and passionate voice that resistance to evil, to silence and to falsehood is what marks out a hero.

Twenty-five years ago, we in Canada would never have believed we would walk the cobblestone streets of Vilna and Kovno, attend Shabbat services in shul there or visit a Jewish museum. Just as the prewar *Yung Vilne* writers were the apex of their literary world, Rachel and her team are the *alte vilne*, whose research into Lithuania's Jewish history and heritage, and the teaching of it, will benefit not only the present but those generations who follow.

Nitza Spiro of the British Spiro Ark cultural centre, who took Rachel's tour of Vilna and the Green House 20 years ago, wrote: "Rachel, petite in size, has become a real giant with her personality, encyclopedic knowledge, deep emotional contact with the subject and her passion for the long story of her people in Lithuania and for education.

A proverb in Hebrew says, "*Dvarim hayotzim min halev, nichnasim el halev*" – "words that come from the depth of one's consciousness, penetrate to those who hear them."

This has been Rachel's gift to those who know her, have heard her lecture, read her books and have seen her museum. It has become her gift to us all.

Esther Goldberg has created and edited the three-volume Holocaust Memoir Digest, *published by Vallentine Mitchell, www.holocaustmemoirdigest.org*

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Yiddish poet, essayist and story writer

[Rokhl Korn]

The years after the Second World War and the post Holocaust exodus of Jews from Europe brought a host of poets and writers to Montreal.

The most prominent of those who came in 1948 was Rokhl Korn, short story writer, poet and essayist. Her arrival was greeted with joy and anticipation by a large group of Yiddish writers and intellectuals from across Canada and the U.S. who knew her and her work from before the Second World War.

In an enthusiastic article in the *Keneder Adler* in 1948, the most well-known of Montreal's Yiddish poets, J.I.Segal wrote: "This is possibly the first time in the history of Yiddish cultural life in Montreal and perhaps the first time in the entire history of Yiddish Literature, that a Yiddish poet is greeted by so many well-known colleagues with such excitement and wonder."

Segal heightens the once-in-a-lifetime character of this event and invites his readers to share in the celebration of Korn's achievement as a writer of poetry and prose.

Praising her unique talent as a Yiddish woman poet in a field dominated by men, he also underscores her miraculous survival in the face of her wartime experiences fleeing the Nazis.

He ends the article stressing the value of her work as a living link to the European world that was destroyed. He says he hopes that the arrival of a poet with such an established international reputation will bolster Montreal as a centre for Yiddish literary activity in Canada. Segal was not disappointed.

By Esther Frank

As the enthusiasm at Korn's arrival in Montreal attests, by the 1940s Korn's work was widely known to Yiddish readers. She had achieved a literary reputation in Poland in the interwar years, and was recognized by Yiddish literature's most distinguished critics for her innovative focus on the Polish countryside, on non-Jewish and Jewish peasant life and on nature and erotic love.

In the 1920s and 30s, these themes were refreshing features brought to lyric poetry largely by Yiddish women poets. They were viewed as heralding the renaissance of modern Yiddish culture in Poland, where, though it may be difficult to remember, a modern Yiddish literature flourished. So too did a successful Yiddish press and theatre, varying Jewish and Yiddish elementary and high schools, scholarly institutions and a body of literary criticism.

Korn was among those who made their literary debuts in Poland. Born in 1898 in East Galicia, she was raised on a farming estate called *Sucha Gora* (Dry Mountain), and felt deeply rooted to the Polish earth. She was tutored in the classics of Polish literature in addition to being schooled in Hebrew and some Yiddish.

Korn began her career writing in Polish in 1918. When the First World War broke out, she and her family fled to Vienna. They returned to Przemysl, Poland after the war and lived there until 1940. Tensions between Jews and their neighbors had arisen after the First World War with pogroms against Jews, and destruction of Jewish homes and upheavals of war shocked Korn. Still, she remained drawn to Polish literature and to Poland, vowing however, as a consequence of pogroms against Jews, never to write in Polish again.

Turning to Yiddish in the 1920s, Korn began to publish widely. Her first collections of lyrics and short stories *Dorf*, (1928) and *Erd* (1936) focus on relations between Jews and non-Jews in the Galician countryside. Made up of works she wrote in her first years as a Yiddish writer, these collections draw attention to the shared life of Jews and non-Jews in nature and depict the hard but sturdy life of those who labour on the soil and are nurtured by it.

Despite the impetus for her turn to Yiddish, Korn's early writings reflected an optimistic and fresh outlook on life. In 1939, all optimism vanished. In lyrical poems from the late 1930s visions of catastrophic foreboding begin to appear in her work.

In a poem about Poland in 1939 she writes: "I never knew I was a stranger to you, a guest who came to you for a mere 15 or 20 generations, for I grew up with your springs and summers, your forests, fruits and harvests...O Earth, if I will have to leave you for exile, every limb of mine and thine will feel the rupture, and bloodied will be you, my most beloved earth, and I and my song" (Liptzin, p. 456).

The Second World War sent Korn reeling thousands of miles. She and her daughter Irene fled to the Soviet Union and wandered there through the farthest eastern regions of Russia until 1944. These were years of hardship and sorrow.

In poems from this period published after the war, Korn writes of her awareness of her homelessness and of the homelessness of her people, and she weeps for her dear ones whose fate is unknown to her. Her poems she writes near the war's end after learning that all her kin has perished are the most moving of those dealing with the Holocaust.

In some her grief is overwhelming and her sorrow inconsolable. In some she despairs of her world, of the possibility of continuing to live and write in a world where so few remain alive. But in others, no less a product of her loss, she begins to find solace again in nature and in words. In these latter poems she struggles with the style and structures of the lyric and slowly begins to experiment with the language and its forms to find ways to convey the enormity of the devastation she experienced.

At the war's end in 1945, Korn once again returned to Poland with her daughter, but found it even more difficult to live there.

Continued on page B44

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She found refuge in Montreal

Continued from page B43

Elected by the newly established Yiddish Writers' Union to be a delegate to the International PEN conference, she moved to Stockholm for two years and turned to prose to write about the experiences of the Holocaust. Her writings from this period appear in *Nayn dertseylungen* (Montreal, 1957).

Despite the hospitality she received in Stockholm, Korn wanted to leave Europe. In 1948, she was joined by her daughter and with the assistance of Ida Maze, a Canadian Yiddish poet living in Montreal, Korn, her daughter Irene — now a doctor — and her daughter's husband, Edmund Kupferszmidt, gained entry to Canada and settled in Montreal. Luckily, Korn, Irene and her family continued life together until Korn's death in 1982.

> *'The poet of sorrow and pain and the poet of longing'*

In Montreal, with its large Jewish population (which peaked at 120,000 in the 1970s), Korn found a dynamic Yiddish creative life. For a time, the city welcomed varying populations each speaking — some say Babel-like — in their own tongue. Yiddish was heard, along with other languages, and was visible on signs in the city streets.

A host of Yiddish speaking immigrants who had come from Europe to Canada before and after the First World War established cultural centres for Yiddish. Despite a dwindling population of Yiddish speakers and readers, Yiddish culture was sustained by a number of intellectuals and writers who continued to write and publish in Yiddish through to the 60s and 70s.

When, after the Second World War, Korn and others such as Yehuda Elberg and Chava Rosenfarb came, they joined a still vibrant Yiddish community in Montreal.

Korn found refuge in Montreal, yet the anguish she experienced in Europe remained at the forefront of her writing. Poems of sorrow and pain appear in her collections published in 1948 and 1957.

From the '60s on, Korn's writings began to reflect calmer moods and themes. She introduced new landscapes of Canada and Israel, which she visited before and after the Six Day War.

Her later works offer insight into her rich cultural inheritance, which both in personal and collective terms enables her to find the appropriate literary register to regain confidence in the language and poetry itself. As she struggles to come to terms with her past, Korn's poetry moves toward an exploration not only of the physical world but of her own psychic landscapes.

The poems of this late period offer readers an inside glimpse into the sustaining power of language and the lyric poem. They shed light on the poet's ability to resist loss and systematic destruction through the power of the word and the structure of the poem. Calling her "the poet of sorrow and pain and the poet of longing," Elie Wiesel describes her work as moving her readers with the "evocative strength of her language. Each word calls out to us, each image burns."

Over these years, a tremendous outpouring of verse, essays, memoirs and short stories returned Korn to the literary productivity she had achieved before the war. She brought to fruition the cultural refurbishing in Montreal Segal hoped for in 1948.

...

Since the 1970s, Yiddish fluency in Montreal has declined. Korn's reputation also dwindled. Appreciation of verbal art in Yiddish has become accessible only to few, as Yiddish is less visible in the general verbal landscape of the city.

Recalling this lively culture has now become the work of translation and archival retrieval. Translations of artistic works by Yiddish writers have appeared in English and French.

Rokhl Korn, photo courtesy of The Jewish Public Library Archives, Montreal.

A number of translations have awakened interest in Korn. In addition to the inclusion of her work in varying recent anthologies, translated works from Yiddish to English appeared by Seymour Levitan, Seymour Mayne with Rivke Augenfeld, Abraham Boyarsky, and others.

Since the '90s, translation from Yiddish has become a broad ranging activity involving historical research and critical and imaginative recreation.

A closer look at Korn's life and work is available in a large body of material in the archives of the Jewish Public Library. Most of it remains in its original Yiddish form. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that much can be learned from Korn's oeuvre.

Esther Frank teaches modern Jewish American and modern Yiddish Literature in the Department of Jewish Studies at McGill University.

The rescuer

Judy Feld Carr

Jewish tradition accords priority to *pidyon shvuyim*, the rescuing of captives. The *Shulchan Aruch* goes so far as to equate any unnecessary delay in expediting the freedom of captives as equivalent to murder.

There are several cautions. We are advised that the price paid to free a captive should not be so high as to promote holding others for ransom, nor should individuals knowingly and repeatedly open themselves up to the possibility of captivity.

But these qualifications certainly did not apply to the approximately 6,000 Jews of Syria who, following the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 and, even more so after Israel's victory in the 1967 Six Day War, found themselves captive in the land of their birth.

Their every movement monitored and communication with Jews outside Syria restricted, Syrian Jews lived in daily fear of arbitrary arrest and torture and, on the slightest pretext, were squeezed by Syrian authorities into paying financial tribute. Remembering the financial squeeze put on the Syrian Jewish community, a former Syrian Jew now living in Israel recalled, "we paid for every breath we took."

By Harold Troper

The plight of the oppressed Jews of Syria was taken up by Judy Feld Carr. Beginning in the early 1970s and for almost three decades, Judy remained a mainstay of a public campaign in North America to promote the cause of Syrian Jews. She tirelessly pressed government officials, Jewish leaders and the media to speak out on the oppression of Syrian Jews. But, this was her public face.

Judy Feld Carr had a secret life that would rival anything that Robert Ludlum could invent. Put simply, under cover of her public protest campaign, Judy covertly organized the escape of more than 3,500 Jews out of Syria. Acting very much as an independent player in the shadowy world of international intrigue, she bought these Jews retail, one by one.

Was there anything unusual in Judy Feld Carr's background to prepare her for this task? Nothing beyond a Jewish heart and inability to take 'no' for an answer when it came to aiding Syrian Jews.

Judy was born in Montreal in 1938 and, together with her mother and younger brother, moved to Sudbury, Ont. — hardly a major center of Jewish activism — where her Russian-born father, Jack Lev, traded furs with Native trappers and served as a leader in Sudbury's tiny Jewish community.

Continued on page B46

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Marla, Ronald, Jarod & Phoebe Struminger

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Children & Grandchildren
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Jews were for sale in Syria

Continued from page B45

After Judy finished high school in 1957, she left Sudbury to study music education at the University of Toronto where she earned both a bachelor's and master's degree in music education and musicology, a specialist in instrumental and vocal music. In 1960 she married a young physician, Ronald Feld. They had three children.

Both Judy and Ronald were engaged by Jewish life. In the late 1960s Judy and her husband were swept up in the Soviet Jewry campaign but eventually refocused on the increasingly difficult plight of Jews in Syria.

Convinced that the approximately 6,000 Jews of Syria needed the support of western advocates, the couple pulled together a Syrian Jewish committee in Toronto modeled on the effort being organized on behalf of Soviet Jews. The small group of activists around Judy and Ronald publicized the Syrian Jewish reality: extortion, imprisonment without trial and torture.

Judy and her husband also devised ways to pierce Syrian Jewish isolation, to let Syrian Jews know they were neither forgotten nor abandoned. Their committee began mailing packages of religious articles and books from Canada to Syria, items which the Syrian postal and police authorities allowed to be delivered. In the process, they made clandestine contact with several Syrian Jewish leaders, first in Damascus and later in Aleppo. Guarded and coded communication began, as did the transfer of money from Toronto to support individual Syrian Jews in distress.

Ronald died suddenly in 1973, leaving Judy with three young children. In his memory, family friends organized a charitable fund for Syrian Jews at Toronto's Beth Tzedec Synagogue. Encouraged by this generosity and as a tribute to her husband, Judy continued with the Syrian campaign she and Ronald started. Several years later, this work took a new turn.

In 1977, remarried to prominent Toronto lawyer and Jewish leader Donald Carr and mother to a blended family of six children, Judy was visited by the sister of an elderly Aleppo rabbi inflicted with cancer. The sister, living in Toronto, wanted to bring her father to Toronto for medical treatment. Would Judy help?

The idea seemed impossible. And if Judy had asked experts on Jews in Arab lands, they would have agreed it was impossible. Syrian authorities generally withheld permission for Jews to leave Syria. But Judy did not ask the experts and, intrigued by the possibility of actually removing a Jew from Syria, she accepted the challenge.

It did not take long for Judy to learn that Syria was a marketplace and Jews were for sale. If enough money greased enough palms, she learned it might just be possible to buy a sick and elderly rabbi out of Syria. She succeeded. He never went back. Nor did the more than 3,500 other Jews that Judy eventually delivered from Syria.

Encouraged by her first successful rescue, and backed by money quietly contributed in Toronto and elsewhere in North America to buy airline tickets and pay bribes, from her home in Toronto Judy soon began negotiating secretly with Syrian officials, even Syrian secret police agents, for the departure of individual Jews.

Judy Feld Carr, second from left, with Zaki Shayou, one of the men she rescued from Syria, left, her husband Donald and their granddaughter Danielle.

With every successful rescue, Judy was quietly approached with more names of Syrian Jews desperate to leave. With each new name she began yet another long and sometimes cumbersome rescue effort. Each case was unique. No negotiation was routine.

Since Syrians would almost never permit an entire family to leave as one, Judy was forced to bargain for each individual family member in turn. The amount demanded in bribes and fees varied from one rescue to the next: an old man generally cost less than a young and single woman, a little boy more than a little girl. How much for a pregnant woman? How much for a mother nursing a baby?

In addition to the bribes, Syrian authorities also required a fig leaf excuse for granting Jews permission to leave. Since each departing Jew left Syria with a round trip airline ticket and was officially supposed to return to Syria, Judy was forced to be inventive.

Some, like the elderly rabbi, were said to be leaving for medical treatment abroad and would return. Some left as caregivers for the sick, others for business trips or to visit family who had left Syria in the 1940s and 1950s before Syria's doors were sealed to the permanent departure of Jews. Each Jew allowed out also had to post a financial guarantee of his or her return, even though the Syrian authorities who pocketed bribes knew full well none of those leaving would return.

Most of those whom Judy Feld Carr bought out of Syria were first flown to New York. Those were reunited with relatives in the United States or elsewhere in the west. Others stayed in New York only long enough to camouflage a departure for Israel, where they were quietly resettled in spite of warnings by Syrian officials that if it was discovered that any Syrian Jew made contact with Israel, punishment would be visited on family members remaining in Syria.

In some instances it was imperative that an individual or even an entire family in immediate fear of the authorities be removed from Syria quickly. Often in these cases no amount of bribe money could induce Syrian officials to issue an exit visa. As a last hope, Judy entered the murky world of cross-border smuggling.

Continued on page B47

Always great risk

Continued from page B46

At great financial cost and even greater personal risk, she secretly engaged with shady individuals who, for the right price, illegally moved people and contraband across the heavily guarded Syrian border with Turkey. Once in Turkey, those Syrian Jews who Judy paid to smuggle across the border made contact with Israeli officials and were quietly transported on to new lives in Israel.

In the early 1990s hopes for a comprehensive Middle East peace, including an American-brokered peace between Israel and Syria, were high. With an eye to lowering barriers to bilateral talks, Syria and Israel both made goodwill gestures to one another. Syria, for its part, officially lifted state-imposed barriers to Jewish departures. But this did not stop Syrian officials responsible for issuing passports and exit visas from demanding a handsome fee for their services, often more than desperate Syrian Jews could afford.

Concerned that the Syrian door would not indefinitely remain open to Syrian Jews, Judy threw all her energy and financial resources into removing the remaining Jews from Syria as quickly as possible. The vast majority left, many with Judy's financial assistance. The Jewish presence in Syria, a presence that runs back to the era of the Babylonian captivity, came to an end. Today there are virtually no Jews remaining in Syria.

> *Judy threw all her energy into removing the remaining Jews*

Her Syrian work done, Judy emerged from the shadows to long overdue public recognition. Along with honorary degrees and accolades from Jewish and Israeli organizations, in 2000 Judy received an honorary doctorate from Laurentian University in her former home of Sudbury. In 2001 she was given the Order of Canada, the highest award Canada can give a citizen. A special honour came to Judy in the form of a letter. In 1995, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin wrote Judy to personally thank her for her *pidyon shvuyim*, her work to rescue the Jews of Syria.

"Very few people, if any," Rabin wrote, "have contributed as greatly as you have." But, perhaps most heartening to Judy was an honour bestowed on her by leaders of the Syrian Jewish community she helped escape Syria. They collectively celebrated "Judy Feld Carr who arose when it was 'still night' and woke up the world to the plight of our brethren in Syria."

Harold Troper teaches in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies at OISE/University of Toronto and is the author of The Rescuer: The Amazing True Story of How One Woman Helped Save the Jews of Syria, (Lester, Mason & Begg 2007)

Best wishes to my children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year

Dave Farberman

Best wishes for a year of peace and serenity, health and happiness to our relatives and friends and the people of Israel.

Morris & Fay Freedman
David, Lauren, Michael & Sara

Allan and Caryn Friedman
Amanda and Cassie

Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year

G's . . .

Sam & Gitta Ganz and Family

wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

Aron & Ala Gerhard and Family

Wish their relatives, friends and neighbours a happy and healthy New Year

Kristen, Len
Aaron and Jack Ganz

Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a very happy and healthy New Year!

Al & Julia Gelfant & Family
Susan Fine & Family

wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

Cathy and Frank Gold
Ashley & Jessica

Wish their relatives and friends a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

Irving & Faye Gold

Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for a happy, healthy & peacful New Year.

Mr. & Mrs. Jack Gladstone and Neil

Dr. & Mrs. Terry Davis and family

Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year

Gert Goldberg
children Jill, John & Granddaughter Sydney
64 Carscadden Drive

Wish their relatives, friends & neighbors a happy and healthy New Year.

Irving & Paula Goldhar

Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, friends and relatives for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Best wishes for a year of peace and serenity, health and happiness to relatives and friends and the people of Israel

Fay Goldlist
Marlene & Sam Hait
Barry & Randee Goldlist
Rochelle & Seymour Frydrych
Children, Grandchildren & Great-grandchildren

Regina and Charles Goldfinger and Family

Best wishes to our children grandchildren, friends and relatives for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Michael & Francine Goldrich
Yaakov, Kayla, Shimon
Lana, Yechiel & Naomi

Best wishes to all our family and friends for a joyous and happy New Year

HaShem, may it be Your will to eradicate the enemies of Judaism and the Jewish people.

Lillian Granek

Best wishes for a year of peace and serenity, health and happiness to our relatives and friends and the people of Israel.

Moishe Gruda

Best wishes to our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren Jordan, Jenna Ashley & Frank and our relatives for a happy, healthy New Year

Jack & Ruth Gutholc

H's . . .

ADAM & ZELDA HARRIS and Family

Wish their relatives and friends a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Sylvia and Barry Hennick
Eleanor, Jeff, Ryan and Joshua Stainsby
Karen, Eric, Jackson and Veronica Machtinger

Wish their relatives and friends a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, family and friends for a happy and healthy New Year.

Joel & Bluma Hoffman

I's . . .

Kelly and Daniel Isakow & Family

Wish all their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year.

J's . . .

Bruce & Cathy Jacobs
Jeffrey & Jordan

wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy, and healthy New Year.

K's . . .

The Kalifer Family

Bernyce & Marv, Ron & Nancy Kalifer, Ellen & Gerry Fialkov, Debbie & Wayne Steinberg and all their families would like to send their best wishes for a Happy & Healthy New Year

BEST WISHES FOR A YEAR OF PEACE AND SERENITY, HEALTH AND HAPPINESS, TO MY CHILDREN, MACHATONIM, RELATIVES AND FRIENDS AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.

Jean Kichler

America's first female rabbi

Sally Priesand

In 1972, Sally Priesand became the first woman rabbi in America. Her historic breakthrough blazed a path for the transformation of modern Jewish life.

Changing the positions of women in Judaism had long been on the agenda of those seeking to adapt an ancient faith to the modern world. In America, starting in the mid-19th century, many synagogues abolished the separate women's gallery in favour of having the family pray together like their neighbors did in church.

Subsequently, the question of whether women could become rabbis emerged. In 1889, emblazoned across the front page of Philadelphia's Jewish Exponent, Mary M. Cohen dared to ask "could not — our women be ministers?" (then considered the respectable term for rabbi.) In the following decades, the question swirled among American Jewish men and women. In the 1920s a few young women tried to become rabbis, but none succeeded.

The winds of change for Jewish women blew not only in America, but also across the Atlantic.

In Germany in December 1935, one young woman, so pious that she would tie her handkerchief around her wrist on Shabbat, was ordained a rabbi — not by the authority of any rabbinical college, but privately by another rabbi.

By Pamela S. Nadell

Regina Jonas had been a student at the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums, Berlin's College of Jewish Studies. There she had argued in favor of women's ordination in her thesis "Can a Woman Hold Rabbinical Office?"

After becoming a rabbi, Jonas preached and counselled Berlin's increasingly desperate Jews. Then she shared the fate of her compatriots. Deported first to the notorious "model" ghetto, Theresienstadt, in what had once been Czechoslovakia, she was murdered in 1944 at Auschwitz. The story of her breakthrough, however, did not perish with her, as Sally Priesand would eventually discover.

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Spiritual gifts

Continued from page B48

After the Berlin Wall came tumbling down, Jonas's thesis surfaced in east German archives and is now available in English in Elisa Klapheck's *Fräulein Rabbiner Jonas: The Story of the First Woman Rabbi*.

Sally Priesand's journey to the rabbinate rests on the shoulders of those, like Jonas, who pioneered the question of women's ordination before her. Her success, however, belongs to her remarkable tenacity, her deep spiritual gifts, and also to the moment when she came of age.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1946, Priesand grew up in the settings of American reform Judaism — Cleveland's Beth Israel West Temple, its youth group and reform's Union summer camp in Zionsville, Ind.

Crediting her parents, who raised her to have the "courage to dare and to dream," she set her sights on becoming a rabbi before the second wave of feminism burst forth.

Even before Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, exposing how bored were her Smith college classmates in their "comfortable concentration camp" suburban homes; even before a new generation of young women began demanding an end to the quotas barring them from medical and law schools, Sally

> *'Courage to dare and to dream'*

Priesand's friends were already calling her "Rabbi Sally." Priesand later said that she never wanted to be a pioneer, and she certainly did not set out to champion women's rights. Yet in the end, she did both.

Instead, she wanted to be a pulpit rabbi. That meant heading to reform's seminary, the Hebrew Union College — Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in Cincinnati.

In 1964, Priesand, who had just graduated from high school, simultaneously enrolled in the University of Cincinnati and in neighbouring HUC-JIR's graduate rabbinical program.

In 1968, despite college officials assessment that they did not know what opportunities would be open for women in the rabbinate since they had never "as yet" ordained a woman, she was admitted to HUC-JIR's rabbinical school, the only female in a class of 35 men.

Some of her professors expected her to do exactly what some of the other women who had started rabbinical school had done. Either she would drop out of school and eventually find a "career" in Jewish women's work in Hadassah or another organization, or she would marry one of her classmates and instead of becoming a rabbi, she would have married one.

Continued on page B50

Eugene Katz
Linda, Leon, Michael, Aaron & Daniel Katz
Wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

Morley Klayman
Laura & Mitch Pasternac
Wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year

Wishing all our family and friends a happy and healthy New Year
Murray & Susie Klein
David, Lisa & Abbi
Robbie, Dana, Lev, Aliyah & Shia
and Jamie, Joelle & Mia

Howard & Nancy Kleinberg
Wish their children, relatives & friends a happy and healthy New Year

Israel Koplowitz
Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, relatives & friends for a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year

Best wishes for a year of peace and serenity, health and happiness to our relatives and friends and the people of Israel.
Dorry & Alex Korn and Family

Marilyn Kostman
Elayne & Roberto Slimak
Sasha, Keren, Jonathan & Noah
Arny, Jesse & Tyler Kostman
Best wishes for a year of Peace and Serenity, Health & Happiness to all our friends

L's . . .

Vicki & Syd Lanys
Michael & Zachary Lanys
Sheryl, Sheldon, Lindsay and Sean Cheskes
wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

I wish my family and friends a happy and healthy New Year.
Mary Levitt

Regina, Robert & Brian, Jodi and Mikayla Lee
Alisse & Brian Goldenberg
Wish all their relatives and friends a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

Fela Lichtblau
Children & Grandchildren
Wish all their relatives and friends a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year

Wishing all our family and friends a happy and healthy New Year.
Marilyn, Bruce, Erin, Michael & Brian Lubelsky

Shelly & Marilyn Little
Adam, Sari, Jeremy & Amy
Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year

Natalie & Manny Langer
Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

M's . . .

Carl & Sylvia Mahler

Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Best wishes for a year of peace and serenity, health and happiness to our relatives and friends and the people of Israel

Honey & Milton Mandel and Family

Sam and Lori Merson

Wish their children, grandchildren, family and friends a Happy, Healthy & Prosperous New Year.

Ida Melnik children, grandchildren & great-grandchildren

Wish all their relatives, friends & neighbours a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

In loving memory of our beloved Harry ז"ל

David Mendlowicz
Itzik Ravuna, Lisa Mendlowicz, Jordan & Danielle
Simon Mendlowicz, Wendy Lebskin & Jenna

Wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

JOE & HELEN MORGAN AND FAMILY

wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

Seymour & Florene Moskovitz and Family

wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year

N's . . .

Bernard & Edie Nayman

Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Irving & Eva Nightingale & Family

Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year and to am Yisrael

O's . . .

Best wishes for a year of peace and serenity, health and happiness to my relatives and friends and the people of Israel.

Norma Orlan

P's . . .

Rose & Sam Pacht Children & Grandchildren

Wish all their relatives, friends a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

Nearly 26, ordained a rabbi

Continued from page B49

Priesand, buoyed in part by the first victories of the new women's movement which saw, for example, the elite Ivy League colleges begin admitting women while she was in rabbinical school, persevered.

During her final year she wrote her required thesis, choosing to explore the history and status of women in Judaism. Here, acknowledging Regina Jonas's pioneering achievement allowed her to claim that, since she "was not truly the first woman rabbi," she was not launching a revolution in Judaism.

On June 3, 1972, the young woman who had written when she was a high school junior, "although I am a girl, I would like very much to study for a rabbinical degree," was ordained rabbi, teacher, and preacher in American Israel, as her classmates spontaneously rose to honour her and acknowledge her historic breakthrough. Rabbi Sally had achieved her dream just weeks shy of turning 26.

But ordination was only the first hurdle for this reluctant pioneer of American Judaism. As a student, Priesand already discovered the rewards and frustrations that would mark her career as the first woman rabbi. Media attention had crescendoed as she approached ordination. But, as Priesand sought student pulpits and field experiences in congregations which regularly hired part-time rabbinical students, she discovered that synagogues refused to interview her — or interviewed her only for the novelty. Experiences with the media and in her student pulpits had already begun to convey what Priesand would soon describe as "the unbelievable and almost unbearable pressures of being the first woman rabbi."

She found her first job at New York City's Stephen Wise Free Synagogue as assistant and then associate rabbi. While there, she published *Judaism and the New Woman* (1975), a slight revision of her rabbinical thesis.

Introduced by Bess Myerson, the only Jewish Miss America to date, it laid out a program for achieving "the complete equality that justice demands" for women. But, in 1979, Priesand left that congregation when she was not promised that she would succeed its ailing senior rabbi.

Now, once again, she again found temple boards using gender as an excuse not to interview or hire her. Unable to secure a new position commensurate with her considerable experience, she was forced to take a part-time pulpit and work as a hospital chaplain. Not until 1981 did she find the synagogue home she had so longed for — at Monmouth Reform Temple, in Tinton Falls, N.J.

In the Emmy-award winning documentary *And the Gates Opened: Women in the Rabbinate*, Priesand talks on camera about her life and career. The film shows her cradling the Torah and leading services, images that, when she first became a rabbi, were so novel they were transgressive. Today, of course, such images are commonplace.

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The temple was her family

Continued from page B50

The film shows her preparing young teens for bar and bat mitzvah and guiding a study session. She acknowledges how much women rabbis have impacted Judaism — introducing gender-neutral language, revisioning Jewish theology, favouring partnerships over hierarchy for rabbi-congregant relationships, reading ancient texts through a different lens, posing questions that had never been asked and inventing new rituals.

Priesand also talks frankly about the phenomenon of the "glass ceiling" in the Jewish community, barriers which still exist to women's advancement in Jewish life.

One way to understand her 25 years at Monmouth Reform Temple is to list the programs and causes she and her congregants championed, programs typical of so many contemporary synagogues — supporting Israel, caring for the homeless, sponsoring food drives for the hungry, hosting arts festivals. But this list scarcely conveys the person, the rabbi.

Priesand came to Monmouth Reform Temple and stayed for 25 years, despite the expectation of many that being a rabbi in a congregation of a few hundred families was surely only a stepping stone to a larger and more prestigious pulpit in a major metropolitan Jewish community. Priesand herself acknowledged the expectation, the sense held by so many that success could only be measured by

She stayed for 25 years

numbers, power and location, and that she, as the first woman rabbi, had to achieve that. But she refused to tread that path.

Instead, at Monmouth Reform Temple, Priesand, who never married, came to cherish deeply the partnership she forged with her "temple family."

That temple family let Priesand implement her vision of a rabbi. As a student she had articulated her credo: "I believe that a rabbi is a scholar, a teacher, a preacher, a leader, a counselor, a comforter, a preserver of Judaism and a human being."

She came to her synagogue determined to live out her idea of the exemplary rabbi and refused to stand as the symbolic Jew for the congregation. Instead she demanded that she and her congregants embark on a journey to discover ways old and new to be Jewish together.

She encouraged them to take "responsibility for their own Jewishness, one mitzvah at a time," and showed them how to do so: to study Torah, to see Shabbat as a day "to re-connect with God, our people and each other" and to provide "provide a Jewish presence" beyond the temple's walls.

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Harry Perlstein

Wishes friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year.

Wishing our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, family and friends a happy, healthy New Year

Isaac and Minny Peters

Leib and Fanny Pillersdorf and Family

83 Collinson Boulevard
Toronto, Ontario

Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year.

R's . . .

Willie & Bertha Rosengarten & Family

Wish all their relatives and friends a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

David & Shanea Rakowski and Family

Wish their relatives & friends a peaceful, Happy and Healthy New Year.

Mike & Sally Rosen and Family

31 Denmark Crescent

Wish all their relatives, friends and clients a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

Ralph & Karen Rabinowicz and Family

wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

Adele & Jan Rolin

Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, friends and relatives for a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

THE ROSENS
Hannah, John and Eric

wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

Paul & Phyllis Rosengarten

Best wishes to our children grandchildren, friends and relatives for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Pinchos Rywiec (Rivietz)

Best wishes to my children, grandchildren, friends and relatives for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Best wishes for a year of peace and serenity, health and happiness to our relatives and friends and the people of Israel.

Rene Rechtsman and Family

S's . . .

THE SACKS FAMILY
Annette and Michael
Brooke & Eric
Lisa and Jordan
Ryan, Alexis & Emma

Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year

Rosita & David Salomon

Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year.

Rachelle & Jessica Salamon
Lisa, Rob, Benji & Daniel Switzman
Mindy, Mike & Brayden Caplan
Wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

Mitchell & Lisa Salz
Nadine, Steven & Aaron
Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year

Rob & Hedy Steen
Samantha, Ben and Jeremy
Wish their relatives, friends and neighbours a happy and healthy New Year.

Alice Schmid
Monique Irwin
Amanda Irwin Ratner
Jordana Irwin Joseph
Wish their relatives and friends Happy and Healthy New Year.

Wishing all our family and friends a happy and healthy New Year
Joel Steinman, Victoria Apanovich & Family

Sandy, Ida & Maury Shessel
Elie, Lindsay & Maryam Kochman
Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy and healthy New Year

Max & Dorothy Stern
Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, great-grandchild, friends and relatives for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Nachum & Lea Shore
7 North Park Rd., Ste. 2104
Thornhill
Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, friends and relatives for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Zanvel & Sylvia Stern
Derek & Jill Stern
Brett & Corinne Starkman and Family
Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a Happy and Healthy New Year

Best wishes for a Happy & Healthy New Year to all our relatives, clients & friends
Mr. & Mrs. Milton Snow
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Snow & family
Karyn, Ashleigh, Carly & Jason Schwartz
Dr. & Mrs. Stephen Cohen & family

Sam, Janice, Dale, Jordan and Aliza Stern
Wish their relatives and friends a year of peace, good health and happiness.

David & Luba Smuschkowitz and Family
Wish all their relatives, friends a year of peace, good health and happiness

Jack, Lola, Rose-Mary Sylman
Sid, Evelyn, Madison & Tyler Rochwerg
Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, friends and relatives for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

'We are partners with God'

Continued from page B51

Deeply spiritual, Priesand affirmed "we are partners with God in completing the work of creation." She committed herself and her temple family joined her in fulfilling "the task of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world)." Today, in retirement, Priesand gratefully acknowledges "the sense of belonging" she found at Monmouth Reform Temple and her affection for her "temple family without whom my life would never be the same."

Retirement is but the next stage in her life and career. By the time Priesand became rabbi emerita in June 2006, nearly 1000 women — Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionist — had followed the path she cut into the rabbinate.

Her colleagues in the reform movement Women's Rabbinic Network honoured her by founding the Rabbi Sally J. Priesand Visiting Professorship in Jewish Women's Studies at HUC-JIR.

Keenly aware now of how historic her breakthrough really was for the history of modern Judaism, she has taken the lead in asking the first women rabbis to join her in donating their papers to the American Jewish Archives so that the historian of the future may write their history.

For thousands of years Judaism had relegated half its people to the margins. Women's ordination signalled the end of that.

For those who think, as do I, that we are living through an unanticipated renaissance of Jewish culture and creativity, we cannot separate that renaissance from the admission of women into the public. For that, we have to thank Rabbi Priesand for paving the way so that others could follow.

Pamela S. Nadell is the Inaugural Patrick Clendenen Professor of History at American University and author of Women Who Would Be Rabbis: A History of Women's Ordination, 1889-1985.

Rabbi Sally Priesand relaxes.

Israel Museum renovates

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

A tawny sandstone sculpture of Nimrod, an ancient Hebrew warrior and hunter figure with a razor-straight back and proud stare, sits at the intersection between modern Israeli art and native art from Africa and the South Pacific at the recently renovated Israel Museum.

The 1939 sculpture by Israeli artist Yitzhak Danzinger is an example of the kind of cultural and esthetic contextual links that James Snyder, the Israel Museum director, hopes to evoke in the reopening of the museum following a $100-million facelift that he calls a "renewal."

"It's like a double helix," said Snyder, who came to the Israel Museum in 1997 after 22 years at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, whirling his hand in the air to mimic a double helix's shape. "The culture of the region and the culture of the world – they wrap around each other."

The museum now stretches out on its sprawling 20-acre hilltop campus in Jerusalem across from the Knesset as a sleek and, indeed, renewed version of its former self.

Streamlined and expanded with 204,500 square feet for its refreshed collection galleries, archeology, the fine arts and Jewish art and life are now easily accessible in one large exhibit hall designed with the guiding theme in mind of how objects and art can resonate across time and cultures.

The archeology wing, which traces the development of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, boasts a "House of David" – an inscription from the ninth century BCE seen as part of a monumental stone. It's considered the earliest source backing archeological evidence that there was a dynasty sprung from King David in the Land of Israel. On display for the first time anywhere is a rare Crusader-era fresco that was on the wall of a 12th century Jerusalem abbey.

Fewer holdings are now on display amid almost twice the space. And there is no more trekking up a long pathway exposed to a broiling Jerusalem sun by summer or the cold winds and rains of winter. Visitors to the country's largest cultural institution now reach the museum through an enclosed underground passage featuring a translucent glass wall on one side.

At the highest point on the museum's outdoor grounds is a gleaming 16-foot-tall stainless steel sculpture in the shape of an hourglass specially commissioned for the museum's reopening. Titled *Turning the World Upside Down, Jerusalem*, the work by the renowned Indian-born artist Anish Kapoor reflects, upside down, the city's skies and landscape.

"Jerusalem is all about a very special relationship between the ground and the sky. This work attempts to bring the two together," Kapoor said, describing the sculpture to the *Calcutta Telegraph*.

Continued on page B54

T's . . .

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Tenenbaum
Sid, Judy, Ari-Lev, Elie & Avichai
Gary, Louise & Josh
Uli, Tamara, Odeyah, Daniel, Eliya
& Elisha Erez Friedman
Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours here and in Israel a happy and healthy New Year.

Dina and Willie Tenenbaum
Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, great-grandchild, relatives and friends for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Mrs. Rose Tenenbaum
Best wishes to my children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Wishing all our family and friends a happy and healthy New Year.
Karen Hacker & Irv Teper and family

Dr. & Mrs. Casey Tepperman, Jesse & Katie
Wish their family, relatives, friends & patients a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year

Ruth Trachter
Wishes her children, grandchildren, relatives and friends a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

U's . . .

Irving & Sylvia Ungerman and family
Wish their relatives & friends a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

W's . . .

RHODA & HARRY WAISGLASS
Wish all our family and friends good health and happiness in the New Year.

Albert & Helen Waisglass
wish our children, grandchildren relatives and friends, a Happy, Healthy New Year & peace for the people in Israel.

Perlan and Ted Waxman & Family
Wish their family and friends a happy and healthy New Year

Jack & Anne Weinbaum & Family
Wish all their relatives and friends a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

Jerry & Susan Weiner
Best wishes to our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

The museum has a 500,000-piece collection

Continued from page B53

Asked how he completed the massive undertaking of overhauling the museum both on schedule (three years) and on budget in a country where such feats rarely happen, Snyder answered, "Singlemindedness."

It was Teddy Kollek, also known for having a driving vision, who came up with the vision of the Israel Museum back in the 1950s. It was a time when most people in the fledgling state were focused on survival, not cultivating a world-class collection of art and archeology.

Under Kollek's guidance, the museum was opened in 1965, the same year he became mayor of Jerusalem, with modernist architecture designed by Alfred Mansfeld and Dora Gad. Under Snyder's direction, the original architectural sensibility was preserved as much as possible by the architects leading the projects, James Carpenter Design Associates of New York and Efrat-Kowalksy Architects of Tel Aviv.

"The point of our project is not about new architecture and re-engineering in the building," Snyder said in an interview with JTA in his sunny office. "The point wanted to be about changing the way you present content."

"The museum's view had been a little bit that we are many museums under one roof, and I kept saying what's amazing about this place is to find this breadth in one museum," said Snyder, an immaculate dresser who stands out in scrappy Israel with his rounded orange glasses, tie and blazer.

Over the years, the museum, which has active and generous friends associations abroad, has acquired a 500,000-piece collection. Along with its Judaica and fine arts holdings, the museum long has been known for its outstanding regional archeology holdings. A major showcase has always been the Dead Sea Scrolls, which are housed in their own building.

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The new entry to the museum

Main 'Cardo' hallway, looking north

Mark & Jodi Weisleder, Hillary & Jillian
Louis & Marlene Weisleder, Joshua, Lindsay & Zachary
Marsha Weisleder
Anne & Sam Himelfarb Adam & Eric
wish their family and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

John & Marcia Wenus Dustin, Shelby, Brittany, Dylan and Eden
Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy & healthy New Year.

Shana Tova
To our friends & relatives for a happy & healthy New Year
Stefanie & Steve Winter

THE WISEBERG'S
Gloria
Barb, Darrel & Joey Hotz (Canada)
Azriel, Sigal, Nitzan, Dafna, Maya, Dvir & Noga Har Lavan (Israel)
Wish their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

Lou & Helen Wronzberg
Rick, Debbie, Alexis & Danielle
Larry, Darlene, Lynsey & Tarah
Randy, Debbie, Jordan, Lina, Ashley, Dustin & Melissa
Donna, Nechama, Zecharya, Chaim & Shmuel
Wish all their relatives and friends a happy and healthy New Year.

Sidney Wolbrom
Best wishes to my children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, friends and relatives for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Weinstock
David, Lauren & Jacob, Moss, Michelle, Nina & Sari, Mark & Donna, Dan
Wish their relatives, friends & neighbours a happy & healthy New Year.

Tamara Weinreich
98 Brookview Drive.
Best wishes to my children, grandchildren, relatives & friends for a happy, healthy & peaceful New Year.

The Wine Family
Ted, Annette, Madison & Eden
wish their family & friends a happy and healthy New Year

Y's . . .

Best wishes for a year of peace and serenity, health and happiness to our relatives and friends and the people of Israel.
The Yermus Family

'It's all about cultural synthesis'

Continued from page B5

More than $80 million of the renewal project was raised privately in Israel and around the world through individuals, families and foundations. Another $17.5 million came from the Israeli government.

Defending critics of the museum's "universalist" approach, Snyder says, "How can you avoid it? Look where we are – in Jerusalem, at the crossroads of the ancient world, where Europe meets Asia meets Africa and where monotheism happened. So if not here, where?"

The Jewish art and life gallery is designed to provide a view of Jewish life from the Middle Ages to modern times, showing both its secular and sacred dimensions. A highlight is a new synagogue route, which has the interiors of four synagogues, including ones from Germany, Italy and India. The most spectacular of all is a newly restored 18th-century synagogue from Suriname, a tiny South American country north of Brazil whose Jewish community, of Spanish and Portuguese origin, took root there a century before.

The entrance to the Bronfman Archeological Wing *[Israel Sun photos]*

In the 1990s, with the Suriname Jewish community rapidly disappearing and the synagogue no longer functioning, the Israel Museum acquired the synagogue and brought its interior – white walls, large windows and sand-coated floor – and contents to Jerusalem.

Upstairs on the upper entrance hall of the fine arts wing, a much different image looms. It's a towering sculpture of an African refugee boy in Israel made from Styrofoam and painted black. Israeli artist Ohad Meromi's 2001 *The Boy from South Tel Aviv* stands in front of a painting of different coloured polka dots by renowned English artist Damien Hirst.

Snyder thinks the sculpture of this underclass boy with a sense of majesty about him, as he describes it, has found its perfect home surrounded by the Hirst piece and others nearby that draw from African and European themes.

"It's all about cultural synthesis in contemporary culture," he said, his face breaking into a smile.

Then, adding what might be true for the renewed Israel Museum as a whole, Snyder says, "I hope we can keep it up."

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'I, too now belong in Poland'

By CAROL SEVITT

"What took you so long? We've been waiting for you."

On a recent trip to Poland and Ukraine, these words uttered by an old woman in Terawa Woloska, Poland, pierced my heart. As a child of Holocaust survivors, I felt that it was time for me to walk the streets my ancestors walked, breathe the air that was theirs and see the sights and smell the smells of their youth. With my cousin, Rosalyn Golfman, and a childhood friend, Claire Hoffer, I joined a Jewish Heritage tour organized by the Taube Foundation in San Francisco that took us to the major places of Jewish interest in Poland. Afterwards, we went to visit our ancestral towns.

Terawa Wolsoka, a picturesque Galician shtetl in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains, was home to the Langsam family, including my grandmother, great-grandmother, aunts, uncles and cousins. Tragically, most of the family perished in Belzec concentration camp, and I have only my mother's tales and two or three photos to verify their existence.

When my grandmother Shaindel married Zecharia Fink, they moved to Sanok, about 20 kilometres away, where they had five children. Born in 1923, my mother, Hania (Anne Novak), spent summers in Terawa Woloska running free on its hills and enjoying its quiet pastoral life.

Life changed drastically after the Nazis invaded Poland. The San River in Sanok was the border between the German and Russian-occupied parts of Poland. The Fink family escaped eastward and were evacuated to Siberia in 1941 as forced labourers. It seemed a cruel and unusual punishment at the time, but it saved their lives. During the war years, when they were starving and toiling in the forests, the family heard horrific stories about what was happening in Poland, but they couldn't believe anything could be worse than Siberia. Of course, they were wrong and soon learned that they had lost almost everyone and everything.

My grandmother's sister, Clara, who had come to Winnipeg before the war, sponsored all the surviving family members after it was over. Having been born in a displaced persons camp in Germany in 1948, I was only six months old when we came to Canada by ship and moved in with my aunt's family. It was very moving that 62 years later, Clara's daughter – my cousin – was with me on this historic pilgrimage back to Poland.

Continued on page B57

Sevitt and her cousin Rosalyn Golfman near the Terawa Wolsoka sign.

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'Through my tears, I thought of the losses we suffered'

Continued from page B56

Accompanied by our affable and larger than life guide, Alex Dunai, we toured Sanok, now a city of 40,000, which had once been one-third Jewish. At 57 Slowakiego St., my mother's address, we found a new house that bore no resemblance to the one she had described. The child playing outside eyed me suspiciously as I photographed the property, the neighbouring houses and the street from every angle. We asked a neighbour if there were old people around who might remember the Fink family, but learned that the oldest woman had died a few years ago.

Next, we headed to the Sanok Jewish cemetery. Many Jewish cemeteries have painful histories, as the Nazis often dragged Jews there, forced them to dig their own graves and then shot them. They also removed most of the Jewish headstones to use as construction materials, so many Jewish cemeteries around Poland and Ukraine are now just barren grassy fields. Hundreds of tombstones had been removed from the Sanok cemetery, but 50 old sandstone and marble tombstones and a new monument remained. I had brought stones from my Toronto garden and lovingly left a few in honour of my ancestors who were buried there in unknown spots.

After the cemetery, we retraced my mother's annual trek to Terawa Wolsoka, but instead of taking a few hours by horse and buggy, we got there by car in 20 minutes, enjoying breathtaking vistas as we crossed the Slonne Gura mountain.

Shortly before my journey, my 87-year-old mother drew a map of the hamlet for me. All the relatives lived in and around the main street – her grandfather was a butcher, her uncle was a baker, others had little shops. The first landmark was a church on the edge of town, and just as she indicated, there it was.

Two older women walked by as we reached the church, and Alex asked them if they remembered the Langsam family. Their faces lit up – yes they remembered various people including Pinchas the butcher (my great-grandfather). They walked us around the town and enthusiastically showed us where various family members had lived and where the Jewish cemetery had been (no tombstones remained).

They spoke of the terrible times the townspeople went through during the war and of a Polish woman who had tried to hide a Jewish child, but got killed for her effort. In their excitement to share their stories with us, they revealed that we were the first Jews to come back since the war had ended. That's when one of the women said to me, "What took you so long? We've been waiting for you."

Through my flood of tears, I thought of the 70 years that had passed, the losses we had suffered, and the people who would never be able to return to their beautiful shtetl. My cousin and I left Terawa Woloska with mixed emotions – elated that we had found people who remembered our family, impressed with its natural beauty, but grieving for more than 60 family members who were never a part of our lives, except in sad whispers.

Continued on page B58

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'I felt a sense of closure'

Continued from page B57

After seeing my mother's places, it was time to cross the border into Ukraine to visit my father's town. My dad, Oscar Novak, was born in 1920 in Stojanow, a shtetl about 100 kilometres north of Lvov (formerly part of Poland) with a population of about 2,000, half of whom were Jewish. Because he lived in the Soviet-controlled part of Poland, he was drafted into the Russian army in 1941 and stationed in Stalingrad at the start of the siege. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Russians began to distrust the Jews and sent my father to Siberia to join the industrialist army. There he found the conditions unbearable, and before long, he decided to desert. Unfortunately, he was caught.

The Russians decided to set an example, and after a show trial, sentenced him to eight years in jail, where he had to do hard labour. By 1945, near the end of the war, the Russian army had suffered so many losses that they began recruiting prisoners for suicide missions and promised that if they survived, they would be free. Fed up with his life, my father volunteered, but a kindly prison director wouldn't let him go, saying the war was almost over. By the time the war ended and he was freed, he heard the terrible truth that his entire family had been rounded up in Stojanow and liquidated in Belzec.

In 1946, he made his way to Breslau, Poland, and got involved in setting up kibbutzim to recruit Holocaust survivors to move to Israel. When he met my mother, he fell in love with her, followed her to the camp in Neu Ulm, Germany where she was living and married her in 1947. The following year, I was born.

While my mother constantly spoke about the war and her childhood in Sanok, my father never did. Whereas my mother is alive and helped me prepare for my trip, my father died in 1998.

As a result, I went to his town with very few details about Stojanow, his youth, his parents, his siblings, his life. Since I never saw a photo of my father's family, it was difficult to think of them as real people. To me, Stojanow was a name, and my ancestors were mere shadows.

Driving into Stojanow was very emotional because I felt that I was honouring the memory of my father, my grandmother Krusia, after whom I was named, and of all those unknown, unseen family members.

We found an 86-year-old woman who excitedly invited us into her apartment and plied us with coffee and chocolates.

Seviet in Stojanow in front of a Soviet war monument.

I had brought a photo of my dad taken right after the war, and when I showed it to her and told her his name, she told me that she remembered my father. She had played with him as a child, and knew that the family had run a store on the main street of town.

In that tiny kitchen, she told many stories about what had happened during the war, she laughed with us and cried with us. Then she looked up at me and said, "You look like your grandmother."

My eyes filled with tears as I thought about the woman after whom I was named, her tragic fate, and my loss at never having seen or known her. This woman hugged and kissed me and invited me to come back anytime and stay with her. Later, her daughter took us to the location of the Novak house and store on the main street, where the family of 10 had lived as part of this thriving Jewish community.

Back in Lvov (once known as Lemberg), which had once had a huge and vibrant Jewish community, the faded glory of the magnificent buildings harkened back to a prewar time when Jewish life in Poland was in its heyday. I could imagine all the rabbis, students, housewives, children, business and tradespeople who had once walked these streets. I felt the ghosts around me wherever I went in Poland and Ukraine.

Returning to Toronto, I felt a sense of closure. I had seen my family places, I had seen the major Jewish sites in Warsaw and Krakow, I had said *Kaddish* in Auschwitz. Although I will never fully make my peace with the Holocaust, a part of me feels that I too, now belong to Poland.

Carol Sevitt teaches business communication at Ryerson University in Toronto.

Jewish communities in Germany reborn out of the ashes

By MICHAEL PAUL

"Why would a Jew want to visit Germany?" Betty Barban asked me skeptically? At 97 years, she is the oldest member of the Jewish community in Newfoundland and Labrador.

She had a point, as she and her family and the parents of her late husband, Andreas, had to flee Nazi oppression in Vienna following the Anschluss (the Germany annexation of Austria into Greater Germany by the Nazi regime in 1938). The family ended up taking the last boat from Genoa to China and spent the next eight years in Shanghai.

I told Barban that I was fortunate to be able to attend a meeting in Munich, and while in Germany, I would also take the opportunity to learn more about Jewish life, past and present, in the areas between Frankfurt and Munich.

First, I decided to visit the areas of the "*Shum*" region, as it was called in Hebrew. *Shum*, when referring to the region, is a play on words. *Shum*, in Hebrew, means garlic. The Jews put garlic in most of their foods in the old Ashkenazi world of Germany, and in medieval depictions of Jewish men, they were drawn as holding a bag of money in the right hand and a bag of garlic in the left hand. *Shum* was also the acronym of the three famous places of Jewish learning in medieval Germany – Speyer, Worms and Mainz. In fact, Rashi spent some of his formative years in Worms and in Mainz studying at the famous yeshivas in those towns.

The ancient Jewish cemetery in Worms

In Mainz, Speyer and Nuremberg, I found few signs of Jewish life. Only the *Judengasse*, the Jewish ghetto, remained as a reminder of the once vibrant Jewish community in these places.

The town of Worms was a major centre of Jewish learning. Jews have been known to live there for more than 1,000 years. The old town, or *Altstadt*, is surrounded by remnants of the ancient wall and its towers. One tower near the old Jewish quarter is now called the Rashi Tor, in honour of the famous resident.

The current Jewish community complex in Worms includes the oldest synagogue in Germany (it was the first synagogue rebuilt in post-World War II Germany by the German state and federal governments), a mikvah and the Jewish museum. The latter was built on the spot where there had been a Jewish old peoples' home.

The Worms synagogue was initially destroyed in 1096 during the rampage of the Crusader mobs on their way to the Holy Land. The next destruction occurred in the mid-14th century, at the time of the Black Death, when the Jews were accused of poisoning the wells and causing the plague, and finally, the synagogue was totally destroyed in November 1938, leaving only rubble.

Continued on page B60

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'In awe as I entered the cemetery's ancient section'

Continued from page B59

The rebuilding of the ancient synagogue was done in 1959-60, using fragments of the rubble mixed with new stone bricks. The reconstruction was based on the photos of the interior and exterior of the original structure. The shul's main body serves as the men's section, and the women's section is off to the left. Somehow, the famous Rashi Chair was saved. It is claimed that Rashi used this chair.

The Worms museum, run by the city government, exhibits artifacts of the city's former Jewish residents –their homes and businesses, as well as articles from the old synagogue. A short distance away is the old *freidhof*, or Jewish cemetery. The cemetery is surrounded by a high wall, and it's divided into ancient and modern sections. The latter is closest to the main gate.

I was in awe as I entered the cemetery's ancient section. The *matzevot*, or tombstones, are enormous, are of a red sandy colour and appear to be of substantial weight. Many of them are four to five feet tall. One could still make out the ancient Hebrew script and small decorations on the tombstones that were not covered with moss. Here and there were the symbols of the Kohanim, the priestly tribe, with the hands outstretched in blessing, the picture of a lion or of a deer, or other figures. Close to a path were two prominent stones upon which had been placed many pieces of paper with small stones to weigh them down. One was the stone of the Maharil and the other the stone of the Baal Shem. The stones in this section appeared to be placed in a haphazard manner, and many had toppled over. The next section had stones dating from the late 1700s to the early 1930s. Some of the monuments were ornate, while others were plain. Almost all of them were in marble. They gave a glimpse into the history of this remarkable Jewish community. Not a single stone had been desecrated by the Nazis during the entire 1933-45 period. The same could not be said of the Jews living in Worms.

Headstones of the Maharal, left, and the Baal Shem.

Heidelberg on the Necker River was a centre of Jewish trade in medieval times. The community there shared the fate of other Jewish European Jewish communities during the Shoah. Heidelberg's old synagogue was located close to the Neckar.

Continued from page B61

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In Heidelberg, only a *Judengasse* without memorial

Continued from page B60

The Jews were given a small portion of land close to the river, so they would suffer the most during the frequent spring floods that wiped out the entire Jewish quarter and ruined the trading assets of the tradesmen. There is a memorial square in Heidelberg with 12 small pedestals made of the stones from the ruined synagogue, to symbolize the 12 tribes. At the front of the square is a small bimah upon which there is an inscription in Hebrew to memorialize the destroyed community. There is currently a small synagogue in active use in the city, and the community is small.

I next travelled to Nuremberg, the city made infamous for the early Nazi rallies, the Nuremberg racial laws and by the war crimes trials that bears that city's name.

The University of Heidelberg was one of the first universities in the 19th century that accepted Jews on the faculty without their having to convert. Sadly, in the 20th century, the university was plagued by virulent anti-Semitism and was one of the first to expel Jewish students and faculty after the Nazi rise to power.

All that remains today in Heidelberg is a *Judengasse*, without any sign of a memorial to its former Jewish citizens. This is truly a sad statement, especially from a city so tainted by Nazism.

Regensburg on the River Danube was one of the few German towns not bombed during World War II. There is an active Jewish community in Regensburg today. The small Jewish community was revitalized by an influx of Russian Jews in the early 1990s. The Jewish community complex is surrounded by a wall on which there is a memorial plaque. On the wall opposite the front door of the community centre is a painting of the pre-1938 synagogue. I was taken to the current sanctuary. An Orthodox synagogue, it had a linen mechitzah and was designed in the usual Ashkenazi manner. The current rabbi, Rabbi Josef Chaim Bloch, was there, and he joined the tour, pointing many things out to me. In my Yiddish and in his German, we got along very well.

In the Regensburg Synagogue with Rabbi Josef Chaim Bloch.

The rabbi insisted on my coming to his family's apartment a few blocks away for some tea. On the way, he told me a few things about the community. The Russians who had joined the community posed some serious problems in terms of their Jewishness. There are many mixed marriages with children, and some people consider themselves Jewish but halachically are not. Another issue is that some members of the community have not been circumcised, as circumcision was not widely practised in the former Soviet Union.

Rabbi Bloch and others teach the children of the community about Judaism. He told me that when the afternoon school is in session, there is a police car parked in front of the building. He said that he has not experienced anti-Semitism in Regensburg, but the Jews are always watchful. The authorities are friendly toward the Jewish community. The rabbi, on parting, told me about another historical Jewish site in town – a low, white rectangular structure with the word "*Mizrach*" in Hebrew where the old synagogue's Aron Kodesh stood. This ancient site was uncovered several years ago.

Continued from page B62

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Some 1,750 Jews in Augsberg

Continued from page B61

The city of Augsburg is the site of many great churches and palaces. The Jewish community *Gemeinde* (official community) and synagogue are only a few minutes' walk from the main street in the *Altstadt*. This is a liberal community, similar to American and Canadian Reform communities. Sadly, the Augsburg community today is only a shadow of what it once was. Currently, few of the city's approximate 1,750 Jews are active in communal affairs. I was told this by the community's archivist, a man who was born in Italy but who also lived in Czechoslovakia and in Poland. The problem of "who is a Jew" is very prominent in Augsburg – as he told me that the community's definition is very lax.

For example, he claimed that the current chazzan is from Serbia, but it's believed that his mother is Christian and his father is Jewish. However, he's accepted by the rabbi and the community as being Jewish. The services are more than 95 per cent in Russian with only a smattering in Hebrew. Even though the services are understandable to the main constituents, no more than 30 or 40 attend Friday night services and about eight to 10 come on a Saturday morning. The building used by the *Gemeinde* not only houses the synagogue but also a museum, which is used by the city's elementary school and high schools to teach children about German Jewish history, especially Jewish persecution during the ages.

The final city on my trip was Munich. This is a city tainted by its association with the early days of Nazism, and by the massacre of 11 Israeli athletes during the 1992 Olympics. The city that was once almost *Judenrein* is now home to an active Jewish community that some estimate at about 10,000. Currently, there are three known synagogues – one shtibl, a shul in the Jewish section of the city on Possartstrasse and the main synagogue, Ohel Yaakov, in the centre of town. A new complex of three buildings connected by tunnels, only a few blocks away from the Alte Rathaus (old city hall), contains the Ohel Yaakov Synagogue, the *Gemeinde* offices and the Jewish museum/ kosher restaurant. The complex is guarded by the police almost round the clock and by several Israeli security men. The *Gemeinde* is open 24 hours a day, and to enter one must talk to the Israeli security person who sits behind bulletproof glass. The museum consists of three floors and includes a section on the history of the Jews in Munich, which dates back to about 1275, when Jews were first mentioned in official documents.

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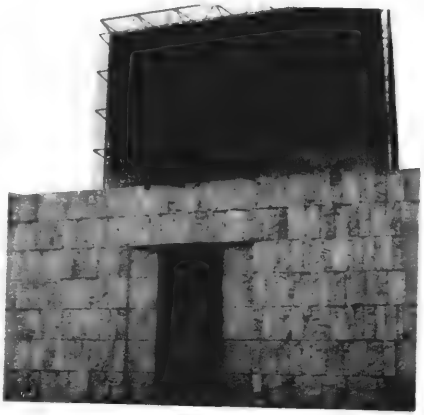
'Yasher koach to the Jews of Germany'

Continued from page B62

In order to enter Ohel Yaakov Synagogue when it isn't open for services, a visitor must undergo questioning by the security agents and present a passport. The tunnel to the synagogue contains memorial plaques and the names all of the Jewish residents of Munich who perished in the Shoah. When I was there, the staff was busy preparing the sanctuary, as on the very next day was to be a bar mitzvah. I met the shammas, a very charming man by the name of Erich Lehmann, who was originally from Mainz. He took the time to show me the Aron Kodesh with its eight Torah scrolls beautifully dressed in decorated donated mantles. What was very impressive was the ceiling made of Plexiglas to maximize the amount of light entering the room.

That evening for Shabbat services I had made arrangements to be with the Chabad rabbi, Rabbi Yisroel Diskin, who has been stationed in Munich for 21 years. He and his wife run the local Chabad House, which is across the hall in their apartment building on Princeregentsstrasse 91. The Chabad organization has about 10 houses across Germany, as listed on their website at www.chabad.org. Rabbi Diskin, his wife and his two young children were very inviting and kind. I joined the rabbi on the short walk to the Possartstrasse Synagogue. The ubiquitous Israeli security agent was present at the entrance but did not ask me any questions as I was a guest of the rabbi.

The people in attendance at the shul were in the main of Russian origin, with a smattering of former Polish residents. There was also an Israeli visitor. The interior was fairly simple. Rabbi Diskin led the Kabalat Shabbat services. We were finished by 9 p.m. As is the custom, the rabbi invited anyone who needed or wanted a place to go for Shabbat – an act of chesed. The rebbetzin had made a delicious supper, and the discussion around the table included chassidic stories about great saintly rabbis and the current state of political affairs.



The main entrance to the Ohel Yaakov Synagogue. *[Photos by Michael Paul]*

As I was leaving, the rabbi reminded me that as a visitor to the community, I was invited to the bar mitzvah Shabbat morning at the Ohel Yaakov.

I arrived at the shul at about 8:45 a.m. Lehmann greeted me at the door wearing his top hat and high-collared shirt with cravat. Of course, there was a gold chained watch across the vest. The shul rabbi – Rabbi Steven Langnas – is originally from the United States, but has been with this shul now for 12 years. He has a very nice voice and started the *psukei d'zimrah* before the chazzan took over. The chazzan, a young man with a soft and melodious tenor voice, continued. The bar mitzvah boy did his chanting of the Maftir and Haftorah very well, after which everyone on the bimah was peppered with candies. Both the rabbi and the bar mitzvah gave short talks in German.

I happened to be sitting next to a man with whom I had a good discussion about the *Gemeinde*. He indicated that Jews who are members are taxed at a rate of eight per cent, half of which is deductible from federal taxes. He lamented the fact that many of the Russians and Israelis in the city are not members. After the services, we walked to the *Gemeinde* building where there was the buffet meal. The way was lined by some of the adults in the community singing mazal tov songs to the family of the bar mitzvah.

My brief and limited trip to Germany's Jewish communities has shown me how out of the ashes of destruction and annihilation a community can be reborn, with vigour and vitality. Yasher koach to the Jews of Germany.

Michael Paul is a physician who is an active member of Beth El Synagogue in St John's, Nfld.

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This Week

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Stop blocking inspectors, IAEA tells Iran

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VIENNA — The United Nations' atomic watchdog chief said Monday that Iran's decision in June to bar two experienced nuclear inspectors from the country is problematic.

"I learned with great regret about Iran's decision to object to the designation of two inspectors who recently conducted inspections in Iran," said Yukiya Amano, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Repeated rejections of IAEA staff are hindering their work, he said.

Iran has accused the two inspectors of giving "false information" about its nuclear program. But Amano told a meeting of the IAEA's 35-nation governing board on Monday that he had full confidence in their "professionalism and impartiality."

The dispute over the inspectors has added to international concern about Iran's nuclear program, which western powers suspect is aimed at developing atomic bombs. Iran denies this allegation, insisting the program is aimed solely at generating electricity.

International Atomic Energy Agency director general Yukiya Amano, left, with Israeli President Shimon Peres in Israel last month [*GPO photo*]

Apart from the two inspectors barred in June, Iran also refused access to a senior inspector in 2006 and has objected to a number of other appointments in the past.

"Iran's repeated objection to the designation of inspectors with experience in Iran's nuclear fuel cycle and facilities hampers the inspection process," Amano said, according to a copy of his speech provided to reporters outside the closed-door meeting.

He urged Iran to reconsider a decision in January 2007 to reject 38 agency inspectors.

Amano said further that Iran's selective co-operation with his inspectors means that he cannot confirm that all of Tehran's atomic activities are peaceful.

Amano's blunt comments drew a strong response from Iran, which accused him of distorting facts in his report for the gathering.

Continued on page 37

Canadian cultural icon to tour Israel

Members of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet surround Amir Gissin, centre, Israel's consul general for Toronto and Western Canada. The troupe recently announced plans to tour Israel next month. Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger will also make the trip. *Please see related story on page 23.*
[*Rheo Catt, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, photo*]

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Constitutional referendum gives Turkish PM more powers – please see page 35

Our mission is to strengthen our unity

As we embark on the New Year, hope for peace appears tangible. While we focus on the recent summit meeting in Washington, we pray that it will lead to the signing of a historic peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinians, and bring tranquility, prosperity and security to the peoples of the region.

With a common and better future in mind, the Jewish people in the Diaspora and Israel must work together for the benefit of the generations to come and a brighter tomorrow. In this context, it is imperative that a spirit of brotherhood and a close bond with Israel continue to be a part of the Jewish and Zionist education of Jewish youth in the Diaspora. I believe the first-hand experience provided by visits to Israel plays a significant role in achieving this objective.

In a period when attempts to delegitimize Israel as a Jewish state are relentless, it is essential that we, in Israel, and the Jewish people throughout the world, jointly seek to thwart these efforts. We must mobilize our forces to expose the lies and highlight the values of the Jewish people through the ages, based on the Ten Commandments, as well as the moral and ethical values that constitute the foundations of our country and our people.

It is also vital that we stand alongside the international community in the fight against fanatic leaders, armed with nuclear weapons, and who deny the Holocaust and call for the destruction of the State of Israel.

In a world where science and technology rank high, Israel continues to stand at the forefront of advances in this domain. Indeed, we are proud of Prof. Ada Yonath of the Weizmann Institute, who received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, and Prof. Elon Lindenstrauss of the Hebrew University, who was awarded the prestigious Fields Medal for mathematics, for their achievements and for bringing such credit to Israel and the Jewish people.

Israeli President Shimon Peres

Our mission for the coming year is to strengthen our unity in matters that affect the destinies and future of us all. We must work together in harmony and reach agreements through dialogue. Solidarity, brotherhood, tolerance and understanding are the foundations of a strong and secure family. We cannot, and must not, allow disagreements to tear us apart. We must collectively dedicate ourselves to the well-being of the Jewish people.

In this spirit, I convey my best wishes to our brethren throughout the world for a year of peace, joy, good health and prosperity.

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Carter urged to take up case of Gilad Schalit

Toronto lawyer makes request to former president

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Jimmy Carter's reputation among supporters of Israel is, putting it charitably, less than stellar. But Toronto lawyer Bert Raphael has a suggestion that could change that.

Raphael, chair of Canadian Lawyers and Jurists for World Jewry, is suggesting the former U.S. president undertake a humanitarian mission to Gaza to secure the release of imprisoned Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit.

Where others have failed, Carter might succeed, Raphael said last week. "I think Carter has the flexibility with the Muslims to get him out. They listen to him. He's got that kind of clout. Everything else has failed."

Schalit, an Israel Defense Forces corporal, was captured by Hamas operatives in a cross-border raid from his post inside Israel. He has been held in captivity for more than four years, and Hamas has refused to allow any humanitarian organizations, including the Red Cross, to visit him or to even bring him mail.

Carter, who served as U.S. president from 1977 to 1981 and brokered the Camp David peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, recently returned from North Korea, where he secured the release of an American jailed for allegedly illegally entering from South Korea. Over the years, he has been a vocal critic of Israel, authoring a book with the provocative title *Peace Not Apartheid*.

Raphael believes, "Carter wants to redeem himself with the Jewish community because of the stuff he's written. Hopefully, he has the clout."

Raphael wrote to Carter, urging him to intercede.

"You have established a cordial relationship with the Palestinians, and there is no question but that they would be moved by your intervention," Raphael wrote. "There has been criticism of some of the negative comments you have made about the State of Israel. If you are successful in achieving the release of Gilad Schalit, then the respect that you earned from Jews throughout the world with your success at Camp David in achieving a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt would once again be restored."

Jimmy Carter

Raphael had not heard back from Carter as of *The CJN*'s press time. But if he accepts, it wouldn't be the first time he has raised Schalit in talks with Hamas.

According to an item on the Carter Center's website, the former president reported in December 2008 that he travelled to Syria, where "I met with Khaled Meshal and his fellow Hamas politburo members, all of whom are scientists, medical doctors, or engineers – none trained in religion... We discussed items on my agenda that included an extension of the ceasefire in Gaza, life there under the Israeli sanctions, the Arab peace initiative, reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah, the future of Palestinian leadership and elections in the West Bank and Gaza, and formulas for prisoner exchange to obtain the release of Cpl. Schalit. Like the Syrians, they are patient, relatively satisfied with the status quo, and putting all their eggs in Obama's basket."

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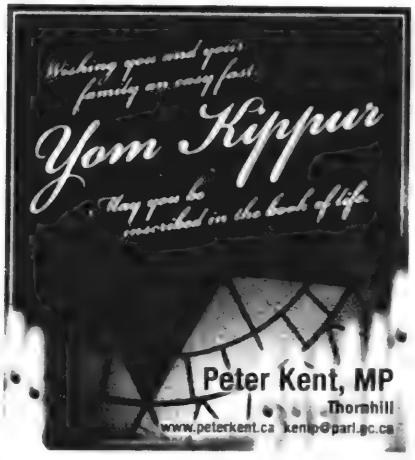
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Focus on education

From the editor's desk...

No activity is more cherished by the millennia-old traditions of our faith and our culture than the education of our children. The obligation to teach our children is enshrined in the very watchword prayer of our faith, the *Shema*, whose words are taken verbatim from the Torah, that every Jew of every affiliation, fellowship and orientation learns at a young age and likely remembers for his or her entire life.

Our sages always taught that we are grossly neglectful if we do not devote "every effort to the education of our children."

Of course, they had in mind specifically Jewish education. In this day and age, however, the definition of "Jewish" education might be broadened to incorporate the wider education to enable our children to sustain themselves as family-supporting adults with dignity, reasonable prospects and confidence in the modern world. In truth, our sages also hinted at such a necessity when they obliged parents to teach their children three specific skills: the ability to study (Torah), to swim and to ply a trade.

Obviously, the rabbis of yesteryear, too, were mindful that our children needed to know how to survive as adults in an often dangerous and uncaring larger world.

As most everyone knows, however, the education of our children – whether in the public educational system or in the Jewish educational system – is an enormous undertaking. (For the purposes of this column, I restrict my observations to the Jewish educational system.)

Despite the fact that the reinforcing heart of Jewish education is, has always been and always will be the individual home and family, the macro system of delivering education to our children involves the massive mobilization of an entire community.

The Jews of Canada are regarded throughout the Jewish world as relatively literate in the traditions, customs, language, teachings, philosophy, literature and ritual of our people. A cursory search of annual Jewish community digests by demographers or sociologists will confirm this. The annual reports of the Jerusalem-based Jewish Peoples Planning Policy Institute, for example, point to the Jews of Canada this way.

This high regard is a testament to the parents going back more than a century in this country – who have clamoured for a Jewish education for their children.

It is also a testament to the visionary community leaders – lay and professional – who, also for more than a century, created those schools ex nihilo, out of nothing, except their steel-hard resolve to do what their consciences and their hearts told them needed to be done to prepare and preserve a Jewish way of life for the next generation, too: build institutions of Jewish teaching.

It is not an overstatement to write that Jewish schools are the collective, herculean synergy of a vast coming together of teachers, administrators, custodians, parents, grandparents, fundraisers, funders and, of course, children.

The president of a school, for example, volunteers her time and her energy, sometimes her emotional equilibrium, too, for the sake of the future of the school she serves. The many responsibilities of the role overlap across committees, portfolios and personalities and are never merely the domain of morning meetings, dinner discussions and gala events.

To a great degree, she is the face of the school in the community, embodying through her comportment, altruism and dedication, the finest – and it must also be said, the least fine – qualities of the school to the rest of the community. And that is only the position of the president.

Our schools are a veritable Rube Goldberg construction of innumerable moving parts of human beings and generosities.

But our Jewish schools are in jeopardy.

I might add that the Jewish schools of Ontario stand in greater jeopardy than those in other parts of Canada. For the community leaders in Ontario must try to find the funding every year without the advantage of at least some funding enjoyed by Jewish communities in other provinces. The assistance given to families by the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is substantial. But, alas, it is clearly inadequate to ensure the viability of the various Jewish schools in the near future. Too many families will simply be unable to afford the costs of sending their children to a Jewish day school.

This is hardly news to anyone following the steep annual climb of tuition fees, let alone to the priority planners and decision makers in our schools and our various federations.

Strengthening Jewish identity is a high priority in every community in Canada. To be sure, it is a complex matter with myriad overarching facets, aspects, approaches and considerations.

But it is well settled by social and educational researchers and beyond doubt that the keystone to the arch of Jewish identity is Jewish education. Making Jewish education more accessible, more affordable to the families who will shy away in the future or are already bearing the suffocating financial burdens, must be the very first item on the communal agenda of strengthening Jewish identity.

With school just underway and our thoughts focused on the personal and collective meaning of the Days of Awe, it is important to acknowledge the great debt we owe to everyone involved in making Jewish education possible for our children. May they have the wisdom, resources and resolve to make it so for all generations of our children.

– MBD

See JN

HIGH HONOUR FOR VET

Sam Romberg, front, immediate past president of the Royal Canadian Legion's General Wingate Branch #256, was recently awarded the Palm Leaf, considered the legion's highest award. With him at the presentation at Baycrest Hospital were, from left, Ethel Sacks, Tom Snedden, Harold Kates, Harold Goldman, Larry Small, Morris Polansky, Larry Levy, Nelson Modlin, Oscar Adler, Jeff Ostroff and Brian Gelade. Romberg served in an armored tank unit in the Canadian Army during World War II and received five campaign medals. The General Wingate Branch #256 is the only Jewish branch in Ontario.

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Ward 16 candidates focus on developmental planning

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF and RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporters

Four candidates are running for councillor in Toronto's Ward 16 (Eglinton-Lawrence).

Michael Coll, a contract firefighter, Roy Macdonald, an educator, Terry Mills, a planner and designer, all hope to unseat incumbent Karen Stintz in the Oct. 25 municipal elections.

Ward 16 is bounded by Highway 401 to the north, Yonge Street to the east, Lawrence Avenue to the south and Bathurst Street to the west.

The Jewish population makes up 10 per cent of the ward's ethnocultural demographic, and it is home to numerous community shops and stores along the Bathurst strip.

The CJN asked each candidate the following question: **What are your priority issues for the ward and what would your first actions as councillor be if elected/re-elected?**

* * *

Michael Coll

Michael Coll: The first [priority] is to protect small businesses.

I would work with the local Business Improvement Area (BIA) to create a parking strategy in which you can possibly provide free parking between certain hours. [Customers] go to big box malls where you can park in these vast parking lots for free and do this one-stop-shopping.

Small business makes up a large portion of Ward 16 – it's very important that we preserve that. Vacancy rates are already too high. Business property tax rates are far lower in Vaughan than in Toronto. You can't increase business property taxes in the area and expect to reduce vacancy rates. I plan to keep [the tax] the way it is or lower.

It's important that you have the right development in the right spots. In Ward 16, you have to have adequate parking provided for the use of the building[s]. You need to take a much more assertive approach with developers and indicate that the area is already burdened by parking… It's important that the developer not only realizes that, but applies it to the development.

Roy Macdonald

Roy Macdonald: One thing [Ward 16 needs] is a long-term development plan. We can't just have these massive buildings being thrown up and not thinking of a long-term sustainable plan.

[Another priority] is street safety. The amount of traffic is unacceptable and out of control. In terms of safety, there have been quite a few issues [including muggings]. We really need to see some sort of police presence in our neighbourhood. We need to see some sort of sustainable plan for safety and traffic concerns.

There's a real need for working together with the police to see what resources we can have for the neighbourhood… You don't think of Eglinton Avenue or Yonge Street and Lawrence Avenue as having huge crime levels, but there's a significant amount.

Garbage [removal] is a big issue, and snow removal is a huge concern… I'm really looking at how we deliver these services. We have to look at whether we'd contract [services] out [or]whether it'll be some combination of private and public [services].

Terry Mills

Terry Mills: Since amalgamation, we've seen that decision-making is being distanced from the community.

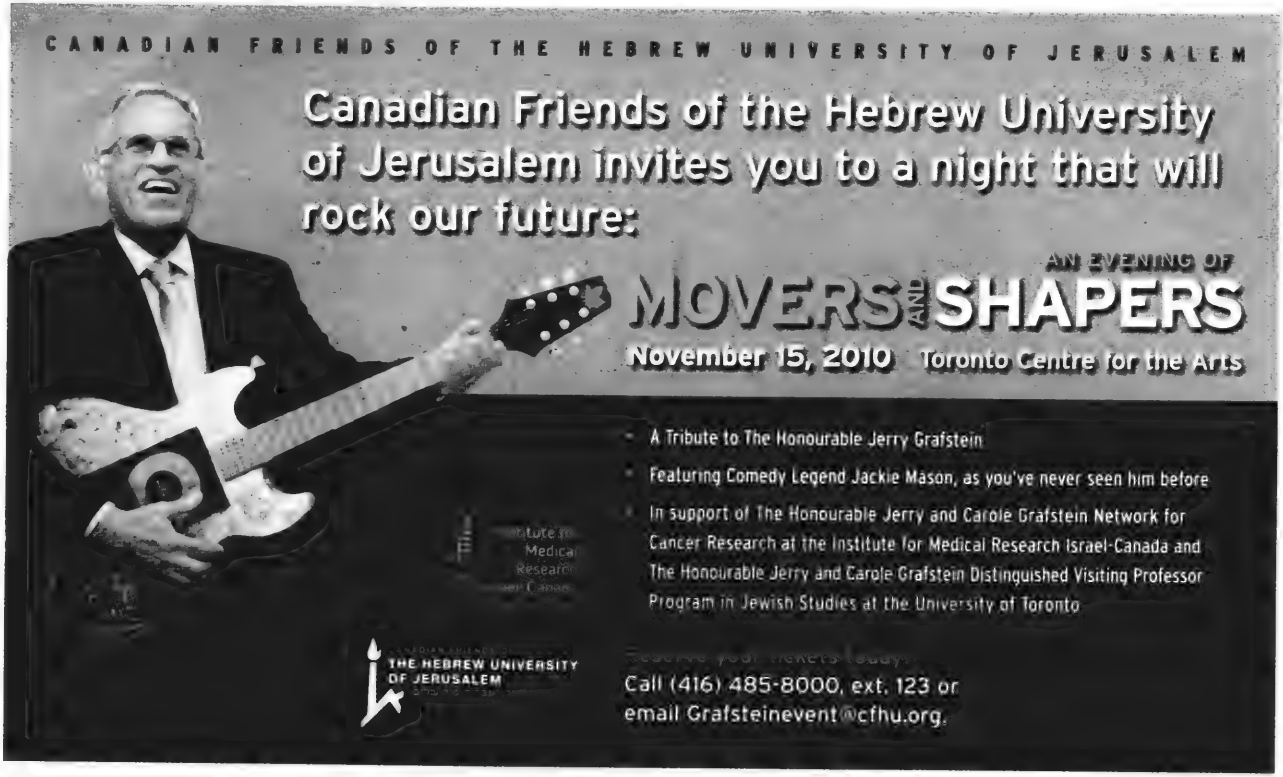
If elected, I would start instituting ward forums right away. Every month there would be a date when people could meet in a community hall and discuss what the community's all about.

We're a ward that is under a lot of growth pressure… [because] this is a very desirable part of Toronto for development. The one thing that concerns me is that the development thrusts that come into this ward generally just refer to the city's official plan.

That plan is only a general guide, to be implemented through local planning instruments, which have not been [created].

What you need to do is to have a community vision that can be used as a brief to guide development interests in the ward. It's what's called a development control plan, which would lay out expectations for fair standards and practices for development on a site.

Continued on page 7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Jews make up 10 per cent of ward

Continued from page 6

Karen Stintz

Karen Stintz: Maintaining our community assets such as our parks, green spaces, pools and arenas, and working to improve and enhance those assets is important.

City wide, there's an expectation that we're going to balance the books and take the necessary measures to restrain spending at city hall.

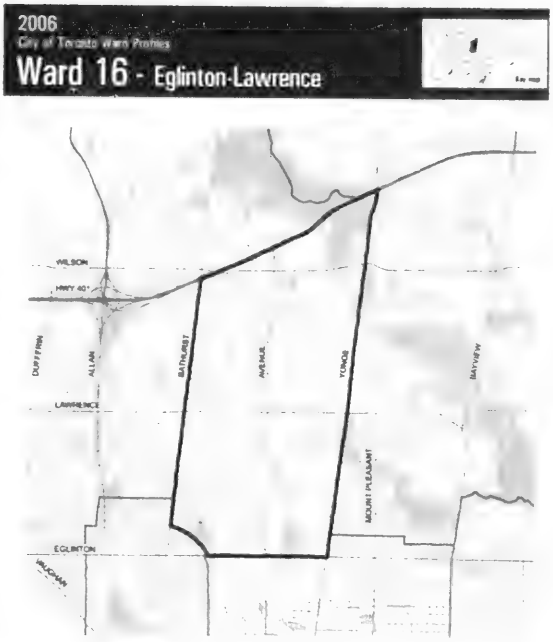
And for the community, there's been some interest in establishing some arena boards so that we can improve accessibility for the local community and make them better facilities.

There's also an interest in improving Brookdale Park and the ravine that goes through there. So I want to put together a steering committee of local residents to see if we can buy new park equipment and identify priorities to improve the local parks in the ward.

Also, we're scheduled to redo the ward's official development plan this year, and the key piece that needs to be added are density targets. Right now, we're the only centre that doesn't have density targets. We need to put these in so we can manage the development that will occur. And Bathurst [Street] also needs a secondary density plan and we'll want to put that in over the next term.

A NEW YEAR

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School Grade 4 students herald in both Rosh Hashanah and the new school year on their newly made shofarot. Students from SK to Grade 8 delighted in hearing their first shofar blasts of the year coming from their own schoolmates.



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Hamas hides nothing: openly opposes peace

The head of the Shin Bet, Israel's vaunted general security services, officially reported to the Israeli cabinet on Sunday what everyone involved in the revived face to face Israeli-Palestinian peace talks already knew. Hamas has issued "an organizational directive to foil the talks." Hamas controls the Gaza Strip, evacuated by Israel five years ago. It also has terrorist cells working in the West Bank, which is controlled by the Palestinian Authority.

Yuval Diskin also warned that "threats [to Israelis] are due to increase in the near future, as diplomatic developments occur. This isn't just an estimate, but is supported by real intelligence."

On the eve of the talks that began on Sept. 2, Hamas terrorists killed four Israelis as they were driving near Hebron. Two Israelis were wounded in the area the following day. In five days from Sept. 8 to Sept. 12, Hamas launched five rockets into Israeli territory from Gaza, including a mortar shell that landed next to a daycare centre shortly before children were scheduled to arrive.

The organization does not hide its objective. Indeed, after the murder of the four Israelis, a spokesperson for Hamas boasted that some 13 militant groups had joined forces to launch "more effective attacks" against the Jewish state. Hamas and its sponsors in Tehran openly oppose the peace talks and, through their murderous ways, hope to bring them to a halt.

Thus Israeli security forces are on full alert to pre-empt further attacks and to punish the perpetrators if they occur. After the rocket landed near the daycare centre, for example, Israel's air force struck in northern and southern Gaza. On Sunday, the IDF prevented an attempted incursion by three armed Palestinian men at the security fence between Gaza and southern Israel.

But PA security forces, too, have apparently mobilized against Hamas. Last week, they arrested six Hamas-linked suspects involved in the two shooting attacks against Israelis two weeks ago.

In his report to the Israeli cabinet, Diskin confirmed that the PA's security forces had indeed arrested the perpetrators of the attacks and that they seemed intent on preventing future attacks.

This is a very welcome development, and at long last, we might add. Formerly, arrests of suspected terrorists by PA forces were more cosmetic than functional, for the sake of appearances rather than crime prevention. In truth however, the leaders of the PA have no choice but to combat Hamas.

Hamas – and their Iranian backers – are the PA's enemy as much as they are Israel's enemy. The brutal, sadistic, vicious civil war between Hamas and the PA, in which Hamas wrested control of Gaza from the PA, should put paid to any belief to the contrary. But most important of all, Hamas is the enemy of peace.

It falls, therefore, to every supporter of peace to protect the fledgling talks from Hamas' sinister schemes to bring them down.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Speaking at a national Press Club luncheon in Washington, D.C., Rabbi Meir Kahane, founder of Israel's extremist Kach party, predicted he would become prime minister of Israel because its government couldn't prevent Arab terror. Kahane, who advocated expelling all Arabs from Israel and the West Bank, strongly denied he was racist and said U.S. Jewish leaders feared him becoming prime minister.

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One is the loneliest number

As mitzvot go, you can't get an easier one to fulfil than hachnasat orchim – the welcoming of guests. It requires no fluency in Hebrew, no synagogue membership and no obligation to pledge $1,000 during the *Kol Nidre* fundraising appeal.

So why aren't more Jews heeding these words at the New Year? No doubt, there are many who extend their generosity to strangers. But there are still too many, especially singles, who leave the service as they arrived – alone.

The answer to this question is as varied as the Jewish denominations themselves. In liberal congregations, returning home for a festive meal is not a custom observed in every household. And in the observant communities, in which post-prayer meals are a tradition, invitations to family, friends and co-worshippers can sometimes mean that those without a place to eat are unintentionally overlooked.

But given how many Jews do not wish to be on their own at this time of year, synagogues must seek creative ways to bring the unaffiliated into the fold. There is nothing more embarrassing than having to raise your hand in front of an entire congregation to indicate you are wishing a home-cooked meal. The stigma of appearing alone and unattached is sufficiently humiliating to ensure that the isolated remain isolated.

That is why Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning deserves recognition for its efforts to meet the needs of those wanting home hospitality in a manner that is respectful, dignified and inclusive. Its leader, Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, has developed a novel way that levels the playing field between those seeking a holiday meal and those extending it. At the conclusion of morning prayers, Rabbi Goldstein invites both would-be hosts and guests to the front of the sanctuary, where connections are made without embarrassment or shame. The success of the program should be inspiration for other congregations to follow suit.

My wish for this New Year is that no Jew walks out of synagogue lonely, and that every congregation practises, not just preaches, the mitzvah of hachnasat orchim.

Lorne Opler
Toronto

* * *

Temple Beth El Jubilee Weekend

As Temple Beth El of Windsor, Ont., draws to a close a year of celebration of 50 years as a Reform congregation, we are anxious to bring our young people and others that have moved away back home. Like many communities, both large and small, most children have gone away to study and never returned, except for family visits and religious holidays.

It is important to the active, hardworking, mostly silver-haired committee of Temple Beth El that we welcome back those young people who were nurtured in their formative years by committed teachers and rabbis. We hope that you will return to Windsor for the Jubilee Weekend at the temple, Oct. 15 to 17, to reconnect to those wonderful roots of calmness and security. For more information, e-mail Congregation Beth El at bethelwindsor@cogeco.ca, or call 519-060-2422

Madelyn Weingarden
Windsor, Ont.

* * *

Bialik's tuition

The recent article "Tuition fees rise across the board," regarding Jewish day school tuition fees, stated that the average fee will increase by 5.4 percent. While fee increases are a natural occurrence as a school expands, Bialik Hebrew Day School has been able to maintain some of the lowest tuition fees as compared to other day schools. Bialik has kept tuition fees manageable, with an increase of only 3.9 per cent for 2010-11, well below the day-school average. Bialik prides itself on continually providing its students with the highest standards of education in a student- and family-friendly environment. Students and teachers benefit from the most advanced educational technologies available, and we are pleased to announce that as of this year, every classroom has been outfitted with a SmartBoard. As enrolment is on the rise (up two per cent from last year), Bialik is a growing family looking forward to many new developments that will continue to provide our students with lifelong learning skills.

Cayla Spagat
Marketing and Communications Manager
Bialik Hebrew Day School
Toronto

* * *

Misconception about UNRWA

I write this to correct a misconception many of us have about the creation of UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency ("UNRWA perpetuates historic con game," Aug. 19). This UN refugee agency was not created for the Palestinian Arabs displaced by the 1948 war of Israel's independence. It was created for all displaced persons in Palestine, and that included Jewish refugees as well. In 1950, there were 17,000 Jewish refugees and about 28,000 Arab refugees in UNRWA camps within Israel. By June of 1952, these refugees had been rehabilitated and integrated into the country. Without any more need for UNRWA to be in Israel, it left. This should make us realize all the more the magnitude of the con game.

Alex P. Korn
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1544

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

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The peace talks – and their obstacles

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

Peace in a year? Try getting past Sept. 26. Or is it Sept. 30? Direct talks between Palestinians and Israelis have barely begun, and already the sides are facing their first major hurdle – the end of Israel's partial moratorium on settlement building.

Several issues might beset the sides as they aim to meet the year-long deadline suggested by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and endorsed (with considerable enthusiasm) by U.S. President Barack Obama and (with less enthusiasm) by Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas.

The hard questions – the status of Palestinian refugees and the sharing of Jerusalem – promise to vex the negotiators, as they have for years. Even before that point, however, a number of issues already are creating anxiety among negotiators in Jerusalem, Ramallah and Washington.

The moratorium

Netanyahu placed a partial moratorium on settlement building to entice Abbas to the negotiating table. It lapses Sept. 26 – although not effectively until Sept. 30 because of the Sukkot holiday – and Netanyahu has said he will not renew it. Abbas says he will not be able to continue talks without it.

U.S. officials are pressing the sides to come up with a way out before the next meeting of the leaders on Sept. 14 in Egypt. Michael Oren, the Israeli ambassador to Washington, has spoken of "incentivizing" the Palestinians with other gestures.

Oren did not elaborate, but Netanyahu has made a point of talking up economic incentives for the Palestinians, including increasing commerce by reducing regulations and pulling away roadblocks.

Another way out would be for both sides to avoid questions about the deadline as it approaches and for the moratorium to continue, unofficially, without comment from either the Israelis or Palestinians. Most Israelis living within Israel's pre-1967 borders, the area known as the Green Line, wouldn't notice whether or not building was continuing in settlements, but the impact would be immediately noticeable to Palestinians.

Supporters of the settlement movement, however, say the current restrictions create burdens for the 300,000 Israeli Jews living in the West Bank. The settler community has vowed to protest unless settlement building returns to 2008 levels.

The deadline

Netanyahu wants an agreement within a year, and before that, an interim agreement outlining the parameters of a final-status deal. He has made clear, however, in private conversations with U.S. officials, that the agreement will be on paper until the Israeli leader is sure he can secure his country's borders – in other words, Israelis are saying nothing goes into effect for five, perhaps 10 years.

The Israeli expectation is that Abbas will be able to sell the Palestinian public a peace deal based on clearly detailed outlines of what they will get down the line – sort of like showing Junior the catalogue photo of the BB rifle he'll get for his 15th birthday when he's 10.

Abbas wants more tangible results, and his prime minister, Salam Fayyad, has suggested that a state could be in place by 2011. Fayyad later qualified this to say that he was referring to the infrastructure of a state, much the way the Zionist movement had the instruments of statehood ready to go for years before Israel's founding in 1948.

Abbas and the Palestinian Authority are seeking a patina of inevitability to fend off a challenge to their legitimacy by the Hamas terrorist group, which routed them from the Gaza Strip in 2007 and poses a challenge to them in the West Bank. What remains to be seen is whether state institutions – short of statehood – grants them that inevitability.

The border

Netanyahu wants a demilitarized Palestinian state, a demand the Palestinians effectively conceded in the 1990s. But like his predecessors, he also wants a long-term, if not permanent, presence in the Jordan Valley, along the border with Jordan, to contain the threat from the east that for generations has been a problem for Israelis.

The Palestinians (and the Jordanians) counter with "what threat from the east?" The prospect of having to secure Israel's longest border may have once been a concern in terms of its drain on Israel's military, but there is a peace treaty with Jordan, and the United States has neutralized Iraq. And for the Palestinians, the point of the peace is to rid themselves of any continued notion of Israeli military occupation.

Iraq may be neutralized for now, the Israelis counter, but the region is inherently unstable and Iran is staking its claim in Iraq.

The territory

So within a year, let's say there is peace with the Palestinian Authority and mutual recognition, an end to all claims.

Well, except for Gaza, which is ruled by Hamas, which does not recognize Israel or any prospects for peace – in fact, it barely recognizes Abbas.

What does peace mean without the territory Israel referred to between 1949 and 1967 as a "dagger aimed at Tel Aviv" and the acquiescence of its 1.3 million Palestinians?

Just pretend and hope, Oren says.

"We are negotiating, we, the United States and the Palestinians are all three of us negotiating – throw the Egyptians and the Jordanians in there for good measure, too – as if the West Bank and Gaza are together, when in fact we know they're not," the envoy said recently. "The assumption is, if we cut a deal with the PA and some day the people of Gaza throw off the Hamas yoke, they'll join the peace arrangement."

The word

Netanyahu has made clear that he wants the Palestinians to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, and in this, he has the Obama administration's backing. The Israeli prime minister did not invent this formulation. Tzipi Livni introduced it in 2006 when she was foreign minister.

The rationale was that the PLO's absolute recognition of Israel – extracted in excruciating negotiations by Netanyahu during his previous prime ministership in 1998 – added up to not much. In the 2000 Camp David talks, the Palestinians insisted on a Palestinian right of return, which Israel believed amounted to a peaceful plan for removing the Jewish state. The Palestinians also denied any Jewish claim to Jerusalem.

That was followed by the bloodshed of the second intifadah, and for Israelis, the failure to accept the Jews as a natural presence in the region became inextricably linked to the trauma of those years. The algebra was simple: failure to recognize the Jewish claim equals anti-Jewish incitement equals violence.

Netanyahu has said that demilitarization and recognition of the Jewish claim are the keys to reaching a true peace deal.

The PA rejects this analysis. Its reasons for avoiding the Jewish claim is the responsibility that the Palestinian leadership feels for the 20 per cent of Israelis who are Arab – it does not want to cut them out of their rights, although Netanyahu has said those rights will always be upheld.

There is also the sense among Palestinians that they have ceded enough by settling for "only" the West Bank and Gaza, 22 per cent of British Mandate Palestine.

Nonetheless, there have been signs in recent months of movement here: In a meeting with U.S. Jewish leaders in June, Abbas recognized the ancient Jewish history in the area.

When Palestinian diaspora intellectuals challenged this as capitulation last month, the PA mission in Washington pushed back not by parsing Abbas' statement, but by repeating it and saying that it did not undermine the Palestinian claim.

• • •

In related developments, senior Palestinian negotiator Nabil Shaath said at a press conference in Ramallah last Wednesday that the Palestinian Authority will not recognize Israel as a Jewish state, even though the PA acknowledges that there is a Jewish majority in Israel. Shaath said the Palestinian negotiating team turned down Netanyahu's request to discuss the recognition of Israel as a Jewish state during the upcoming round of peace talks in Sharm al Sheikh next week.

Shaath said the recognition of Israel as a Jewish state would harm Israel's Arab citizens and negate the right of return of Palestinian refugees. He added that any future peace agreement with Israel would be brought before the Palestinian people in a referendum. "If we're on the verge of a peace agreement, we will need complete unity," he said.

Meanwhile, in his Rosh Hashanah message to Diaspora Jewry, Netanyahu said making peace with the Palestinians will not be easy.

"I believe that we should make every effort to reach an historic compromise for peace over the coming year," Netanyahu said in a holiday message to Jewish communities around the world that was released last Monday. "I guarantee one thing: this will not be easy. But as Israel's prime minister, it is my responsibility to make every effort to forge a lasting peace with our neighbours.

"Lasting peace must be anchored in security, and it must be anchored in the recognition of the Jewish state's permanence in this region, not merely as a fact, but as something that our neighbours accept by right," he said.

Netanyahu pointed out that last year was the safest in Israel in two decades and reiterated that Israel has weathered the global financial crisis better than nearly any other industrial country.

"In the next year, Israel will face many challenges," the Israeli leader said. "I have no doubt that in meeting those challenges, Jewish communities around the world will stand by Israel's side – I think we've seen that every step of the way up to now. We'll see that every step of the way going forward."

In his message to the Israeli public, Netanyahu stressed that any agreement "will be based on two criteria: security and recognition of Israel as a Jewish state."

The message to the Israeli public, in Hebrew, was released on YouTube.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton listen intently as Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas makes his points last week in Washington. ***[Moshe Milner/GPO photo]***

Opinions

Defying death

Last year, I read a report about the death of a 92-year-old woman. She was a Satmar Chassid who had survived Auschwitz. We know of many who, thankfully, survived. So why was she newsworthy, and why discuss her now? Quite amazingly, by the time of her death, she had 2,000 descendants. One woman, 2,000 new lives!

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

That's something not easily subsumed under "survival." That is, in fact, death-defying.

And thought-provoking.

To state the obvious, many have tried in the past to obliterate us. Some are still trying. But this one woman powerfully responded. Her example is a quintessential Jewish rejoinder. I don't mean that we should focus on the procreational, although one can't avoid the very practical requirement and justification of that response. We do need Jews for survival.

But after so many centuries of persecution, we can be proud of our continued existence with a rich tradition and cultural heritage. Accordingly, in this season, I prefer to focus on the metaphysical aspect of her life after Auschwitz.

For some reason and in some manner, she didn't give up. Whether and in what way she despaired or was depressed, we don't know. Her survival resources are equally hidden. But we have some facts before us. She continued to live and function. She married, had children, was part of a faith community, did not detach herself, and did not leave the community or her family.

What is the model here? Because when things seem hopeless, should we give up?

Daily we hear of the failure of community, the assimilation of Jews, the impossibility of Israel's position. What are we to do? Despair? Change our ways? Join a different group?

Nonsense.

There was no more hopelessly impossible situation than Auschwitz.

Think about that when the prophets of doom surround you next. Don't give up on the next generation. Sure there's assimilation, but there are 2,000 more Jews today than the Nazis thought possible.

Intermarriage is happening, but so is return and conversion. Israel is attacked, but we can defend. Open your mouth. Stand up and act with faith.

We claim to remember to be faithful to the command of *zachor*. But *zachor* has two parts, according to Maimonides: in the heart and in the mouth. That means we must remember both by word and by deed.

So this year have a little bit of faith, remember that woman, don't despair, believe in our community and Israel, and then act upon it.

Have a great year.

Awe, repentance and our resplendent past

Every Yom Kippur, in addition to all the prayers and repetitions, petitions for forgiveness and acknowledgement of our shortcomings the previous year, our cantor chants a very strange and awesome service. This Avodah service, the mishnaic account of a priestly rite at Yom Kippur, may seem an anachronism, but it's one of the most vivid descriptions of a ritual that held immense significance for Israelites gathered in the Second Temple precincts.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

Some scholars believe that secular theatre began with religious ritual enactments. Certainly the pomp associated with the Avodah ceremonies would fit this theory. The changing of the High Priest's garments, the sacramental sacrifices, the smoke from incense, the sprinkling of blood and the murmur of the priests lifted the congregation away from the ordinary. (The bleating of the animals would have added an earthy touch to what must have been moments of terror.)

In our machzor, we have both poetry and sections from Mishna Yoma that describe the service. The High Priest was charged with the most sacred duty of all: entering the Holy of Holies and pronouncing the name of God, a name that only he could pronounce and only at this point during the services.

It was a moment fraught with peril. Could he withstand the power that might emanate from the place itself, where the presence of God might overwhelm him? Would God pardon the sins of the people on whose behalf the High Priest was entreating forgiveness?

To the people, this ceremony was of cosmic importance. Everything depended on the perfect performance of the ritual: forgiveness of sins of the past year, good crops and health for the nation, and the well-being of individuals. A special prayer for the inhabitants of Bashan, where earthquakes were a constant threat, was added.

It may be true that a golden thread was attached to his leg so that, should he collapse under the strain, he could be pulled out – for no one but the High Priest was ever allowed to enter that most sanctified place. In fact, the other priests were instructed to chant while the name was pronounced so that no one (including the ordinary priests) would actually hear the name of God.

We repeat this chant – "Baruch shem kavod malkchuto l'olam va'ed" – over and over at the end of Neilah before the blowing of the shofar.

The service involved the selection of two goats, one which would be sacrificed and one that, bearing the sins of the congregation, would be driven into the wilderness southeast of Jerusalem and pushed over a cliff. To us this seems a bizarre ritual, although it did give us the English word scapegoat – a word with which Jews are all too familiar. To the watching congregation, that goat was a symbol of all sins they had committed during the past year.

Today all that is left is recitation. When the cantor chants the sections during which the congregation in the Temple fell on their faces, the rabbi and cantor actually fall to the ground.

So why recall this seemingly outmoded service?

As a Conservative Jew, I value the historical roots of our religion. The rabbis documented the Avodah service to remind us that once in Jerusalem stood a mighty Temple. During this ritual of repentance, the people of Israel reached the year's most solemn moment. Life and death hung in the balance; judgment and mercy struggled for the souls of the nation. Imagine their great relief when word came that the scapegoat had been dispatched and the High Priest had emerged unscathed from his encounter with the divine. The service links us with traditions more than 2,000 years old. Certainly Hollywood couldn't inspire us with the same awe as the memory of this past glory.

In the afternoon of Yom Kippur after the terror and the relief, it was time for matchmaking. As our mood changes from awe to rejoicing during the course of the long day, so did the mood of ancient Israel. It is another link with our resplendent past.

Religion and politics revisited

The inter-relationship between religion and politics is a reality evident throughout history and observable throughout the world today.

For example, Libya's dictatorial and tyrannical leader, Moammar Gadhafi, announced this week that he wanted Islam to become the religion of Europe. This is a frightening suggestion, given that it would have the effect of denying or even eliminating the great diversity of religion and culture there.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

Conservative U.S. broadcaster and commentator Glenn Beck, at his recent Washington rally, designated "Restoring Honour," called for Americans to "turn back to God." The rally, part of the so-called Tea Party political movement, attracted national and international attention.

But one does not have to look that far away to find contemporary examples of the influence of religion on politics.

Here, in Canada, the evangelical movement has played a significant role in the make-up and policy initiatives of government. Journalist Marci McDonald documented this in her 2010 book, *The Armageddon Factor: The Rise of Christian Nationalism in Canada*. She argues that this influence is evident in current trends in social policies and the people in government who are wed to those policies. This is not a unique phenomenon in our country. For example, the history of Alberta politics is shaped by the Social Credit governments that were in power for decades until 1971.

The Canadian Jewish Congress has ventured into national politics on issues that relate to the well-being of all Canadians, not solely related to the interests of Canadian Jewry. However, the CJC, unlike some religiously based organizations, has never engaged in the promulgation of a Jewish agenda in respect of policy formulation.

The infusion of religion in the political process is not surprising. Throughout our lives, our values and principles inform and influence choices and actions. We are affected by our upbringing, our schools, our peers, the media and, of course, our religion. In Canada, our Constitution states, in the preamble to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, that "Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God." After much debate, "the supremacy of God" was included in the Constitution in 1982, although the courts have not given weight to that clause. But the preamble does officially recognize the importance of religion in our national fabric. The United States has a similar reference in its Pledge of Allegiance, which states that the United States is "one nation under God."

The religious underpinning of North American politics is, however, tempered by three factors. First, the exigencies of political reality make it imperative that politicians appeal to a wide spectrum of individuals with varying religious and social backgrounds, rather than simply embrace that portion of the electorate who are like-minded and sympathetic to their own political and religious beliefs. Moderation seems to be a key to political success and power.

Secondly, at least in Canada, our political leaders are generally open-minded and receptive to input from a diverse community when forming policies. For example, despite the deeply held beliefs of some political leaders, the federal government has not revisited the issue of abortion (although there was debate about two years ago concerning the now-abandoned private member's bill, the Unborn Victims of Crime Act).

And thirdly, in the interpretation of the Canadian Constitution, our courts have given a broad, reasonable and somewhat expansive meaning with respect to the content of our fundamental rights and freedoms, particularly in cases under the freedom of religion section of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

One sometimes reads articles, similar to the *Time* magazine cover story almost 45 years ago, which asked the question, "Is God dead?" Clearly, within the political realm, the opposite is true.

Politics has been described as the art of influence. The corollary is that government policy is the culmination of a process characterized by the exertion of influence. Clearly religion has and will continue to play a significant role in that process. But we should be mindful that the separation of religion and the secular state is fundamental to the preservation of Canada as a diverse, heterogeneous and multicultural society.

The Kirshner File

Israel co-opted its Arab citizens

In 1949, at the end of Israel's first war with the Arab world, 156,000 Muslim and Christian Palestinians who had not fled or been expelled found themselves in a Jewish state whose creation nearly all of them had opposed and even fought. Forming 15 percent of Israel's population, they were suddenly a marginalized minority in a land in which they had been a majority. Since the Israeli government generally viewed them as a hostile and potentially seditious fifth column, they were placed under military rule and subjected to a whole host of restrictions, including freedom of movement.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Israel, in a further attempt to exert control over its Palestinian citizens, established networks of Arab informers and collaborators in Arab towns and villages.

This murky facet of Israel's history is deftly described at length by Hillel Cohen, an Israeli researcher at the Hebrew University, in a fine book, *Good Arabs: The Israeli Security Agencies and the Israeli Arabs, 1948-1967* (University of California Press). Cohen's previous work, *Army of Shadows*, focused on the Zionist movement's system of Arab collaborators from 1917 to 1948.

In his latest book, which is based on the heretofore secret files of Israel's police and the prime minister's office, he shows how the Israeli government controlled its Arab nationals. Israel did so in part by trying to prevent Israeli Arabs from funnelling vital data to neighbouring Arab countries and joining their intelligence services.

Israel also attempted to ascertain the political leanings of prominent Israeli Arabs and to fill leadership positions with "moderates" who had not adopted nationalist positions, accepted Israel's existence and refrained from criticizing its imposition of military rule and expropriation of Arab property.

Finally, Israel worked to reshape Arab consciousness in a bid to detach Israeli Arabs from their Palestinian identity and the Arab national movement, to promote obedience to the state, to indoctrinate Arab schoolchildren with the Zionist narrative and to widen the fissures between Muslim, Christian and Druze Arabs.

In Cohen's judgment, Israel's policy was very effective. But in retrospect, he claims, Israeli Arabs "presented no real danger to Israel's security."

Despite its success in managing its growing Arab population, Israel was never really able to squelch dissent. As he puts it, "throughout the 1950s and 1960s, nationalist Arab groups and figures stood against the authorities ... as they challenged government policy."

The Communist party, known in Hebrew as Maki and later Rakah, was the principal channel through which dissension was expressed. Although the Communists were kept under surveillance and their influence was checked, they were never formally outlawed. Israel regarded the Communist party as a pressure valve through which the Arab public could let off steam. Nor did Israel wish to jeopardize its relationship, tenuous as it was, with the Soviet Union.

The question that arises is why Israeli Arabs from the Galilee to the Negev generally co-operated with the government. All but one of the Arab states that had waged war on Israel in 1948 signed armistice agreements with the Jewish state in 1949. King Abdullah of Jordan had even gone as far as handing over to Israel a large chunk of territory, the Triangle, containing many Arab villages. Due to these developments, and the fact that they were weakened by military rule, Israeli Arabs tended to focus on sheer survival.

Israeli Arabs who co-operated with the authorities were compensated, given jobs and leases to abandoned Palestinian farms, permitted to smuggle in goods, particularly meat, from bordering countries, and carry weapons.

According to Cohen, only a small minority of Israeli Arabs internalized the Zionist discourse, accepting the dogma that Israel aspired to live in peace with its Arab neighbours and intended to endow Arab citizens with full equal rights. Still other Israeli Arabs practised self-censorship, declining to get involved politically, he adds.

The government encouraged Arabs to celebrate Israel's Independence Day, but this annual event degenerated into a struggle between the state and Arab nationalists, on the one hand, and between "loyal" and "militant" forces in each village, on the other hand.

Communists, who won 20 per cent of the Arab vote in Israel's first general election, offered a nationalist alternative, conducting protests to oppose military rule and land seizures and call for equal rights and Israel's withdrawal to the 1947 United Nations partition borders.

Clashes pitting Communist activists against the police and the military government erupted routinely. Security forces made intensive use of British emergency regulations for punitive purposes. Smaller groups, such as al-Ard, which was eventually outlawed, rejected Israel's very existence. Israeli Arab informers and collaborators mounted anti-Communist crusades.

Infiltration was one of the most acute challenges faced by Israel in its early years. Gen. Moshe Dayan, the Israeli chief of staff, claimed that infiltrators were motivated by "a sea of hatred and a desire for revenge." From 1948 to 1956, Palestinian infiltrators killed more than 200 Israeli civilians and wreaked immense economic damage. In Cohen's view, the vast majority of infiltrators were refugees who simply wanted to return to their homes and reunite with their families.

Many Bedouins in Israel, such as this young man in 1950, helped the army prevent infiltration.

Some Israeli Arabs, including Druze, helped the infiltrators, some ignored them and still others took advantage of them.

Israel granted citizenship to 20,500 infiltrators who had entered the country from 1948 to 1953. An additional 3,000 Arabs were given entry permits on humanitarian grounds.

Israel thus implemented a limited "right of return" to a small proportion of the refugees who found themselves in Arab countries after the first Arab-Israeli war. Cohen says that some of the returnees rendered service to the state before 1948, while others promised to do so in the future.

The refugees did not return to formerly mixed Arab-Jewish towns such as Tiberias and Safed. Acre, once an entirely Arab town, became an Arab-Jewish municipality.

Although Israel succeeded in creating an Israeli Arab identity, it failed to convince Arab citizens to jettison their Arab and Palestinian identities completely. Cohen lists three reasons. First, Israel's ambivalent attitude toward Israeli Arabs had an effect. Second, Israeli Arabs were swept up by the fervour of Arab nationalism, as best exemplified by President Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt. Third, Palestinian national memory was not something that could be conveniently forgotten or cast off. Indeed, Israel's progressive decision to keep Arabic as the language of instruction in Arab schools contributed to their mental affiliation with the Arab world.

Cohen's explanation for the abolition of military rule in December 1966 is instructive. Israel, needing more Arab labourers, perceived military government as an impediment to its objective. With the collapse of the United Arab Republic – the union between Egypt and Syria that lasted from 1958 to 1961 – Israel no longer feared an Arab offensive that might be supported by its Arab citizens. Israeli opposition parties pressed for an end to military government in the Arab sector.

In conclusion, Cohen says that Israel's carrot-and-stick policy toward Israeli Arabs worked, as evidenced by the fact that they were largely loyal to the state in the run up to and during the Six Day War. And as he points out, Israel used its experiences with Israeli Arabs to build a new network of collaborators and informers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the wake of the 1967 war.

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Iranian exiles call for regime change in Iran

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Two Iranian exiles have called for regime change in Iran, charging that its Islamic fundamentalist government oppresses its citizens.

The exiles, Reza Kahlili, a former Iranian Revolutionary Guard member now living in California, and Marina Nemat, an ex-political prisoner who came to Canada in 1991 after spending about two years in jail, appeared at a press conference in Toronto last week at the offices of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

Marina Nemat

Kahlili, wearing a baseball cap, sunglasses and surgical mask to disguise his appearance and speaking through a special device to muffle his voice, described the Iranian government as "dangerous and criminal."

Nemat, saying that the regime stifles dissent and cannot tolerate democracy, declared that Iran's government is a threat to the world and the people of Iran, and that its president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is a "brutal man."

Kahlili, who worked undercover in Iran as a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency spy in the 1980s and 1990s, urged the West to sever diplomatic and commercial relations with Iran so as to "suffocate" the clerical establishment, the Revolutionary Guards and Ahmadinejad and thus pave the way for a new, pro-western government.

"The Iranian people want freedom and democracy."

Until now, he observed, the West has betrayed Iranians by co-operating with the Islamic regime.

Nemat, who has written two books about her imprisonment and her flight to Canada, *Prisoner of Tehran* and *After Tehran: A Life Reclaimed*, suggested that the current Islamic system of government must be "eradicated," not by foreign powers but by Iranians themselves.

Kahlili, the author of *A Time to Betray: The Astonishing Double Life of a CIA Agent Inside the Revolutionary Guards of Iran*, accused Iran of supporting terrorism and warned that Tehran is well on its way toward becoming a nuclear power.

Claiming that Iran has enough enriched uranium to build three atomic bombs, he said that Iran, in concert with North Korea, is currently developing inter-continental ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

Kahlili, asserting that the Iranian leadership is suicidal and irrational, predicted that Iran will become emboldened and "untouchable" once it acquires a nuclear arsenal.

Forecasting that Iran will directly attack Israel one day, he said, "You can rest assured that Iran will use a nuclear bomb."

Reza Kahlili

But he cast doubt on the possibility that Israel will try to destroy Iran's nuclear infrastructure by military means.

An Israeli attack, he said, would only dent Iran's nuclear sites and prompt Iran and its allies, Hezbollah and Hamas, to retaliate fiercely, causing many casualties.

In his view, the overthrow of the current regime is the best solution for ending Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons.

But in an interview, he said it is already too late to stop Iran from going nuclear.

A new, democratic Iran, he noted in a brief interview following the press conference, would restore diplomatic ties with the United States and Israel.

Taking issue with Kahlili, Nemat said that Iran has no intention of "nuking" anyone, fearing it will be "nuked back."

She said that economic sanctions against Iran will not really accomplish much unless Russia and China agree to impose much tougher measures in the future.

Kahlili said that observers should differentiate between the theocratic Iranian regime and the Iranian people, claiming that the latter are generally pro-western.

He claimed that Iran has sent intelligence agents to Canada and uses mosques in Europe for operational purposes.

Kahlili and Nemat were introduced by Avi Benlolo, the president and chief executive officer of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

Benlolo called on Canada and other western nations to press the International Criminal Court to indict Ahmadinejad – a vocal and persistent advocate of Israel's destruction – on charges of incitement to commit genocide.

He also said that international sanctions against Iran will not work.

Photographs courtesy of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

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Jewish Life

Yom Kippur and spiritual readiness

By RABBI MEIR ROSENBERG

Upon reflection, it seems almost unreal that another year has gone by so quickly.

Our goal as individuals, families and as a Jewish community, though, should remain somewhat the same this year, much as they did at the beginning of last year – living our lives in a purposeful and Jewish manner. In order to succeed, we must return for a moment to a time when we received our first mandate as a Jewish nation.

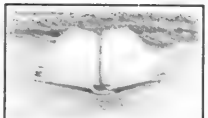
When God gave us the Torah at Mount Sinai, he succeeded in fulfilling the destiny of the Jewish nation by giving us purpose. Consequently, in great measure, the creation of this world was based on our acceptance and subsequent observance of Torah.

The midrash tells us that when God descended upon Mount Sinai, the world stood still, because the purpose of creation was about to be revealed. Yet despite this great revelation, it's most disturbing that it failed to have a lasting impact upon us, for soon afterward, we created a golden calf. Moses, upon learning of this from atop the mountain, shatters the *luchot* containing the Ten Commandments. How could such a great beginning have such an abysmal end?

All was not lost, since Moses is commanded to write a second set of tablets, which are received on the 10th of Tishrei, Yom Kippur, by the Jewish nation. These are enduring and are received in sincerity by the Jewish nation.

The great commentator Rashi explains that the first tablets that were given amid tumult, thundering and a great assembly were affected by the evil eye, whereas the second tablets, which were given under more modest circumstances, were able to endure.

While Rashi teaches us a very important moral lesson, it doesn't fully explain the circumstances surrounding the second tablets. Why did God command Moses to write the second set of tablets instead of giving them to him ready-made from Heaven, as was the first set? Additionally, God instructs Moses to write the new tablets at the foot of the mountain and then carry them to the top. Was all this really necessary? Yes! It was precisely these instructions that explain the durability of the second set of *luchot*.



Rabbinic Reflections

God initially made a revelation that we were not spiritually prepared to appreciate. In a moment of great inspiration, we exclaimed: "We will do and we will listen." This desire quickly passed, and a great sin ensued.

The second tablets, though, were brought up from below. They were written by Moses and sanctified by God and were the result of a nation that was now spiritually ready to connect with the word of God.

Inanimate objects have the potential to destroy or create. Their destiny is determined by the level of education and preparedness of their wielder. The same is true of religious philosophy. As Jews, our greatest tool for living a purposeful life is in the preparation at the beginning of the New Year. We should allow ourselves to be inspired by the Yom Tov tfillot, as well as the cantor and rabbinic sermons. Without this personal initiative, we risk feeling empty and unmoved by our Judaism and its atmosphere, which could possibly lead to some most self-destructive behaviour.

Moses was told to "inscribe for yourself" – make yourself a proper vehicle to receive God's word.

Only our Almighty Father in Heaven knows our ultimate destiny. But through our active participation in religious life – at home, in our synagogues and in the Jewish community – we ensure that we play a major role in determining our blessings for the coming year.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish each of you and your families a most enjoyable and uplifting Yom Tov. May each of us look forward to a year filled with joy and success, health and happiness and the fulfilment of the hopes and desires of our Jewish nation.

Rabbi Meir Rosenberg is spiritual leader of Congregation Ayin L'Tzion in Thornhill, Ont., and national executive director of Mizrachi Canada.

The morning after

Money Matters

By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

The High Holiday period is one – we hope – filled with introspection, reflection and a commitment to try to become a better person. Our religious antennae are at their highest point as we spend the day in prayer and fasting. For many, it's the only time of the year that any significant amount of time is spent in communal prayer. It's a day when we focus on the fragility of life, remembering those who are no longer with us and pleading that we be spared from that fate.

It's a time that makes many a rabbi nervous as they work to deliver a sermon that will be thoughtful and inspirational – not an easy task when dealing with a very demanding "clientele." Topics such as Israel, family, assimilation, Shabbat, tzedakah, social activism and community involvement are the order of the day. Our Yom Kippur experience is meant to inspire us even – or, shall we say, especially – when the day is long gone.

As important and central as Yom Kippur is, it's the day after that's much more crucial. Fasting and prayer in of themselves are of little value. However, if our hunger motivates us to help alleviate the misfortune of others, then one has had a meaningful fast – a fulfilment of the Talmudic dictum that the "reward for a fast is charity."

A little biblical history may shed some light on what should be an additional area on which to focus in the aftermath of Yom Kippur.

"It was on the next day that Moses sat to judge the people and the people stood by Moses from the morning until the evening" (Exodus 18:13). Moshe Rabbeinu, as many great leaders are wont to dao, tried to do everything himself, without delegating tasks to others. He was the sole judge adjudicating all financial disputes – a task that literally took up his entire day. His father-in-law, Yitro, warned him that he was bound to fail if he continued in his ways.

The Torah goes out of its way to note that this happened on the "next day," a strange expression, especially considering the Torah makes no mention of the previous day. Our sages note that the previous day was none other than the very first Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur must inspire us to resolve our outstanding monetary disputes with others.

Yet this wasn't the only thing that was happening on the day after Yom Kippur. According to our sages, the command to build a tabernacle took place on the day after Yom Kippur.

The Torah links these two seemingly unrelated events, placing them both on the day after Yom Kippur.

A tabernacle can only be built if our monetary disputes are settled. One can pray, fast and repent all day and night, but unless one reconciles with one's fellow man, Yom Kippur cannot atone for our sins. God will not, and actually cannot, forgive sins committed against another human being. While it's perhaps unfortunate that people must be involved in monetary disputes to begin with, it's the way of the world. What's crucial is that a mechanism exist – and is taken advantage of – to resolve these inevitable disputes.

Yitro advised Moshe to select judges who, among other qualities, would "hate money." Money can be a wonderful tool in life, and it's natural and appropriate to love some of what money can buy. However, if we're in love with money itself, we're bound to love other, more important aspects of life less.

It's not by chance that Jewish law prohibits the handling, and even talking about, money on Shabbat and holidays, days devoted to increasing our love of God and our fellow man.

Jewish Life

The Artscroll revolution

In our age of the Internet, many people worry about the future of the printed book. But at least one publisher is doing surprisingly well: the haredi publishing house, Artscroll. Jeremy Stolow's new book, *Orthodox By Design: Judaism, Print Politics and the Artscroll Revolution* (University of California Press, 2010) is an avant-garde analysis of the Artscroll phenomenon.

Stolow, an assistant professor of communication studies at Concordia University, studied for his PhD in the cutting-edge social and political thought program at York University. Stolow does not analyze Artscroll books from a perspective of classical Jewish studies (a field in which he did not train) but explains how Artscroll manages to be a "purveyor of handsomely designed, accessible, and uncompromisingly Orthodox" books.

Martin Lockshin

Much of Stolow's book centres on the ironic disconnect between Artscroll's use of every innovative way to package Jewish texts, while doing so to promote a haredi approach that allegedly rejects all "of modernity. To defend their anti-modern worldview, haredi publishers like Artscroll have to "master the use of speech genres, managerial techniques, and modes of cultural activity found in the 'outer-world' domains of advertising, fundraising, political lobbying, secular scholarship, popular music and fashion." (Readers unacquainted with current academic jargon will find parts of this book slow going.)

Artscroll might be best known for its prayer books and its monumental project, the *Shottenstein Talmud*, a 73-volume English-language version of the Babylonian Talmud. But Stolow also lists and analyzes other surprising genres that have been made "kosher" by Artscroll – including 50 titles of haredi adventure and fiction. Concerning those works, Stolow quotes the discerning words of Rabbi Yoel Finkelman, a popular teacher in Jerusalem, who argues that every appropriation of a new cultural form "runs the risk of profaning the sacred rather than sanctifying the profane."

Artscroll claims that they promote "maximum comprehension with minimum effort." A number of their customers whom Stolow interviewed agree. One 20-something informant said: "I still really like the way, like, how it basically assumes that you're an idiot without treating you that way." Without doubt, the Artscroll product has found a niche. But the question remains: what actually is communicated through Artscroll books?

Stolow mentions the sharp criticisms of Artscroll by scholars, such as Prof. Barry Levy of McGill University, who have noted the inaccuracies and awkwardness of the translations, and the tendentiousness of the material chosen.

Stolow devotes more attention to discussing the significance of the fact that Jewish classics and manuals of Halachah are, because of Artscroll, now achieving much wider dissemination in America (and beyond) than ever before. Stolow frequently argues that this is a method of spreading haredi control. But at least once in the book he offers the possibly inconsistent claim that the wide dissemination of book knowledge to the kinds of readers who never had such knowledge in the past is a form of empowerment that lessens the readers' reliance on their rabbis, a reliance that has always been a crucial element for religious control.

As he writes, "Artscroll marks the point of a shift in the balance of power between, on the one hand, locally situated teachers, legal interpreters, and ritual leaders and, on the other hand, the commanding voice of the text. Now it is the text alone that commands."

Knowledge has always represented power in traditional Judaism. Changing the modes of access to knowledge has always had repercussions. Stolow's analysis could have benefited from considering previous Jewish "revolutions" of access to written legal materials.

In the 12th century, for instance, Moses Maimonides revolutionized and partially democratized access to knowledge of Halachah. Until then, in order to figure out the law on any issue, a Jew had to master the entire Talmud, an enormous free-flowing corpus written in a unique combination of Aramaic and Hebrew, with

little discernable structure and no index. The Talmud presents multiple opinions and it is not always clear which one is "authoritative" in the Jewish tradition.

Maimonides gathered all the authoritative talmudic statements into one well-organized law code, the *Mishneh Torah*, which he wrote, as he himself boasts, in easy Hebrew. The result was that new classes of Jews now had access to halachic rulings and, as a result, the traditional centralized authority of the rabbis in Iraq (Babylonia), who called themselves *rashei ha-golah* (the leaders of all diaspora Jewry), was reduced and ultimately eliminated, shifting authority to local community rabbis and, potentially, to educated laymen.

In the 16th century, with the invention of the printing press, another sea change occurred in the spread of Jewish learning, leading to more changes in the status of rabbis. Two great rabbis of that century, Shemuel di Medina (*Responsa Maharshdam, Hoshen Mishpat 1*) and his student, Avraham di Boton (*Lehem Mishneh, Talmud Torah 5:4*) wrote that some of the traditional Jewish rules about honour due to rabbis no longer applied, since now "*ha-sefarim hem ha-melammedim*," i.e. books are our teachers, not human beings.

Of course it is hard to imagine that Artscroll writers and publishers actually want to see rabbinic authority diminished further. But the results of any project are not always identical to its goals. While Artscroll claims to be a bulwark against change, could their project possibly lead to a (partial) breakdown of the authoritarian hierarchical structure of haredi society?

To me the most significant part of "the Artscroll revolution" is its promotion of the study of Jewish classics in English translations, a point that Stolow only touches upon.

In traditional Judaism, there is a long history of opposition to the translation of works of Halachah into other languages. When Moses Maimonides wrote his *Mishneh Torah*, he was asked to authorize a translation of that work into Judeo-Arabic. He refused. He was happy to democratize Jewish law partially, by making it accessible to all Hebrew readers, but not to readers of the vernacular. And in the 19th century, the translation of Rabbi Shelomo Ganzfried's *Kitstsur Shulhan Arukh* into Yiddish was considered a controversial step, evoking much opposition, even from the author himself.

Hebrew reading comprehension has always been a crucial Jewish value. The opposition to translations of works of Halachah was not arbitrary elitism; it encouraged Jews to learn the national Jewish language.

One of the greatest blessings of the modern Jewish world is the creation of the State of Israel. And one of the greatest accomplishments of the Zionist movement was the revitalization of Hebrew as a spoken and written language.

Hebrew, as the national language of the Jewish people, is one of the few Jewish values that unite secular and religious Jews. Any Jew living in Israel, and many diaspora Jews today, are able to read classics of Halachah, like Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* and Ganzfried's *Kittsur Shulchan Aruch*, in the original Hebrew. I would estimate that over half of the world's Jews – a higher percentage than at any time in the last 2,000 years – now have that level of Hebrew reading comprehension skills.

The Artscroll revolution almost totally ignores the State of Israel, and harms efforts to convince American Jews that they should get with the program and learn Hebrew, too. Is this the right time for the biggest translation project in the history of the Jewish people to undermine the crucial Jewish value of Hebrew?

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RHA finance director honoured on retirement

Famous ancestor inspires arts-related gift

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Sue Walsh was director of finance at Robbins Hebrew Academy (RHA) for 15 years until her retirement at the end of August, but it's the school's arts program that will benefit from a generous gift in her honour.

Although Walsh claims no artistic talent herself, her great-grandfather was renowned Jewish painter Isidor Kaufmann, whose work can be found in museums, private collections and among Sotheby's Judaica offerings.

Kaufmann – who was born in 1853 in Arad, Romania, part of what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and died in 1921 – was a landscape and portrait artist known for his depictions of Jews in eastern European shtetls.

The art room at RHA's Beth Tzedec campus will be named in his honour. As well, four monetary awards (two at each of the school's two campuses) will be presented annually at RHA's graduation ceremony. One will honour a student's outstanding achievement in visual arts, and the other will recognize menschlichkeit, tikkun olam and empathy.

Sue Walsh

The gift is being made available through the school's Hans and Kitty Schafer fund, established 15 years ago to honour Walsh's parents.

Walsh, 61, will be honoured by the school at a l'chaim on Sept. 20 at the Elevator Gallery.

Before she joined the staff of United Synagogue Day School, as RHA was known until earlier this year, Walsh was a school parent and board member.

She had been director of finance at B'nai Brith Canada for more than six years when she joined the school as its comptroller (the position was later renamed). Prior to that, she worked in the private sector.

The mother of two grown children and new grandmother of a three-month-old grandson in Israel decided to retire after being diagnosed with lymphoma in January.

Having recently finished treatment, Walsh said in an interview at the school's Beth Tikvah campus that now is "the right moment to go a different route and be grateful."

She's thankful that she was diagnosed early, and credits the school for allowing her to work part-time when her stamina was low.

Walsh said that Jewish education has always been important to her and that it's been meaningful to work at a Jewish school. "You always feel like the work is worthwhile."

Over the years, with rising day school fees, she said she has seen more parents not choosing Jewish education because of the cost. "The costs act as a barrier to them starting, and that's heart-breaking for me."

A native of London, England, Walsh is a certified general accountant and has a bachelor of commerce degree from the University of Leeds.

Her family was close with Walsh's great-uncle, Philip – Isidor's son – who was also an artist. As a teen, Walsh used to visit him at his studio around the corner from the famed Abbey Road Studios.

"I used to love to visit him – primarily because I thought I'd get a glimpse of the Beatles," she said, laughing. "I think I did, once."

Walsh and her husband, Mark, have been in Canada for more than 30 years, including a three-year stint in Calgary. Her parents, both originally from Vienna, followed them to Toronto 20 years ago.

The arts aspect of the recent gift reflects her family's belief that "it's important for kids to have a more rounded education," Walsh said. "We have a passion for the arts… This seemed like a neat fit."

As well, she noted, her father, a retired businessman, is a Rotarian and used to volunteer at B'nai Brith. Until last year, he was on the board of George Brown College Seniors' Association, she added.

Walsh's mother, Kitty Schafer, told *The CJN* in a phone interview that her grandfather travelled to eastern European shtetls for several consecutive summers to paint in the late 1800s, at the suggestion of a patron.

"It was very difficult," she said, explaining that the journey itself seemed like going to the moon would today, and that religious people in the shtetls didn't necessarily want their portraits painted.

Kaufmann himself was "not really religious," she said.

Schafer – who was born three months after her grandfather's death and left Vienna in 1939 for London, England – said that, sadly, she has no originals of Kaufmann's works.

She thinks the fund is "a wonderful idea" and is pleased that it will preserve the name of her grandfather, who is less well-known here than in Europe.

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Obstacles to peace, real and imagined

Settlement issue resurfaces following talks

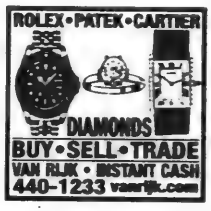
Last week's column described the widespread skepticism that characterized media reports leading up to the Sept. 1-2 Washington summit between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

It was all the more interesting, then, to see that in the immediate aftermath of the meeting, most news reports conveyed a very different attitude – one reflective of the serious, cooperative approach to work to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict adopted by both leaders.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

In so doing, the media "played it straight." That is to say, even if many journalists covering the summit personally retained a prior skepticism that anything meaningful might result from these talks (given the failures of past meetings and the formidable obstacles lying ahead), they didn't allow it to colour their stories. This was a gain for impartial reporting which, as many media analysts have recently noted, is increasingly succumbing to the intrusion of opinion. But in this case it also, ironically, brought news reports on what occurred in Washington more in line with the optimism expressed just prior to the summit by numerous commentators on the op-ed pages who predicted that something substantial would develop this time.



Paul Koring's front-page report for the Sept. 3 *Globe and Mail* was indicative of this perspective. He began: "Glimmers of hope that Palestinian-Israeli talks will finally herald peace after decades of failure, recrimination, bloodshed and despair emerged Thursday from a meeting brokered by U.S. President Barack Obama."

Koring immediately supported this lead, quoting from Netanyahu's remarks the previous night in the White House:

"'The people of Israel and I, as their prime minister, are prepared to walk this road and to go a long way in a short time to achieve a genuine peace,' said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whose embracing of the process and willingness to accept an independent Palestine has made the prospect of a deal within a year a viable possibility.

"'I see in you a partner for peace,' said Mr. Netanyahu, the usually hawkish leader whose apparently heartfelt overture to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas set the tone over the past two days and defied many naysayers."

Quoting from Abbas, Koring also wrote that he "sounded equally sincere."

While Koring noted that Netanyahu's and Abbas' rhetoric and their commitment to meet every two weeks were reasons for "cautious optimism," he noted that serious challenges lie ahead. Foremost is the need to reach an agreement on the the critical final status issues. Unlike some other reporters who tend to fixate solely on the issue of settlements, Koring mentioned other key issues in addition to settlements, namely Jerusalem and refugees.

As this column has pointed out previously, settlements, though undeniably a complicated issue, is resolvable. In fact, the broad outline of a deal was reportedly accepted by the Israel and the Palestinians at the Camp David summit in 2000. A final status agreement broke down not on that subject but rather over these other two issues – especially Jerusalem (to be more precise, over then-PA president Yasser Arafat's refusal to recognize Jewish claims to the holy sites). A similar situation occurred when, in September 2008, Abbas walked away from then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert's offer of Palestinian statehood.

However, according to other more recent media reports, and just days after the Washington talks, we're apparently back to the standard refrain that settlements are *the* obstacle to peace. Only now the charge is that if Netanyahu fails on the Sept. 26 deadline to extend the moratorium on housing construction in the West Bank, the Palestinians will be forced to give up on the talks. The consequence will likely be to blame Israel for (so the unfounded charge goes) scuttling talks that it wasn't really serious about holding in the first place, a reinforcement of the pre-Washington summit skepticism – even cynicism – about Netanyahu.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu meet face to face.

Should this scenario unfold, what are the chances of the media being just as skeptical of a politically weak Abbas looking for a convenient excuse to avoid having to make concessions on the issue that are truly obstacles to a deal? That is, what are the odds of the media holding Abbas accountable when it comes to a compromise on Jerusalem and having to give up the "right of return" of Palestinians to Israel in order to achieve a two-state solution?

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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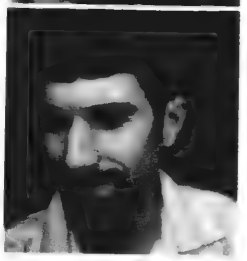

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Mercy killing prohibited in Judaism, symposium told

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Judaism regards hastening the death of a terminally ill person as murder, participants in a day-long symposium on Jewish medical ethics were told.

The educational program intended for health-care professionals was organized by the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) department of pastoral services, in conjunction with the Jewish Community Council of Montreal.

It coincides with Quebec's province-wide consultation on the issue of dying with dignity. A national assembly committee is studying the possible decriminalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Pastoral services director Rabbi Raphael Afilalo, and Dr. Michael Bouhadana, a supportive-care consultant to the JGH, made it clear that traditional Judaism forbids any act that leads to the end of a life, regardless of the person's health, age, state of cognition, family wishes, or any other factor.

This includes stopping treatment, as well as sustaining care such as nutrition, fluids or oxygen, even when artificially administered. "Once these are in place they cannot be withdrawn, even if the family asks for it," Bouhadana said.

Nor can one life be valued over another, according to Halachah. This means, for example, that if there is only one respirator available, an elderly, near-death patient cannot be removed from it to save the life of a young person with a chance of survival, Bouhadana said in response to an audience question.

According to Jewish belief, saving one person does not justify killing another.

On the other hand, Judaism prohibits impeding the dying of a *goses*, a person who is not expected to live more than three days, Bouhadana said.

"It is clear that we cannot take a life before its time; but once the dying process has started, neither can we slow it down," he said. But those near death can be palliated through pain medication, for example.

Rabbi Raphael Afilalo, left, and Dr. Hananel Holzer were among the speakers

Judaism, Bouhadana and Rabbi Afilalo suggested, stresses the sanctity of the individual's life over its subjectively determined "quality." No one should be allowed to decide a life is not worth continuing, and in exceptional cases when therapies are withheld, it should not solely be the doctor's choice.

Both stressed that they were presenting the position of traditional Judaism, which is not necessarily the policy of the JGH. As a public institution, JGH abides by the law.

Bouhadana and Rabbi Afilalo said their role is to advise Jewish patients or their relatives who want to know what Judaism says.

"Withholding [care] may be permitted because it is passive," Bouhadana added. Some examples are not initiating CPR with a dying person after the heart has stopped, or continuing chemotherapy to someone who has been unresponsive to it.

A competent person can refuse treatment if they are terminal and not expected to live beyond one year, according to Jewish law. But declining food, water or oxygen is "tantamount to suicide," unless a person, for instance, believes force-feeding will harm him.

"Every case is separate; in general, if we know we are creating more suffering, it may be permissible to stop," Bouhadana said.

Living wills are permitted, he said, and halachic versions are available, which provide for interventions the person wants to be undertaken in a certain situation, as well as those they don't want.

Similarly, "do not resuscitate" orders can be abided by when the chance of success is low and the risk of pain or disability is high, which must be assessed at the time.

"The DNR or living will must never mean the same as 'do not treat,'" he said.

Bouhadana, a family practitioner, said he sees a lot of elderly patients, regardless of their religion, who are fearful of not getting treated. "They are reticent to agree to a DNR, fearing they will not get proper treatment. They'd rather keep the default position: assess me at the time."

Bouhadana noted that in Jewish law, a terminal illness is specifically defined as one that is expected to claim the person's life within a year. It does not mean a progressively debilitating condition such as Alzheimer's or ALS, or a persistent vegetative state, and therefore those with these kinds of conditions "should get the full range of treatment."

Rabbi Afilalo cited a recent case at the JGH where a family consulted him on whether they should continue medical intervention.

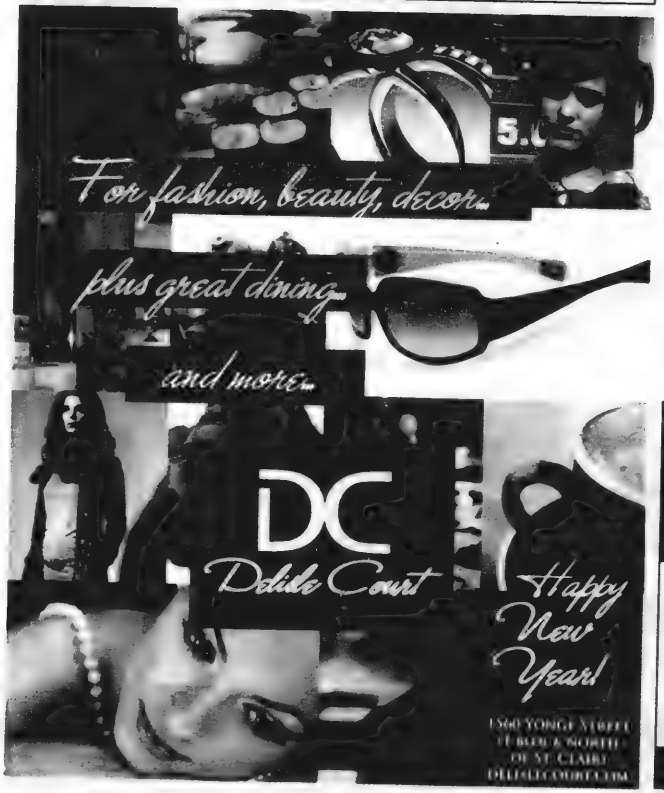
The case was that of a man, 85, with congestive heart failure and dementia, who fractured his spine in a fall at his nursing home.

He was comatose and was put on a respirator when he arrived at emergency. Doctors then determined that he was "brain dead" and wanted to remove the respirator.

His observant son, however, wanted to know what Jewish law had to say.

Rabbi Afilalo had to tell him there is a controversy among rabbis over whether the cessation of brain stem activity alone is enough to determine death, or if the heart must have stopped as well.

The preponderance of opinion, endorsed by the Supreme Rabbinical Council of Israel last year and most of the Rabbinical Council of America, is that brain stem death is death, and therefore life support can be stopped – which is Canadian law. After Rabbi Afilalo explained the two positions, the son decided his father would be kept on the respirator but that no new treatment would be started. The man died a day and a half later.



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Calgary man convicted of hate crime, mischief

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A young man has pleaded guilty to multiple charges – including promoting hatred – arising out of anti-Semitic vandalism in Calgary last November.

The man, who was 17 at the time and cannot be identified, admitted spray-painting swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans on two synagogues, a Holocaust memorial, mailboxes and a fence, said Judy Shapiro, interim executive director of the Calgary Jewish Community Council.

He pleaded guilty to the hate promotion charge as well as mischief to property and mischief to a place of religious worship. He will be sentenced on Oct. 15.

"I think people are incredibly grateful to the police and the attorney general for taking it very seriously and pursuing it as a hate crime," Shapiro said.

The suspect was identified through video surveillance cameras and arrested in Winnipeg last March.

At the time, the graffiti surprised the Jewish community. "This is unheard of," Shapiro said.

The individual daubed a swastika on the House of Jacob Mikveh Israel Synagogue and a Holocaust memorial at the nearby Jewish Community Centre, as well as the epithets, "kill Jews," "F--- Jews" and "six million more."

News of the crime sparked "a huge outpouring of support for the Jewish community," Shapiro said. A rally attracting some 500 people was organized in short order, attended by political figures, ethnic and religious communities and organizations promoting diversity.

"That was the most amazing thing," she said. "The entire community rallied around us."

In Toronto, Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, applauded Calgary police for laying hate crime charges.

"It was absolutely the right thing to do," he said. "I think it does send a strong message that society won't put up with this garbage."

Cotler readies for anti-Semitism meet

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — An international anti-Semitism conference Nov. 7 to 9 in Ottawa will likely adopt a "protocol" to add to the declaration that emerged at a similar meeting in London last year, Liberal MP Irwin Cotler said.

"That's what we're expecting," Cotler, the Liberals' special counsel on human rights and international justice, said at a Sept. 2 press conference at his Mount Royal riding office.

At the inaugural Conference and Summit of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism established in February 2009, signatories to the London Declaration called on their respective governments and the United Nations "never to allow" international institutions to be used to give anti-Semitism legitimacy.

About 120 parliamentarians from 40 countries are expected in Ottawa, as was the case at the inaugural conference, Cotler said.

The former justice minister said Bloc Québécois representatives are also expected to participate. Last year, the Bloc pulled out of a Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Anti-Semitism (CPCCA) inquiry on anti-Semitism because the CPCCA declined to accept submissions from the Canadian Arab Federation and Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East.

"I work closely with the Bloc on many issues regarding civil liberties," Cotler said. "I believe they will be present [at the Ottawa conference]."

Cotler used his meeting with reporters to lambaste Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government on a number of issues, including "mismanaging" taxpayers' money, "silencing dissidents," planning abolition of the gun registry and of the mandatory long form of the census, and to outline his own agenda for the coming parliamentary session.

For full story, go to cjnews.com

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Winnipeg ballet company heading to Israel

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Missions have been bringing Winnipeg Jewish community leaders to Israel for more than 20 years, but in mid-October a who's who of high-profile Manitobans will touch down in the Holy Land.

Joining the usual contingent of community leaders and major donors will be Premier Greg Selinger, Minister of Water Stewardship Christine Melnick, Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines Dave Chomiak, as well as the acclaimed Royal Winnipeg Ballet (RWB).

For the ballet, which is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year, the trip will mark its first visit to Israel since 1975. At the time, it was the first Canadian ballet company to perform in the Jewish state.

The upcoming mission, sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, will see the premier make his first visit to Israel, while this will be Melnick's fourth trip.

Over the years, Manitobans have developed "a special relationship with Israel," Melnick said in a telephone interview from Winnipeg.

As minister in charge of water stewardship, she has been instrumental in bringing together Manitoba's and Israel's top experts for symposiums on water-related issues, the first in August 2008, the second in January 2010. Melnick hinted there may be announcements in Israel of further joint projects, but she would not elaborate.

Melnick has been a voice for co-operation between the two jurisdictions and has had a special affinity for Israel since her first visit there in 1997 as a backpacker.

"It was great," she recalled. "I think it's a fantastic country and the Jewish people are a fantastic people. I went to Israel and had no idea what to expect and found this incredible country and incredible people – the energy, the vibrancy, the intellectual stimulation was like no place I'd ever been before. I've been to many countries, but Israel is the only one I've been back to."

In addition to touring, Manitoba legislators will meet Israeli dignitaries to discuss politics and trade, and Selinger will no doubt meet with "top Israeli politicians," said Amir Gissin, Israeli consul general for Toronto and Western Canada.

The mission "reflects the levels of relationships between Israel and Canada that go beyond the federal level." It also illustrates that there is more to Israel than merely the political aspect. "We welcome visits that have a cultural flavour," Gissin said.

The ballet is scheduled to perform seven times in Israel and once in Amman, Jordan. It will also hold a workshop for young dancers in Jaffa as part of the official opening of the Playground for Peace.

The playground is sponsored by the Manitoba-Israel Shared Values Roundtable, which is Melnick's brainchild, along with the Jewish National Fund of Israel, the Tel Aviv Foundation and the Jewish National Fund of Manitoba. The Roundtable, which Melnick established prior to entering politics, celebrates fundamental values that link the province and Israel, including "democracy, free speech, public health care and public education, all the values that make for a healthy and civil society," she said.

The province's links to Israel go even farther, Melnick continued. The province celebrated Israel's 60th anniversary with a number of performances at the Pantages Playhouse that attracted 900 people, only about 30 of whom were Jewish, and "we celebrated Tel Aviv's 100th last year with a visit from the mayor of Tel Aviv," she said.

Mel Lazareck, president of the Jewish National Fund's Prairie region, said the mission should leave a positive impression among participants about "the real Israel.

"Invariably, first-time travellers to Israel are simply amazed at this sophisticated First World environment – from the basic accommodations as tourists, to Israel's accomplishments in just over 60 years, to the high-tech being applied in such fields as medicine, engineering, agriculture, recycling and water technology to name a few.

"I have yet to talk with any Israeli visitor whose views and impressions have not dramatically changed after their visit," he said.

Kate Hodgert, publicity manager for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, said the company is eager to recapture some of the atmosphere of the 1975 trip to Israel. That visit came in the midst of the RWB's international touring heyday. "Our company has been defined as a touring company; however, we hadn't been overseas in several years… We wanted to go overseas and make it with a splash."

The ballet approached the the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg to include the company in the mission, but the ballet credits former Israeli ambassador Alan Baker for getting the ball rolling two years ago. Baker had been moved by a performance of the ballet and suggested it visit Israel again, Hodgert said.

The company will spend three weeks in Israel and Jordan performing, holding workshops and touring.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," Hodgert said. "All the dancers are thrilled and are counting down the days."

BAR MITZVAH TZEDAKAH: As part of his Aug. 30 bar mitzvah celebrations, Netivot HaTorah Day School student Jacob Abbou is helping to buy, assemble and deliver breakfast baskets to clients of Ezrat Achim, a non-profit organization that gives food and financial assistance to needy Jews in the Toronto area. His tzedakah project was inspired by the commandment to bring bikurim – first fruits – to the Temple, as well as other mitzvot related to tithing contained in his parshiot, Ki Tavo and Nitzavim.

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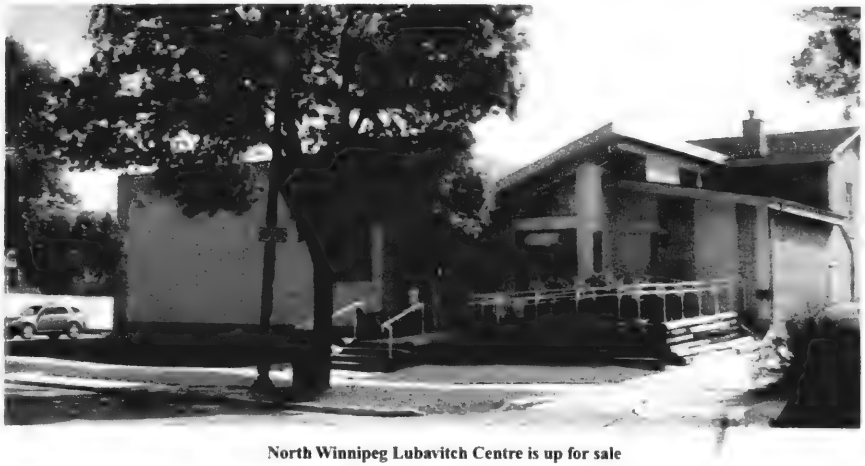
For sale: Winnipeg Lubavitch Centre

New building in city's south end to serve community

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent



North Winnipeg Lubavitch Centre is up for sale

WINNIPEG — You could say it's a sign of the times.

As construction of the new south Winnipeg Lubavitch centre is racing toward a mid-October completion date, a "for sale" sign has gone up in front of the North Winnipeg Lubavitch Centre.

The building of a new Lubavitch centre in south Winnipeg and the decision to sell the north end building are further reflections of the continuing demographic shift in this city's Jewish community from the north to the south end.

When Rabbi Avraham Altein came to Winnipeg in 1972 to bring the teachings of Chabad to Winnipeg, the majority of the Jewish population was still living "north" (although even then there was a steady movement "south"). Rabbi Altein established the original Lubavitch centre in a north Winnipeg suburb in 1980.

Although the north end Lubavitch centre has regular Erev Shabbat and Shabbat minyanim, as well as yom tov services, Rabbi Altein said the the building was never intended to be used primarily as a shul.

"We built an education centre from which to run our various community programs," he said. "The minyan was just one aspect of that. We don't have any memberships, and we don't have a Chabad community here. We have a few shlichim here to serve the entire community."

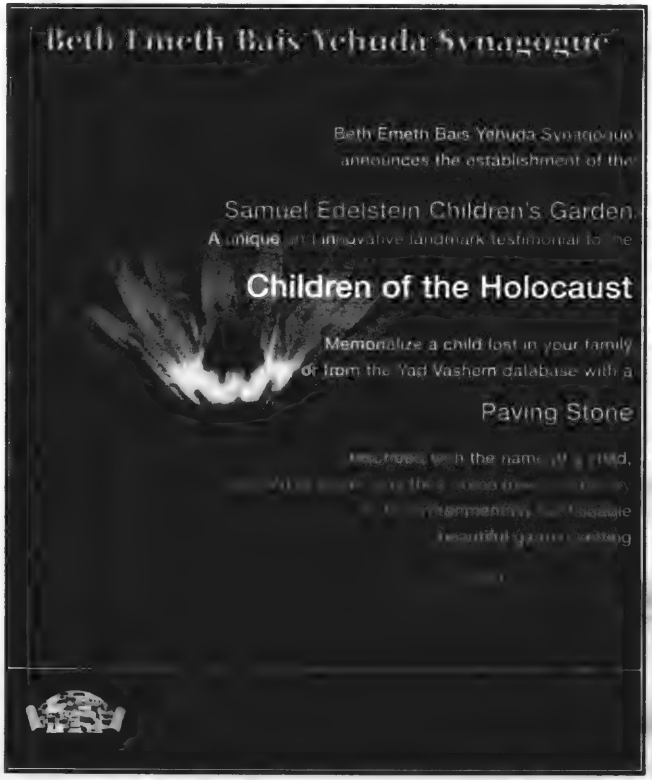
Lubavitch programs in Winnipeg include summer and winter children's camps, summer yeshiva programs, yom tov activities, speakers and much more.

The new building in south Winnipeg is much larger than the north end location. It will house a multi-purpose social hall/lecture hall/synagogue along with classrooms, a library, a small gym for Chabad's preschool program and camps, and separate mikvahs for men and women.The new building will be able to accommodate 350 to 400 people

"The best way to put it is that we are restructuring," Rabbi Altein said.

As to the daveners in the north end who currently attend Shabbat services at the current North End Lubavitch Centre, some arrangements will be made, Rabbi Altein says.

"Maybe we can work out something with the new owners – or find an alternative location – or arrange a merger with another shul in the area."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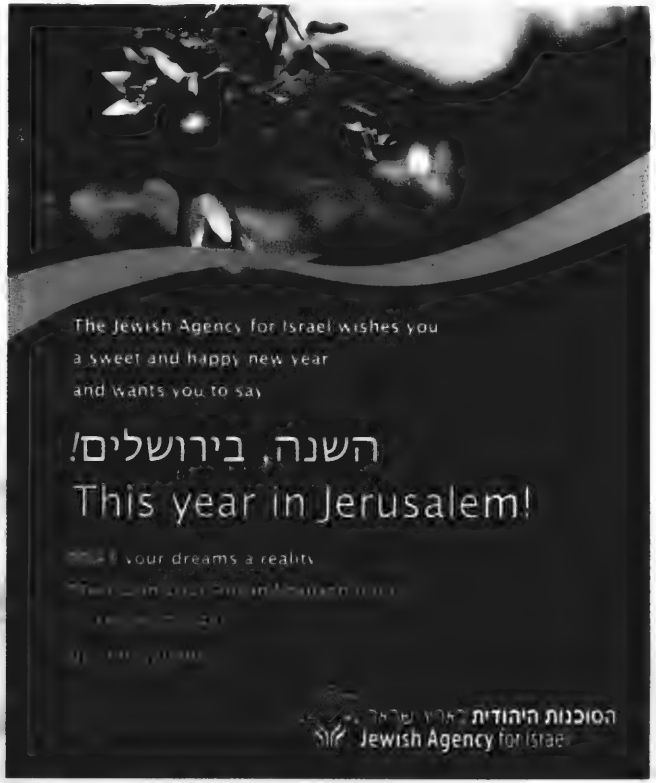
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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Only paid Family Moments announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first-come, first-served basis, as space allows.

Mazel tov announcements featured on onlysimchas.com will appear as space permits.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum.

To send in digital photos, please visit

www.cjnews.com

and click the Family Moments banner at the top.

Mazel tov to Andrea & Ian Cargman on their recent marriage.

Dr. Leo and Ghita Gerczuk, Gail Bernstein, Sydney Berger and Barbara Novek are thrilled to announce the upcoming marriage of their children Lauren and Joshua. Proud grandparents are Chaike Gerczuk, Edna Borden, Irving and Helen Bernstein and Celia Berger. Excited siblings are Paul, Jenna and Danielle. Lovingly remembered at this time are Michel Gerczuk, Phil Borden and Joe Berger. A November wedding is planned. B.H.

Mazel tov to Hannah & Daniel on your recent marriage. With love from the Rosenblum and Diamond families.

Sahri & Bernard Baum proudly announce the engagement of their daughter Rebecca to Doron, son of Ofra & Benny Perelstein of Israel.

Mazel tov to Pearl & Barney Seetner who recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. With love from your children and grandchildren.

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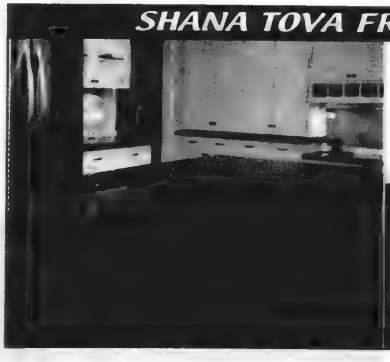

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What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

Our regular columnist, Leila Spelcman, is away on medical leave.

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Please note holiday deadline for What's New. Deadline for Oct. 7 is Tuesday, Sept. 21. Deadline for Oct. 14 is Oct. 4. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Sunday, Sept. 19

SWEDISH KLEZMER

The Stahlhammer Klezmer Classic Band performs at Temple Emanu-El, 120 Old Colony Rd. 7 p.m. **Semmy Stahlhammer** will read from his book *Codename Barber*. All are invited. Refreshments provided, donations at the door in support of community projects. 416-449-3880.

HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

Oryanu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism invites the public to an "Introduction to Humanistic Judaism." Principal available for school tour. 131 Fenn Ave. RSVP/info: **Roby**, 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

Monday, Sept. 20

BOOK AND FILM CLUB

Beth Tzedec's Book and Film Club. Journalist and book reviewer **Toby Saltzman** discusses *Love Comes First* by **Erica Jong**. Dessert 1 p.m. Review 1:30 p.m. $15 at the door, $60 for six sessions. 416-781-3511 to register.

LOVE, HATE AND ANXIETY

National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section's opening meeting. Advice columnist and television personality **Ellie Tesher** speaks about "Love, Hate and Anxiety: The Good and Bad We Bring to Our Relationships." 7:30 p.m. Council House, 4700 Bathurst St. RSVP: 416-633-5100 or reception@ncjwc-ts.org. Free, everyone welcome.

Tuesday, Sept. 21

DIABETES MEETING

The Jewish Diabetes chapter of Canadian Diabetes Association meeting. "Diabetes Care: Put Your Heart Into It," with **Dr. Paul Oh**. 8 p.m. Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 470 Glencairn Ave. All welcome, wheelchair accessible. $1. Door prize. 416-363-0177, ext. 7403, www.diabetes.ca.

BOOK AND FILM REVIEWS

Review of *The Winterhouse* by **Robin McGrath. Heather Kassell** facilitates. 8 p.m. Adath Israel Congregation. Members $50 for series, $10 per review. Guests $85 for series, $15 per review. **Beverley**, 416-499-6920 or **Eveline**, 416-493-3626.

YIDDISH READING CIRCLE

Informal Yiddish reading group, *Leyenkrayz*, meets the third Tuesday of each month. Lipa Green Building, 7:30-9:30 p.m. $25 annual fee. committeeforyiddish@ujafed.org. **Ester**, 416-635-2883 ext. 5189.

Other News

ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

Exhibition for **Isaac Bashevis Singer**, acclaimed novel and short story writer. With original drawings and illustrated books by artists including **Larry Rivers**, **Maurice Sendak** and **Irene Lieblich**. Al Green Gallery, 64 Merton St. To Sept. 30. 416-440-3084 for hours.

LECTURE SERIES

Registration is open for Temple Emanu-El's fall lecture series. Mondays, 2-4 p.m. Starts Oct. 18. Speakers are **Rick Phillips**, **Robert Filler**, **Julia Zarankin**, **Hugh Innes** and **Arne Kislenko**. $40 for series, $10 per lecture. 416-449-3880.

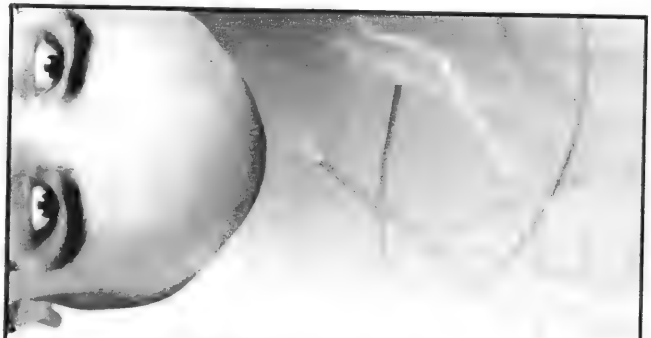
SIMCHAT TORAH

Solel Congregation of Mississauga celebrates Simchat Torah with Zebrina klezmer band. Oneg follows the service. Sept. 29, 7 p.m. 905-820-5915.

PYNK FUNDRAISER

Temple Har Zion presents local band GoFreddieGo, Oct. 23 at 8 p.m. Proceeds from the event support PYNK, Sunnybrook Hospital's young women's breast cancer program and Temple Har Zion projects. $25. Refreshments, cash bar, silent auction, raffles. 905-889-2252 or gofreddiego@bell.net for tickets.

Continued on page 27



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Continued from page 26

SUKKOT CARNIVAL

Sukkot family carnival, Downsview Park. Sept. 26-28, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 35,000 square feet of rides, games, food and prizes for the whole family. $15 all-day pass per child ages three to 18. Everyone else free. Proceeds to NCSY Toronto programs. www.ncsy.ca for passes.

SUKKOT AT SOLEL

Solel Congregation of Mississauga invites the public to their family Sukkot program. Sept. 22, 5 p.m. Arts and crafts, decorate the sukkah, service and dinner. $6 per person, $20 for a family. 905-820-5915. Sukkot services continue Sept. 24 at 10 a.m.

YIDDISH FOR ADULTS

Sunday morning Yiddish class for conversation, reading and writing. Beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Prosserman JCC, 4600 Bathurst St. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. $125 for 10 sessions. Starts Sept. 26. **Ester**, 416-635-2883, ext. 5189.

HOLOCAUST GROUPS

The Holocaust Resource program at Baycrest offers support groups: one for child Holocaust survivors, to be held at Baycrest; one for children of Holocaust survivors, to be held at Wagman Centre, and in collaboration with the Miles Nadal JCC, an additional group for children of Holocaust survivors. All groups start in September. For more information, contact **Shoshana Yaakobi**: 416-785-2500, ext. 2271, or syaakobi@baycrest.org.

MELTON MINI SCHOOL

Melton Adult Mini School offers graduate courses that are open to the public. "A History of Western Art Music from a Jewish Perspective: From **Salomone Rossi** to **George Gershwin** and Beyond." At Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto. Wednesday evenings starting Oct. 6. 416-789-7400 to register.

MEDITATION MONDAYS

Temple Har Zion's monthly Meditation Mondays. The last Monday of every month, starts Sept. 27. 8:15 p.m. New and experienced meditators welcome. 905-889-2252.

PJ LIBRARY PUPPET SHOW

PJ Library presents Cascade Theatre's puppet show, based on the book *Something from Nothing*. Sept. 26, 10:30 a.m. TanenbaumCHAT, Kimel Family Education Centre. 9600 Bathurst St. $10 per family, includes refreshments. Limited space. www.pjlibrary905.ca.

RENTAL LISTINGS

List any rentals you have for free through the accommodation registry at UJA's Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto. Also available to those looking for a place to live. Contact 416-635-5600 or jinfo@ujafed.org. For more information, visit jewishtoronto.com and follow the link to "Doing Jewish In Toronto."

FINANCIAL LITERACY

JVS Toronto offers free workshops in "Financial Literacy for Jewish Agencies." If your agency is interested in hosting financial literacy workshops or would like more information, contact **Allen Stern**. astern@jvstoronto.org or 416-636-2481 ext. 217.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Beth Emeth Leadership Development Program includes seminars, institute-type learning and interactive participation. Open to anyone who feels they can benefit from leadership training. Now accepting applications. Maximum 25 students. Classes begin Oct. 7 and meet monthly on Thursdays from 7-9 p.m. **Rosalie Shadlyn**, 416-633-3838.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC. Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner talks about "Forgiveness: Seeking, Granting and Are There Limits?" Sept. 16, 1:30 p.m. Refreshments served. 416-924-6211 ext. 155.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons for men and women. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. Everyone welcome. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Association of Jewish Seniors. Annual Sukkot lunch and entertainment. Sept. 28, 11:30 a.m. Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. Prepaid reservations required. Members $20, guests $25. **Tammy**, 416-635-2860 ext. 458.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama Oct. 13, departs 10 a.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 p.m. Bingo Tuesdays, Sept. 21, 12:30 to 3 p.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30 p.m. Sunday night dance resumes Sept. 19 at 6-8:30 p.m. Line dancing Thursday resumes Sept. 23 at 10 a.m. **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Membership $25. All welcome.

LZA Senior's Cultural Club. Tuesdays 10 a.m. Discussion group at Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Wellness lecture: "Leisure and Relaxation," with **Judy Weiss**. Sept. 16, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Free.

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Kolel's unique brand of quality adult education is going on the road. Space on each tour is limited, and early registration is recommended. For itineraries, prices and details call **Michelle** at Payless Travel, 416-922-0116, ext. 1. For any questions on the content of the trips, contact **Rabbi Goldstein** at ext. 4472 or rabbi@prossermanjcc.com.

Shabbat R 'n' R, Oct. 2, Nov. 6 and Dec. 4 from 1-5 p.m. A free drop-in program of Shabbat-appropriate songs, stories, Jewish learning fun, activities and snacks. Families of all levels of Jewish observance will feel welcome at this family-friendly event. Free, no preregistration necessary. Room 205.

Work out the Brazilian way with Capoeira, a blend of martial arts, sports, dance, culture and philosophy. Ten per cent off family registration.

Tic Tac Two morning program for two-year-olds. Two, three or five mornings per week from September to June. Includes weekly Shabbat program. Limited space left. **Kailah**, ext. 4351.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel services. Sunday 8 a.m. Thursday 7:15 a.m. Kosher breakfast included. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Fitness demo day Sept. 15. 7 a.m.to 8 p.m. Boxing, nia, Zumba, small group training and more. Food, games and prizes in the fitness lobby. Ext. 521.

Pre-school programs – register now. New Shabbat club (3 to 6 years) with **Sarah Brodbar-Nemzer.** Ext. 277.

Get your kids active this fall at the MNJCC Fitness Centre. Programs include a basketball academy, floor hockey, boxing, Zumba, teen yoga (girls only) and karate. Programs start in September and October. Ext. 0 to register and for more information.

The 3rd Degree, Sept. 21-25. 8 p.m. $30. Presented by Chicken Coop Theatre at the Al Green Theatre. Tells the story of Sir Henry Smythe, his wife Lady Penelope and daughter Caroline. 416-992-9248. www.the3rddegree.webs.com.

Toronto Jewish Film Society screens *The Wooden Gun (Roveh Hulliot)*, a coming-of-age drama set in 1950s Tel Aviv. With guest **Mark Clamen**. Sept. 26. 4 and 7:30 p.m. $15 general admission, $10 ages 18-29 (7:30 p.m. screening only). Rush seats 15 minutes before each screening. Ext. 606, film@mnjcc.org.

Decorate the sukkah. Rooftop party and activities for Sukkot. Sept. 26, 12 to 1:30 p.m. Ext. 277.

KOFFLER CENTRE

4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.kofflerarts.org.

Israeli dance classes for beginners and intermediates. Sept. 20, Prosserman JCC. Beginners 7:30-8:30 p.m. Intermediates 8:30-10 p.m. Intermediate level dancing also at Darchei Noam Synagogue, Tuesday evenings. 8-11 p.m. $7. **Teme Kernerman**, ext. 4364.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

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Naomi Diamond	Aug 27/10	335 Lonsdale Rd
Fern Sachs	Aug 29/10	800 Sheppard Ave
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Harry Stemerman	Aug 30/10	3560 Bathurst St
Sonia Esco	Aug 31/10	1195 Queen St E
Simmie Tanner/Lenick	Sep 1/10	7250 Yonge St
Barney Berkovitz	Sep 3/10	260 Heath St W
Saul Markowitz	Sep 3/10	2075 Bayview Ave
Hartley Jacobs	Sep 2/10	10 Northgate Cres
Hy Foxman	Sep 3/10	110 Promenade Cir
Leslie Kert	Sep 3/10	226 Carmichael Ave

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On Campus

Some 50 to 60 student leaders attended the Canadian Federation of Jewish Students' leadership retreat this year. *[Alana Kayfetz photo]*

Aboriginal student group reps join CFJS retreat

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

Eric Chapman had his first camp experience this summer. He swam, canoed and learned about effective leadership and Israel advocacy.

Chapman, a third-year biology student and co-president of Queen's University Hillel, was one of around 50 to 60 campus leaders who took part in the Canadian Federation of Jewish Student's (CFJS) annual retreat at Camp Gesher, near Cloyne, Ont.

The retreat, which ran from Aug. 26 to 29, helped students develop leadership skills and included lectures from organizations such as Canadian Jewish Congress.

"This was my first CFJS conference. I wanted to make sure I was ready to be co-president of Queen's Hillel," said Chapman, 20. "I gained a lot of experience hearing other leaders that have been in high positions for a long time. It really inspired me."

Chapman, who had never been to Camp Gesher before, learned about Israel advocacy and dealing with the media.

The third-year biology major also did some bonding.

"I had never been to camp growing up. It was a big deal for me. You really get to feel how people come together. You really become a family," he said.

Chapman also enjoyed hearing from the Assembly of First Nations, which had representatives come to the retreat for the first time this year.

"It was quite interesting… to see how other minority student groups act together to work on issues. We were kind of trying to relate that to the CFJS and what we do," he said, adding that he hopes to help unite other student groups at Queen's.

Shira Fenyes, vice-president of programming at CFJS and the retreat organizer, sees this as an important goal, both nationally and locally.

"We're really taken an interest in reaching out to other student groups," said Fenyes, 20, adding that CFJS president Aaron Vomberg attended the Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council this past July.

"We're hoping it'll be a long-lasting relationship…: We come from such a multicultural society," she said.

Fenyes, a third-year political studies major at the University of Saskatchewan, said the goal for this year's conference was to provide a forum for campus leaders.

"The goal of the conference was to bring Jewish student leaders together and… to give them tools and ideas and training that they could bring back to their campuses," she said.

For Fenyes, Camp Gesher was an ideal environment for the retreat.

"It really provided a setting that was conducive to this type of retreat. Having a conference at a camp really does change the dynamic, and it was a more relaxed environment," she said.

For Alexandra Izso, 20, president of Carleton University's Hillel, the retreat was an important learning experience.

"We had a lot of advocacy training workshops and Jewish identity workshops. We discussed what Israel means to us and touched upon volunteering and building coalitions with other groups on campus," said Izso, a third-year student in international relations and economics.

"I definitely learned a lot, especially coming from fellow students who have had experience in the past with campus politics."

Izso, who hopes to bring a larger variety of Jewish programming to her campus this year, appreciates the social connections she gained from the trip.

"I've met people from all over the country who are in the same shoes as I am, and people who have done this previously. I've networked and built relationships," she said. "I really enjoyed it."

Eat, pray, learn: my summer in Israel

By KORTNEY SHAPIRO
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

"You're joining Jewish history, you're adding your chapter," McGill University professor Gil Troy told our group, a contingent of university students from all corners of the world, as we sat in the King Solomon Hotel in Jerusalem this past June.

Troy told us that there are two intifadahs occurring on our university campuses today: the "campus intifadah," the distorted and manipulated information about Israel that is disseminated outside the classroom, and the "academic intifadah," in which Israel is delegitimized as a country in textbooks and conferences.

Like many other Jewish 20-somethings, I spent this past summer in Israel. I began my travels with a group of students from all over the world, who were selected to be a part of the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America's (CAMERA) leadership and advocacy training mission. The trip was geared to give students a better understanding of Israeli history and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Through CAMERA, we met with Knesset members, journalists and leading members of the community.

We visited the Shalem Center in Jerusalem, where we met with Daniel Gordis, the centre's vice-president and the author of *Saving Israel: How the Jewish State Can Win a War that May Never End*. Gordis said that North American university students and activists are advocating during a difficult time on campus, in which the State of Israel and its supporters are under constant attack. That afternoon, as we made our way to Tel Aviv to lie on the beach, Gordis' words remained with me.

The stinging reality check of our meeting with Gordis was countered by an overwhelming sense of tranquility amid the perpetual tension as we stood in Tel Aviv in Independence Hall, the site of the signing of Israel's Declaration of Independence.

During the remainder of my advocacy mission, I learned the significance of the stones in the underground tunnels of the Old City of Yerushalayim and went rafting down the Jordan River. I listened to Israeli soldiers who at my age seemed wiser than most of my peers, discussing their daily routines while stationed at the Lebanese border, where there is a Hezbollah village.

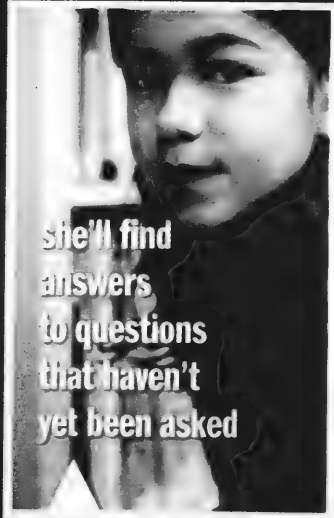
In late June, I travelled throughout the country with friends, visiting the Baha'i Gardens in Haifa and the lush hillsides of Srigim, where a number of my family members live. I ate meals in Tzuba, a kibbutz near Jerusalem where my cousins live and swam in a natural spring during a road trip to the Golan.

I am thankful to have had a summer that has encompassed more than I thought imaginable. Although my trip was both for pleasure and education, I understand now more than ever the significance of my voice as a young advocate during these critical and trying times.

The efforts to demonize the State of Israel have increased exponentially on university and college campuses worldwide, and it is imperative that young leaders within the community speak up. I have come to realize that the ongoing fight for truth and justice is concerned not only with recruiting freshmen students and utilizing community leaders for the perpetual defence of the State of Israel. The fight also includes believing so strongly in a country that regardless of how trying and exhausting the struggle may be, we refuse to give up.

Kortney Shapiro is a fourth-year student at McGill University and McGill Hillel's Holocaust Education Week director.

Kortney Shapiro, left, poses with her friend, Renee Kramer near the Old City in Jerusalem.



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JNF ISRAEL

Feature

Spotlight on old-timers in small-town Saskatchewan

By CHANA THAU
Special to The CJN

People typically think of Canadian Jews as living in large urban centres – in fact, many started out in rural settings, although few stayed there.

As part of an oral history project for the Jewish Heritage Society of Western Canada (with funding from the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba and Manitoba Heritage Grants Program), I set out in mid-August on a road trip to Estevan, in southeast Saskatchewan.

The purpose of this trip was to interview Gertie Lev, the last Jew in Estevan. Before I left, I asked her what there was to see in Hirsch, 18 miles east of Estevan, other than the Jewish cemetery. The Hirsch Agricultural Colony, which was funded by and named for French baron Maurice de Hirsch, was established in 1892.

"Oh," came the reply, "there are the bachelor brothers, the Kleimans."

And so it was that I came to visit Harvey and Jack Kleiman, whose parents had been part of the Hirsch Colony, an Orthodox farming community.

The brothers, now in their 80s, live independently in the small farmhouse where they were raised. They have a second, newer home, but that is "for guests." Although they no longer farm, but rather lease out their land, they are far from retired. "Just tired," quips Harvey.

Everyone in the area knows them, so I had no trouble getting directions to the farm. When I arrived, Jack, the younger brother, was just getting off the tractor mower after mowing the large tract of land on which they live.

I interviewed them in the kitchen, an odd mix of old and new, accompanied by the hum of their huge Massey-Harris chest freezer. (The family used to sell Massey-Harris farm machinery, among their many business endeavours.) They have a fax-photocopier combination and a laptop "for doing spreadsheets" for their oil business.

When asked about their childhood in Hirsch, both mentioned that early on, there had been "a lot of Jewish people – maybe as many as 250 at one time". There were three synagogues and two kosher butchers. "We had fresh meat twice a week," and since there was no refrigeration, the meat was kept "down the well or in an ice house."

The colony had a rabbi and Jewish teachers. "We wouldn't get home until six," Harvey complains, since they had two hours of Jewish school after public school every day except Shabbat, and two hours on Sunday morning. Sometimes the Jewish teacher would come to the house and sometimes their family would board a teacher. Many of the secular school-teachers were also Jewish.

Harvey had his bar mitzvah at the synagogue in Hirsch and continued to *leig tfillin* daily with his maternal grandfather for a few years. Unfortunately, by the time it was Jack's turn, there was no longer a rabbi or teacher, so he did not have a bar mitzvah.

Gertie Lev

The school consisted of two rooms, with 60 students and two teachers. Harvey completed Grade 12, although the higher grades had to be done by correspondence with assistance from the teacher. Jack did not get to complete high school, as he was needed on the farm.

When asked whether they ever thought of leaving the farm, the response was, "We were always too busy, that was the problem." Throughout their lives, the brothers did not encounter any anti-Semitism. "We were well-respected, even in Estevan, because all the business we [did] was honourable. If we had a commitment, we looked after it."

Although they have connections with other Jews in Regina and with their sisters in Winnipeg, they rarely leave the farm these days. Various Jewish people come to visit the cemetery and, having heard of the Kleimans, drop in on them too.

"We might move to Estevan – for the winter anyway," says Harvey. "We can't shovel the snow anymore."

Next, I went to Estevan to meet Gertie Lev, the only other Jew in the area. This petite, outgoing woman welcomed me warmly to the yellow bungalow she has lived in since arriving in Estevan 39 years ago. Lev came to Estevan because of her marriage to Morris Lev, her third husband, a farmer in Hirsch. Gertie was a widow who was set up with Morris by a friend.

Gertie was raised in a non-religious home; she attended Shalom Aleichem School for a couple of years, where she learned to "write and speak Jewish." But it was her move to Estevan that really brought out the Jewish side in her.

Although her parents did not observe the High Holidays, "I have been… since I moved here. Every Friday, I light my Sabbath candles and I say the prayers." She is proud of her Jewish home and heritage, proud to show it off to her many friends.

When asked whether she has thought of moving to a place where there is a Jewish community, she sees no need. She travels to visit her daughter in Arizona and family in Winnipeg, where she goes every year for Rosh Hashanah. She has a community of wonderful friends who mow her lawn, shovel the snow and help with grocery shopping.

Gertie and Morris never encountered any anti-Semitism. They were charter members of the Estevan Multicultural Council, formed in 1977. Gertie proudly recounts how she was invited to participate in the opening ceremonies of this year's Folklorama, a multicultural event to celebrate Manitoba's centennial.

Since it was Friday night, she brought her lace *teichl* (kerchief) and candelabra and blessed the Shabbat candles. Gertie has always been independent and resourceful. Her house is full of photos, documents and medals honouring her for her volunteerism. From the day she arrived in the town, she "joined everything there was to join. And that's how come I didn't make Morris miserable. I occupied my time while he was farming" six months of the year.

Sadly, Morris passed away in August 1988. "He was a wonderful husband, very kind, very giving, very loving."

Gertie carried on with her volunteer activities "to help fill the void." She has many hobbies, including singing, and treated me to a rendition of the *Shalom Song*. She loves telling a good joke and, reflecting on her life, concludes, "I've lived a life of happy happenings, with a few sprinkles of sorrow, but what life goes without that?"

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לואיס דאָנסקי האָט זיך קונה-שם געוואָרן מיט זיינע מוזיקאַלישע אָודיסטריטן ניט בלויז אין סאָוויעטן נאָר אין דער גאַנצער וועלט. קורץ נאָך זיין אָנקומען קיין אַמעריקע האָט ער באַגייסטערט מיט זיין קלאָסישן רעפּערטואָר אין איטאַליעניש, יידיש און חסידישע אַ נוסח אין ניו-יאָרקער קאָנצערט האַל. אַ גרויסן רושם האָט אויך געמאַכט אין ניו-יאָרק זיין אָפּגעריכטע תּפילה בּיי דער לוחיה פֿון באָרימטן אימאַליעניסן דיבער סקיפּאָ.

אין סעפּטעמבער 1984 האָט מען צוגעטיילט דאָנסקין דעם כּבוד צו זינגען אין סאָראָנטער מיפּל-ליף-גאַרדענס פֿאַר אַן עולם פֿון 16 טויזנט פֿאָלקסמלטע, וואָס זענען נאָכקומען מקבל פּנים זיין די ענגלישע קעניגין עליזאַבעט. אין 1995 האָט חזן דאָנסקי נעמאַכט אַ לעגענדאַר סוף אין מזוזה-אידאָפּע; ער איז אויסגעסטאָנען אין מאָסקוי, לענינגראַד, קיעוו, אָדעס און בודאַפּעשט אין אַ ריי הונדערט און פֿאָלקסימלעך-יידישן רעפּערטואַר און איז ער אומעטום אויפֿגעומען נעוואָרן מיט גרויס עכטהייַט און אָנערקענונג. אַן עלטערן דערפֿאָלג האָט אויך נעהאַט זיין אָודיסטריט אין יושלים בעת אַ וועלט צוזאַמענפֿאָר פֿון חזנים.

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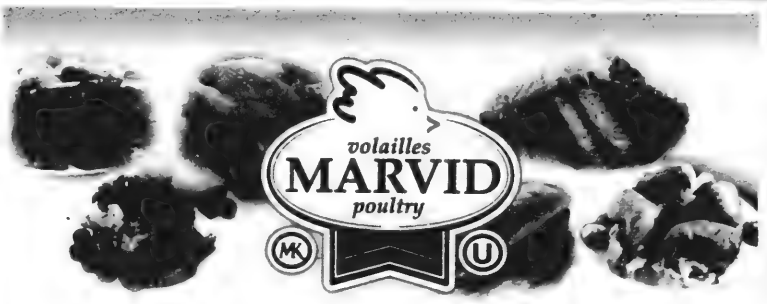
MAJESTIC BLAST FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Boys in grades 6 to 8 at Netivot HaTorah Day School put their lungs to the test blowing a tekiah gedolah, the traditional blast blown at the end of Yom Kippur. Pictured is Grade 6 student Yaakov being timed for the shofar blowing competition by Israeli national service volunteer Rotem Lev. *[Rebecca Ansel photo]*



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שנה טובה ומתוקה

Spice of Life

Preparing meals for the sukkah together

By BEVERLY LEVITT
Special to The CJN

During the joyous holiday of Sukkot we gather in our sukkah to eat, sing and tell stories, just as our ancestors have done for generations.

Sukkot is a true holiday of bonding as moms, dads and children assemble temporary dwellings of sweet smelling branches and leaves, then decorate them by hanging fruits and vegetables from their "sides" and "ceilings."

Building the sukkah and eating and sleeping inside can be a precious childhood memory.

For New York chef and restaurateur Jeffrey Nathan, Sukkot is a time to practise what he preaches in his book, *Jeff Nathan's Family Suppers*. In it, he emphasizes the importance of not only eating but also cooking with your children. And that's exactly what he does during Sukkot, when the Nathans assemble the sukkah together and then cook the meals they will eat under its leaves and branches.

"Now that Jackie and Chad are teenagers they're busy with friends and a million activities. But being home on Friday night and Saturday and during the Jewish holidays like Sukkot is sacrosanct.

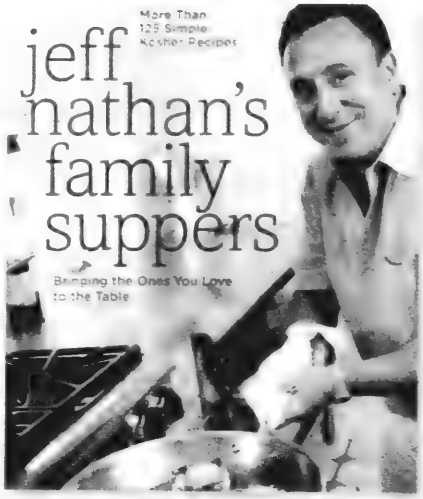
"I love the family feeling of it," Nathan says. "Getting in the kitchen with my wife, Ali, and our kids is our biggest pleasure. I think we're closer because we cook together.

"How many things are there that you can do as a family that are as much fun as cooking?" Nathan asks. "We laugh at our mistakes. I keep reminding them that, as Julia Child said, if something doesn't turn out right, you can just eat it – and nobody else has to know." He smiles.

Since Sukkot celebrates the harvest, it's traditional to serve a variety of autumn fruits and vegetables. A beautiful fresh salad is perfect.

Nathan shares his family tradition of the Salad Mystery Basket.

"We go to the farmers market or the produce section at the supermarket and buy whatever looks the freshest – whether it is bok choy or mesclun or baby carrots. We put everything into a basket, bring it home, and the kids assemble their own salads.



"They're in charge. They make up the recipe, including the dressing. Of course, I'm on the sideline explaining which raw items go together. And what dressing accentuates the flavours.

"But I encourage them to develop their own likes and dislikes. They're learning that everyone's taste is different. And I encourage that. I hate wine snobs. I want them to develop their recipes around whatever is pleasing to them. Don't try to like something just because someone else tells you it's good.

"I want to build their confidence. And their sense of adventure."

"Since we're eating outside during Sukkot, we want dishes which can be transported easily from the kitchen to the sukkah," says Alison, a chef in her own right. "So we do a lot of one-pot meals. We serve hot soup out of a tureen. It's wonderful, as it's often cold in October."

In Israel, stuffed vegetables are a staple during Sukkot. Stuffed peppers, eggplant, mushrooms, squash, tomatoes or onions are great because they come with their own intrinsic container.

"Instead of washing the bowl, you can throw it out," Jeff says with a laugh.

Nathan divides the cooking chores according to each person's talents and likes. Jackie, 14, is very artistic; so she's in charge of stuffing the vegetables and making them look pretty. She also has patience; so she gets the job of cutting the tiny tips off the green beans or spooning out an indentation in the mashed potatoes, filling it with gravy, and then sprinkling herbs all around," Nathan says.

Jackie loves setting the table and arranges the utensils right out of Miss Manners, he adds. But Chad, 17, has no patience – he does the heavy work like getting the barbeque ready, shopping with his dad and putting everything in the dishwasher. He also loves standing over the grill.

"When the kids were younger, I was more hyper and they were intimidated and always afraid of making a mistake. Now, I'm more relaxed so we have more fun," Nathan says.

"You can learn so much in the kitchen," he adds, "from teamwork and co-operation, to planning what to make and figuring out what you'll need. I get to teach them about the importance of eating healthy food – what is healthy – and why they should wash their hands before they start to cook. I've become a real food safety nut," he laughs. "And I always wash my produce carefully with a good fruit and vegetable wash.

"Of course, it's not all just educational; we have fun too. I usually don't tell people – it's kind of our secret – but we have food fights. It's always outside on the deck and it usually involves chocolate mousse. Even there we play our roles. The kids are throwing the mousse at each other. I'm chiding them to stop. But once Ali starts telling the kids to 'get dad,' the game is quickly over," he says with a laugh.

"The best part about cooking together is just looking at their faces as they're tasting something they've made. When we're gathered around the table and I see Jackie beaming about something she's cooked, it's like manna from heaven. She's so happy and proud of herself. And then you know that you're doing something right."

All but the first of the following recipes are from *Jeff Nathan's Family Suppers*.

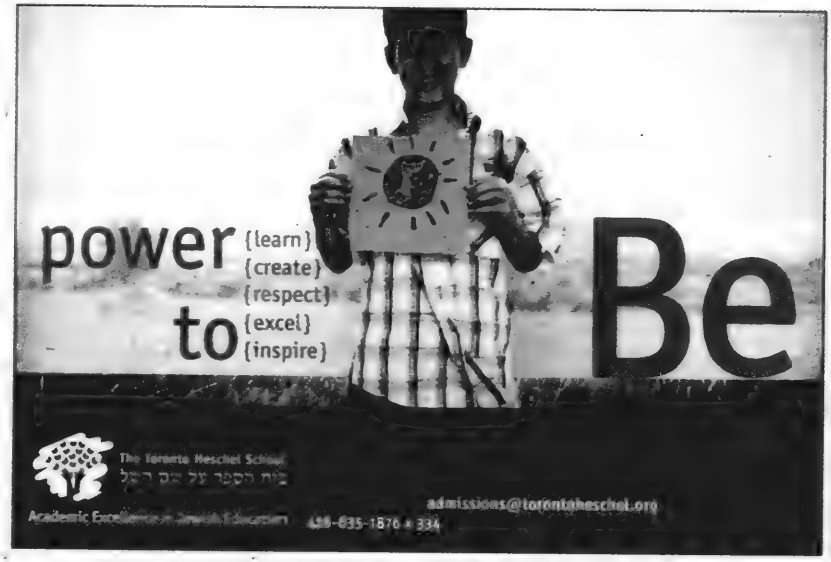
GRILLED ASPARAGUS, PAPAYA, AVOCADO AND GRAPEFRUIT ON A BED OF LAMB'S LETTUCE

Prepare the vinaigrette and the vegetables the day before Sukkot. Right before serving, assemble individual salads.

Grapefruit vinaigrette
grated zest of 1 grapefruit
1/4 cup fresh grapefruit juice
2 1/2 tbsp. fresh lime juice
1 tbsp. honey, or less if desired
1/2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

For salad
2 dozen fresh asparagus, trimmed of woody stalks, then grilled
1 large pink grapefruit, peeled, seeded and divided into sections
2 ripe avocados, peeled and diced
1 ripe papaya, peeled, seeded and diced
1/2 cup toasted pine nuts
1 lb. lamb's lettuce (you can substitute Boston lettuce or baby spinach)

Continued on page 33



Sweet endings for a Sukkot meal

Continued from page 32

Vinaigrette: Combine grapefruit zest and juice, lime juice and honey in covered container. Shake to emulsify. Slowly whisk in olive oil, salt and pepper for 30 seconds. Allow vinaigrette to sit for at least 1 hour or overnight before serving.

Salad: The day before Sukkot, wash and dry the lettuce and place it with a paper towel in an airtight plastic bag. Working over a medium bowl to catch the juices, supreme the grapefruit by cutting off the thick peel where it meets the flesh, then cutting between the thin membranes to release the segments. Place segments in a bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Splash avocado in the juice, place in bowl with the papaya, and store both bowls in refrigerator overnight.

To serve: place lettucé on individual plates. Artfully arrange asparagus, avocado, grapefruit segments and papaya on top of lettuce. Sprinkle with pine nuts. Pour vinaigrette into small pitchers and place on table for guests to help themselves. Makes 6 servings.

WHITE BEAN SOUP WITH GARLIC AND ROSEMARY

1 lb. dried white kidney (cannellini) beans
1/3 cup plus 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
4 medium carrots, chopped
2 medium celery ribs, chopped
1 large red or yellow bell pepper, cored, seeded and chopped
12 garlic cloves, chopped
2 ripe plum tomatoes, cut into 1/2 in. dice
1 tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary
1 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
1 tsp. hot red pepper flakes
1 gallon water
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Place beans in large bowl and add enough water to cover beans by 2 inches. Let stand for 8 to 12 hours. Drain well.

Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion, carrots, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Cook, stirring often, until vegetables are softened, about 12 minutes. Add the drained beans, tomatoes, rosemary, oregano and red pepper flakes; reduce heat to low. Cook until tomatoes soften, about 7 minutes. Stir in the water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer until beans are very tender, about 1-1/4 hours. During last 15 minutes, season with salt and pepper. In batches, transfer soup to a blender and puree. Transfer to soup tureen and season with salt and pepper. Serve hot.

POACHED APRICOTS WITH LEMON AND THYME

This is the perfect Sukkot dessert – light, beautiful and delicious. Serve this dessert as compote, with regular or non-dairy vanilla ice cream or whipped topping.

2 cups water
1 2 cup fresh orange juice
1 2 cup honey
1 4 cup sugar
zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 3-in. cinnamon stick
1 lb. dried apricots
1/4 cup almond-flavoured liqueur
1 tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
a few gratings of fresh nutmeg
non-dairy vanilla ice cream or whipped topping, for serving
lemon zest, cut into julienne, for serving

Combine 2 cups water, orange juice, honey, sugar, lemon zest and juice and cinnamon in a medium saucepan. Add apricots; bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Partially cover the saucepan with the lid; simmer until apricots are tender, about 10 minutes.

Remove from heat and add liqueur, thyme and nutmeg. Cool until warm (or cool, cover and refrigerate until chilled). Serve, spooned over ice cream and topped with julienne lemon zest, if desired. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

SICILIAN-STYLE STUFFED BELL PEPPERS

4 sweet bell peppers, red, yellow, orange or green stemmed, halved, deveined and seeded
1 cup Italian-seasoned dry bread crumbs
1/3 cup plus 1 tbsp. golden raisins, plumped and drained
6 boneless anchovy fillets, finely chopped
1/4 cup capers, drained and rinsed
2 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
2 tbsp. chopped fresh basil
1 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
freshly ground black pepper to taste
1/2 cup canned tomato sauce, as needed

Preheat oven to 400. Lightly oil a large baking sheet. Place peppers skin side down on the sheet. In a medium bowl, mix together bread crumbs, raisins, anchovies, capers, parsley and basil. Add oil and stir well to make a crumbly mixture the texture of wet sand. Season with pepper. Spread bread crumb mixture in a thin layer onto the cut surface of each pepper. Drizzle each with a bit of olive oil and top with tomato sauce. Bake until peppers are wilted and the crumb filling is golden brown, about 25 minutes. Serve hot, cool or at room temperature. Makes 4 servings.

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Winnipeg community goes green

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — With the launch of EcoShift, Dov and Sara Allentuck Secter have staked their claim to a leadership role in the Jewish community here.

"We lead green lives at home and are passionate about safeguarding the environment," says Allentuck Secter, a 27-year-old teacher.

"Dov [a 33-year-old architect] and I weren't seeing much interest in environmental issues in the organized Jewish community. So we thought we would do something to promote environmental awareness within the community."

What the young couple came up with was EcoShift, a daylong series of eco activities to take place at Asper Jewish Community Campus, on Sept. 26. The event aims to educate the community members about the importance of incorporating green behaviours into their daily lives. The program will include composting and recycling and home retrofit demonstrations, environmental activities for children and a green vendor showcase featuring exhibits by local businesses. The highlight of the day will be an appearance by David Suzuki, Canada's best known environmentalist, speaking at the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue in the evening.

"We thought we would start off with something small," Allentuck Secter says, "but this has really blossomed. We are hoping to have at least 700 people for Dr. Suzuki's presentation and several hundred more participating in the activities we have planned during the day."

Sarah Allentuck Secter and Dov Secter

The Secters hope that Ecoshift will lead to community organizations implementing environmental initiatives and the expansion of the green agendas of those that already have them.

"EcoShift can act as a catalyst for these changes while raising the profile of our Jewish community's role in sustainable initiatives within the city of Winnipeg," Allentuck Secter says. "With tikkun olam as a core Jewish value, the individuals and organizations in Jewish Winnipeg should be paving the way for a more sustainable future."

While the young couple have been involved in the community previously as canvassers for Combined Jewish Appeal campaigns and have attended Young Leadership conferences in Toronto, EcoShift marks the first time they have ever taken on a venture of this magnitude. "It has been a challenge," Allentuck Secter says, "but it has been rewarding. We have had a lot of support from the Jewish Federation [of Winnipeg] and we have good people on our committee."

Allentuck Secter's mother, Sharon Allentuck, is a longtime CJA volunteer and a former president of the Winnipeg chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women and a national board member.

The couple and their committee organized EcoShift under the auspices of J-PEG, the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg's Next Generation Leadership Division. J-PEG's mandate is to involve adults between the ages of 25 and 45 who live in Winnipeg in community events, leadership development programs and fundraising initiatives to support local and overseas Jewish communities.

Researchers discover gene for chronic pain

ISRAEL21c staff

JERUSALEM — A gene affecting chronic pain caused by nerve injury has been identified by Israeli and international researchers, offering hope of new treatments for sufferers everywhere.

Chronic pain affects approximately 20 per cent of adults worldwide and includes persistent headaches, back pain, arthritis and even psychogenic pain, where doctors are unable to find the cause of constant pain.

While it is recognized that some people are more susceptible to chronic pain than others, no one knows why. Given the same injury and the same operation, people will suffer variable degrees of pain, even under nearly identical circumstances.

Now, researchers at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, University of Toronto, Sanofi-Aventis in Germany and the Karolinska Institute Center for Oral Biology in Sweden, believe they may have found the answer in genetics.

"The immediate significance is the mere awareness that differences in pain perception may have a genetic predisposition," says Ariel Darvasi of the Alexander Silberman Institute of Life Sciences at Hebrew University.

"Our discovery may provide insights for treating chronic pain through previously unthought-of mechanisms."

In a report published recently in *Genome Research*, Darvasi and colleagues identified a region of mouse chromosome 15 that likely contained a genetic variant or variants contributing to pain. However, this region contains many genes and the responsible variant remained unknown.

Darvasi and his team, which includes Marshall Devor, a professor at the Hebrew University, undertook two fine-mapping approaches to narrow down the chromosomal locus to an interval of 155 genes. From there, they were able to identify a single gene, Cacgn2, as the likely candidate.

In mouse experiments, the researchers were able to confirm that Cacgn2 has a functional role in pain.

To find out whether the human version of the gene also plays a part in chronic pain, the scientists analyzed a group of breast cancer patients who experienced chronic pain more than six months after they had undergone removal or partial removal of a breast. The researchers found that genetic variants of Cacgn2 were significantly associated with this chronic pain.

While cautioning that this association will need further analysis, the researchers say that the result suggests that this gene is an important factor in experiencing pain.

The work was supported by the Israel Science Foundation, the Hebrew University Center for Research on Pain, the Canada Research Chair Program and the European Community's 6th Framework Program.

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Referendum win makes Erdogan second only to Ataturk

By ALON LIEL
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

Analysis

This is the fourth time Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has savoured victory in a national ballot. Twice he won general elections, twice he won referenda. He is a perennial "winner," even if we in Israel are largely united in our distaste for him.

On Sunday, voters overwhelmingly approved the referendum initiated by Erdogan's Islamic-oriented Justice and Development Party. The constitutional measures passed give the government wide-ranging power to exert control over the military and judiciary, both traditional bulwarks of the country's secularism.

The referendum result is a triumph for Erdogan's ideology. It's hard to imagine the heads of Turkey's army plotting another coup, given that the reforms now allow them to be tried in civilian court, or the country's high court banning certain political parties, as it has in the past.

Erdogan can now look both forward and back with satisfaction. He has made his country richer, more stable and stronger in the international community, while simultaneously making it both more democratic and more devout.

Should Erdogan prevail in the July 2011 election – a legitimate prospect after Sunday's victory – he will become the longest-serving, and most influential, Turkish leader since Kemal Ataturk.

Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan

The reforms passed Sunday overturn eight decades of government-touted secular ideology, instilling instead a new political creed that could rightfully be termed Erdoganism. And a leader doesn't have an "ism" attached to his name simply by toeing his predecessors' line.

Many in Turkey and abroad view Turkey's transformation – more religious, more eastward-looking – as cause for concern. But to the majority of Turks, the reforms have made the republic more democratic, more humane.

Erdogan will remain hated by the Turkish secular elite, which is concentrated in the army, universities and business community. But he is beloved by Turkey's poorer, devout periphery. The prime minister has straightened the backbone of the marginalized, and in return has received their undying loyalty.

Fears that Erdogan will turn the country into an Iranian-style Islamic republic are unfounded. Support for the prime minister rests not only on ideology but also on modernization and the prosperity he has helped bring.

We in Israel know Erdogan primarily for his hard-line Mideast policy, less so for his economic platform. But the prime minister's every step is taken with fiscal growth in mind. Erdogan will abandon neither modernization nor democracy, the system allowing his government to stay in power.

The prime minister must now meet one major objective to justify the "ism" that has been appended to his name: create a Kurdish state, or at least recognize Turkey's Kurds as a national minority.

Erdogan is ripe for it, but his country is not. He needs one more term to complete his Kurdish mission. Should he win next July, that may be a real possibility.

Investigation panel seeks Turkish captain's testimony

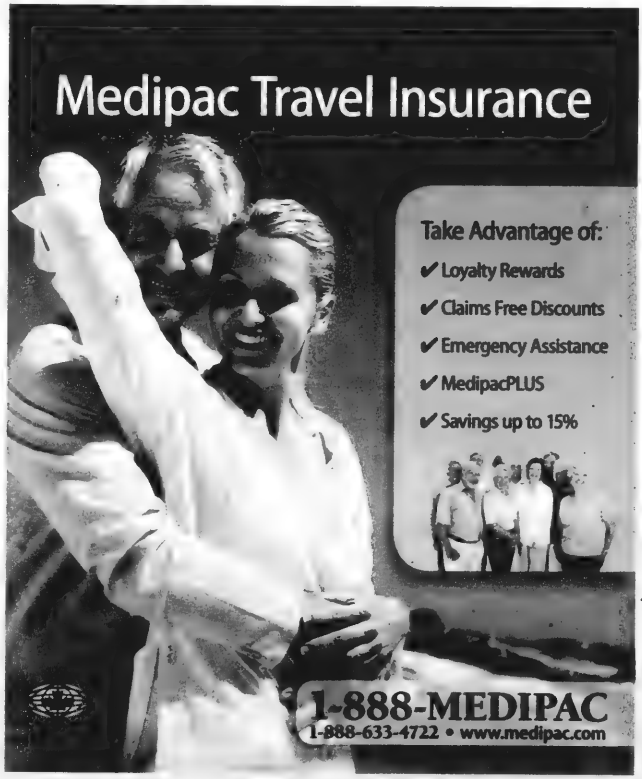
© Haaretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — The investigation committee established to probe the deadly clash aboard the Turkish aid ship Mavi Marmara this spring approached the Turkish Embassy here on Sunday seeking to compel the captain of the ship to testify before the committee.

The Mavi Marmara was one of several aid ships aiming to deliver supplies to Gaza in violation of an Israeli naval blockade. In an effort to prevent it from reaching Gaza, Israeli navy commandos boarded the ship on May 31, and were met with violence. Nine Turkish activists were killed in the ensuing clash. Israel appointed a commission of investigation, headed by former justice Jacob Turkel, to probe the incident.

The panel's co-ordinator, attorney Hoshea Gottlieb, submitted an official request to the Turkish Embassy in Israel: "The public commission to examine the maritime incident of May 31, 2010, wishes to invite Mr. Halid Terzi, who served as the captain of the Mavi Marmara during the incident which the committee is examining, in order to hear his testimony regarding the incident."

On Monday, the chair of Israel's National Security Council, Uzi Arad, testified before the Turkel committee behind closed doors. Mossad director Meir Dagan was expected to testify on Tuesday, and Foreign Ministry director general Yossi Gal was scheduled to testify later this week.



Israel Briefs

Castro criticizes Ahmadinejad

Israeli media reported that Cuban leader Fidel Castro criticized Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for denying the Holocaust and promoting anti-Semitism. In a wide-ranging interview with *Atlantic* reporter Jeffrey Goldberg, Castro, a frequent critic of Israel, said the Iranian government could encourage peace by acknowledging the "unique" history of anti-Semitism and trying to understand why Israelis fear for their existence. "I think their culture and religion kept them together as a nation," Castro said of the Jewish people, adding that "the Jews have lived an existence that is much harder than ours. There is nothing that compares to the Holocaust." Castro said he does not believe Iran will back down on its pursuit of nuclear weapons, despite sanctions and threats of an Israeli attack.

"This problem is not going to get resolved, because the Iranians are not going to back down in the face of threats. The Iranian capacity to inflict damage is not appreciated."

Shell fired from Gaza

A mortar shell fired from Gaza exploded between two day-care centres in a southern Israeli kibbutz. The shell landed on the morning of Sept. 8, shortly before the children were supposed to arrive. Several teachers were in the buildings at the time of the attack. There were no injuries, though one of the buildings reportedly sustained damage. It was the third rocket fired from Gaza in the past three days. A Qassam rocket fired from Gaza struck Sderot at 2 a.m. on Sept. 7. The attacks come following the start of direct peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians on Sept. 2.

Hamas threatens the PA

Hamas said it would strike the Palestinian Authority if the PA does not stop arresting its West Bank followers. In an announcement released on Sept. 8 and reported by Israel Radio, Hamas threatened the Palestinian Authority. "You know that the hands that have reached the heart of the occupier can reach you, too," the announcement said, adding that Hamas can strike anytime and anywhere it wants. The announcement by the terrorist group came after PA President Mahmoud Abbas' security forces arrested at least six Hamas suspects in two attacks on Israelis driving in the West Bank last week. Four Israelis were killed in a shooting attack near Hebron on Aug. 31, and two were injured in a similar attack near Ramallah the next day. Hamas stepped up its attacks on Israeli targets following the launch of direct peace negotiations.

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Israel's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Danny Ayalon, left, and Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas) Peter Kent

Kent has working tour of Israel

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

JERUSALEM — Thornhill MP Peter Kent, Canadian minister of state of foreign affairs (Americas), recently wrapped up an eight-day mission to Israel.

While there, Kent discussed matters of joint Canadian-Israeli interest, including Canada and Israel's involvement with Latin America countries, with Israeli President Shimon Peres, Minister of Foreign Affairs Avigdor Lieberman and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Danny Ayalon.

In Venezuela, Israeli interests have been represented by the Canadian Embassy in Caracas since President Hugo Chavez expelled Israeli diplomats from the country in early 2009.

Congressional elections, which are due to take place in Venezuela this month, have been preceded by a string of anti-Semitic attacks by the state media. "We are seeing again finger-pointing and incitement against the Jewish population, the sort of anti-Semitism that flared during the Gaza incursion in 2009," said Kent, whose talks with Israeli representatives focused on the security of Venezuela's Jewish population. "This would be a concern for Canada even if we didn't formally represent Israel's interests."

Since 1973, Canada has also represented Israel's interests in Cuba through its embassy in Havana. "Our talks centred on the small, vibrant Jewish community in Cuba and the easing of the Castro regime's anti-religious tendencies," said Kent, who was last in Cuba visiting the 1,500-member Jewish community this past November, when 10 Jews – two families – departed for Israel.

"It's now possible for Cuban Jews to make aliyah," Kent said on Sept. 7, his final day in Israel before returning to Canada.

"While Canada represents Israel's interests on political and diplomatic levels, the UJA [Federation of Greater Toronto] and other Canadian Jewish organizations make regular missions to Cuba, and since there are no rabbis [or other community officials], these missions are very important," he said.

Canada and Israel are also working together to pressure the government of Argentina to make reparations for the botched investigation of the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires.

Meanwhile, in Panama, which is a thriving democracy with a growing economy and a strong Jewish community, Canadian-Israeli interests are economic.

Latin American security is also a matter of joint Canadian-Israeli concern. As permanent observers of the Organization of American States, both Canada and Israel are involved in tackling the region's transnational crime, including drug trafficking, an issue that made it onto the agenda of the G8 countries' meeting in the Muskoka region of Ontario in June.

Another area of Canadian and Israeli mutual interest is the involvement of Latin states with Iran. "We share concerns about Iran's contacts in Latin American governments, and we had the opportunity to talk about [how to enforce] UN Security Council Resolution 1929," said Kent, referring to the resolution that was adopted in June involving sanctions against Iran.

While in Israel, Kent met with Palestinian Authority Minister of Foreign Affairs Riad Malki, to review progress on Canada's $300-million assistance package to support PA efforts in the areas of security and justice development over the next five years.

Kent said the lion's share of the funds is going toward the training of a national security force, with the rest being spent on the creation of civil and criminal justice systems, justice training, institution building and institutional renovations, including the construction of courthouses and other justice facilities, in preparation for eventual Palestinian independence.

"We are delighted with our returns so far," said Kent, who visited the central security operation centre in Ramallah, from which PA police and national security forces will communicate and co-ordinate operations between each other domestically, and with Israeli security forces.

The centre is now partly functional, and has already proven effective, as evidenced by PA forces' improved reaction to the terror attacks that took place in the West Bank on Aug. 31. "The communication, co-ordination and response were much improved," he said.

The attacks were clearly aimed at derailing the current peace talks, he added. "They were aimed as much at Palestinians who dream of peaceful coexistence with Israel as they were aimed at those who died. It is clear that the attacks were meant as an obstruction to those who want to travel the road of peace."

Kent said that he was heartened by PA President Mahmoud Abbas' rejections, both of the attacks and of [Iranian President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad's demonization of the peace talks.

"Democracy, freedom, rule of law is a work in progress everywhere," he said. "The work [with the PA] is positive and will yield benefits if these institutions are bolstered in preparation for that day [of Palestinian independence]."

Kent, a former journalist, has been to Israel several times – the first time in 1973, to cover the Yom Kippur War for CTV. But this was his first trip to Israel as a cabinet minister.

He said the Canadian government's support of Israel in the face of terrorism is unwavering. "Our government – Prime Minister Harper – has made it very clear that there is no moral equivalence between terrorism and democracy. Israel has a right to peace and security, and to defend its borders and ensure that terrorist contraband doesn't find its way to the Gaza Strip."

"Certainly not all democracies have been as outspoken as Canada, but Canada doesn't apologize for that at all. The position of our government has been very clear and constant," Kent said. "There is a spectrum of constituent policy decisions that we have taken that are based on principle, not on politics. We base our decisions on international law, human rights and justice."

Finesse needed with 'difficult' Iran: Russian senator

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MOSCOW — Russian nuclear energy support is intended to encourage Iran to play by global arms rules, a top Moscow senator said on Sunday, arguing that Tehran's hardline Islamists responded best to diplomatic "chess," not "rugby."

Describing the Islamic republic as a difficult neighbour, Mikhail Margelov, chair of the foreign affairs committee of the Federation Council of Russia, or upper parliament chamber, said Moscow has no hidden agenda in building and supplying fuel to Iran's first nuclear power plant.

Russia's role at the plant, inaugurated last month near the Gulf city of Bushehr, was aimed at securing Iranian compliance with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN body that seeks to counter nuclear proliferation, he said.

"We do not have any illusions about the character of the Iranian regime at all," he told a Geneva meeting of the International Institute of International Studies think-tank.

"That is why, if we co-operate with Iran in the field of nuclear energy when we do Bushehr, this is how we try to keep these guys playing by the rules of the IAEA."

"This is the only legal mechanism to keep them co-operating with the international institutions."

Western countries fear Iran is seeking to develop nuclear weapons, but Tehran rejects the accusation, saying its atomic activities are peaceful and aimed at generating electricity.

To ease proliferation concerns, Russia will take back spent rods that could be used to make weapons-grade plutonium.

Margelov suggested a delicate factor in the Kremlin's approach to Iran is concern about potential Islamist subversion among Russia's Muslim minorities.

"We have to play chess with them. We do not believe, in our Oriental policy, in playing rugby," he said.

"They are our neighbour – our difficult neighbour… It's difficult to do politics in the Oriental countries, and we know that."

The Kremlin is struggling to contain a growing Islamist insurgency in its North Caucasus region. Chechen rebel leader Doku Umarov this month called on militants in heavily Muslim Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, in central Russia where there has been very little violence linked to Islam, to conduct attacks.

Iran remains under intense international pressure to stop uranium enrichment, something the West says it no longer needs to do, since it can acquire nuclear fuel from abroad.

Moscow is also struggling to balance trade ties with Tehran and warmer relations with the United States, which is eager for Kremlin support to rein in Iranian nuclear activities.

Tehran's refusal to cease enrichment has resulted in a series of UN sanctions and tougher unilateral measures by the United States, the European Union and others.

In a report earlier this month, the IAEA said Iran is pressing on with its nuclear program in defiance of the sanctions and hampering the UN nuclear watchdog's work by barring some inspectors.

Iran has voiced anger over Moscow's backing of the sanctions in the Security Council, where Russia holds veto power.

Tehran continues to defy UN

Continued from page 1

"We request the director general to immediately reconsider this sort of reporting… so that it will not create political tensions," said Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Iran's chief delegate to the IAEA.

The IAEA report noted that Iran continued to enrich uranium in defiance of five UN Security Council resolutions, and focused in greater detail on issues mentioned Monday by Amano – lack of progress on the IAEA probe of the purported arms program experiments and Tehran's recent decision to strip two inspectors of their monitoring rights after they reported what they said were undeclared nuclear experiments.

While all member states select inspectors from an official IAEA list, some western nations on the agency's 35-nation board argue that because Iran has banned more than 40 inspectors over the past four years, a case could be made that Tehran is violating the agency's stated Safeguards Agreements.

The agreements are meant to ensure that the IAEA can monitor Iran's nuclear program without impediment, to ensure that it is solely for peaceful purposes.

Beyond Iran, the board – and a subsequent assembly of the 151 IAEA member nations – will focus on allegations of a hidden Syrian nuclear program, something Syria denies. Israel, which is commonly considered to have nuclear arms, is also on the agenda, with Islamic nations pushing Israel to open its atomic activities to IAEA perusal.

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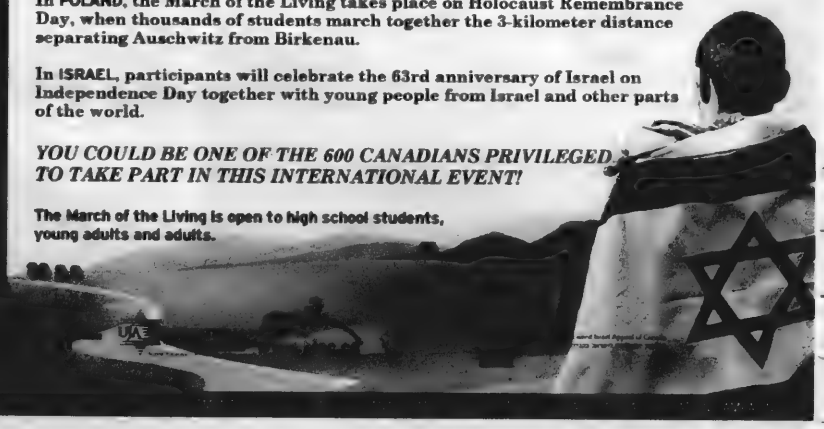

Netanyahu to offer partial settlement freeze

By AVI ISSACHAROFF and BARAK RAVID
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu seeks to adopt a policy identical to that of his predecessor for construction in West Bank settlements – a partial freeze – as the Sept. 30 end of the moratorium approaches

Under Ehud Olmert, more than 90 per cent of construction was carried out in the major settlement blocs – Ma'aleh Adumim, Gush Etzion and Ariel.

Netanyahu will be going to Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt tomorrow for the second round of direct negotiations with the Palestinians, where he will be joined by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, U.S. Middle East envoy George Mitchell and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

The Palestinians have said they will quit the talks if the settlement freeze does not continue, and a senior Palestinian source says this remains their firm position.

Before the 2007 summit meeting in Annapolis, Md., Olmert reached an understanding with the Bush administration that there would be a partial construction freeze in West Bank Jewish settlements. The understanding provided that Israel would not limit construction in Jewish neighbourhoods of east Jerusalem, but would not build in Arab neighbourhoods.

Netanyahu has already embraced that policy in Jerusalem following the crisis with the United States in March over construction in the Ramat Shlomo neighbourhood.

Olmert had committed to U.S. president George W. Bush that construction in isolated settlements outside the settlement blocs and east of the separation barrier would be permitted only in built-up areas, so no settlements would be expanded or new land settled. In that context, virtually no new construction was undertaken in isolated settlements other than public buildings and a small number of new houses.

Olmert also committed that in the large settlement blocs, construction would be permitted beyond built-up areas but only just beyond their perimeter. As a result, thousands of new housing units were put up in Ma'aleh Adumim, Beitar Ilit, Modi'in Ilit and Gush Etzion.

Olmert also committed that unauthorized outposts would not be expanded because they were due to be evacuated. Responsibility for supervising compliance with the understandings was given to Olmert's political adviser, Shalom Turgeman, and defense minister Ehud Barak.

According to a senior official in Jerusalem involved in contacts with the U.S. administration, Netanyahu presented his plan to implement Olmert's policy to Mitchell, President Barack Obama and Clinton.

Netanyahu hinted at the approach at a meeting on Sunday with Likud cabinet ministers and expanded on it in a meeting with Tony Blair, the representative of the Middle East Quartet, which comprises the United States, the European Union, the United Nations and Russia. Nonetheless, Netanyahu did not tell Blair or the Americans that construction criteria would be based on distinguishing between settlements based on their geographic location.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

"The freeze order is due to expire, and we have to think about what is the wise thing to do," Netanyahu said, adding that the potential exists to build 19,000 housing units. "But I believe that in practice what will be built will be much less. We will not agree to be dictated to that nothing will be built."

At his meeting with Blair, Netanyahu said Israel cannot continue with an absolute settlement freeze, explaining that Israel would not build tens of thousands of housing units that are in the planning stages, but would not suspend the lives of Jewish residents of the West Bank.

Netanyahu also said he did not accept the Palestinian approach that if there is no complete freeze, they would leave the talks. The international community views the settlement freeze issue as a test of Israel's seriousness, Netanyahu said, but added that Israel also had tests for the seriousness of the Palestinians, such as recognizing Israel as a Jewish state.

The Israeli prime minister told the cabinet that Palestinian recognition of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people would be critical to reaching a peace agreement.

"We are saying that the solution is two states for two peoples," Netanyahu said. "To my regret, I am still not hearing the phrase 'two states for two peoples' from the Palestinians. I am hearing them say 'two states,' but I am not hearing them recognize two states for two peoples."

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By resolution on July 7th, City Council asked the City Manager to advise Pride Toronto organizers whether the participation of the group **QUEERS AGAINST ISRAELI APARTHEID** (with the signs and banners the group displays) contravenes the city's anti-discrimination policy. Every Councillor present (37) voted in favour EXCEPT Sandra Bussin.

Martin Gladstone who fought to remove groups that hijacked the Pride Parade with their anti-Israel agenda is running for Councillor in Ward 32 and **needs your help** to defeat Sandra Bussin.

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Working For You

A Film Unfinished *plumbs the bitter depths of the Holocaust*

A Jewish policeman arrests a man in a Nazi-ordered roundup in the Warsaw ghetto.

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Yael Hersonski's *A Film Unfinished* is an extraordinary cinematic document from the bitter depths of the Holocaust.

Hersonski, an Israeli, has taken a notorious Nazi propaganda film on the Warsaw ghetto, *Das Ghetto*, known already to archivists and historians, and bulked it up by adding personal commentary and additional footage.

Hersonski's 88-minute documentary opens in Toronto on Sept. 23 at the newly opened Bell Lightbox. It is by turns riveting, horrifying and heartbreaking.

In May 1942, about two months before many of the ghetto's Jewish inhabitants were deported to and murdered in the Treblinka death camp in Poland, the Nazis dispatched a film crew into the overcrowded ghetto, hoping to compile a celluloid record of it before its liquidation. *Das Ghetto*, however, was not completed, much less edited.

Found in a German archive in 1954, *Das Ghetto*, apparently the longest documentary movie ever filmed in the Warsaw ghetto, was widely regarded as historically accurate. In fact, some of its pivotal scenes were deliberately staged and sanitized to distort reality and thereby mislead viewers.

Cynical as always, the Nazis had an agenda, hoping that *Das Ghetto* would be accepted as the gospel truth about the lives of Jews in the Warsaw ghetto.

Hersonski shatters their machinations, blending raw footage with sharp observations and revealing interviews with both Jewish survivors and the German cameraman who shot *Das Ghetto*.

One of the most striking documentaries ever to emerge from the Holocaust, *A Film Unfinished* takes you into the inferno that was the ghetto.

Approximately 500,000 Jews were crammed into the ghetto, which was less than three square miles in size. A miserable holding pen until its ragged inmates could be deported and killed, it was plagued by rampant hunger and disease. Given its inhumane conditions, tens of thousands of Jews died before they could be deported.

After the 1942 roundups, 100,000 Jews remained in the ghetto. When the Nazis ordered further deportations in 1943, the ghetto erupted in revolt. The rebellion was mercilessly crushed.

The most unforgettable images in *A Film Unfinished* are those of famished Jews staring listlessly into the camera. They must have realized that their chances of survival were nonexistent. Their faces speak volumes.

There are also flickering images of street crowds, beggars clad in rags, well-dressed people walking jauntily on strolls, corpses littering streets, trams gliding by silently on tracks, rickshaws carrying passengers and horse-drawn carts transporting a variety of goods. Occasionally the images bubble up, almost dissolving on screen.

The staged scenes bespeak a cynicism of profound proportions.

Adam Czerniakow, the ghetto's chief elder who committed suicide just two days prior to the 1942 deportations, is filmed in his office greeting a delegation of bearded Orthodox Jews. As Hersonski observes in her narration, Czerniakow recounted this faux encounter in his diary.

In a bid to "beautify" the ghetto, the Germans shot footage of a nightclub, a restaurant and a shop.

The nightclub flows with champagne and is filled with patrons dancing to the beat of a band. In the restaurant, seemingly prosperous couples dine to their heart's content. A woman enters a well-stocked store. These outrageous make-believe scenes leave the impression that life is good in the ghetto.

The roaming camera also pans on Jewish policemen arresting Jews (the oppressors and the oppressed would both be murdered in due course), a ritual circumcision ceremony (pity the Jewish baby who had the misfortune of being born in 1942), and Talmud Torah students deep in the throes of their studies (we can safely assume that they did not survive the Nazi occupation).

In a compelling clip, naked men, followed by nude women, immerse themselves in a common mikvah. This stunning display of immodesty is obviously designed to embarrass and humiliate Jews.

These fabricated scenes were shot by Willy Wist, who become a scrap metal dealer after the Second World War and died in 1999. In a reconstructed interview in German in which an actor plays Wist, he claims that he had no inkling of the Holocaust in progress. In passing, he complains that the lighting in the mikvah was poor.

Jewish survivors who lived in the ghetto as children and young adults react to *Das Ghetto* and recall their lives there in vivid testimony.

A Film Unfinished is like a sponge, absorbing the indignities, the deprivations, the deaths and the hopelessness of the Warsaw ghetto.

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Eye on Arts

By BILL GLADSTONE

AMY SKY FEATURED IN 'CONVERSATIONS' SERIES

The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company opens its 2010-11 season with the return of its Conversations On The Green series, hosted by **Ralph Benmergui**. Singer-songwriter **Amy Sky** is featured on Monday, Sept. 20, 7:30 p.m.

The series continues with film director and producer **Norman Jewison** (Oct. 4), lawyer-author **Edward Greenspan** (Dec. 6), theatre impresario **David Mirvish** (April 11, 2011) and media personality **Jeanne Beker** (May 16, 2011). The series is co-sponsored by the Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Toronto. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre, 27 Front St. E. Tickets are $37 per event, available at the door.

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Arts in Brief

• Swedish violinist **Semmy Stahlhammer** reads from his book *Codename Barber*, detailing the exploits of his partisan father during World War II, then performs klezmer with cellist **Isabel Bloomme**. Miles Nadal JCC. Thursday, Sept. 16, 7:30 p.m. Free. 416-924-6211, ext. 154. The Stahlhammer Swedish Klezmer Band also performs at Temple Emanu-El, 120 Old Colony Rd., Sunday, Sept. 19, 7 p.m. 416-449-3880.

• **Sara Kamin**, **Amy Campbell**, **Stef Lang** and **Kristin Sweetland** perform at the Rivoli, 334 Queen St. W., Thursday, Sept. 16. Doors open 8:30 p.m., show 9 p.m. $10.

• The documentary *100 Voices: A Journey Home*, chronicles the journey of six cantors from United States and Canada who visit Poland to learn more about the Jewish life and culture that once thrived there.The film is being screened at the Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Grande, Cineplex Odeon Varsity Cinemas and Silver City Richmond Hill on the evening of Monday, Sept. 20. Toronto cantor **Simon Spiro** introduces the film at the Sheppard Grande. www.cineplex.com/events

• Toronto Jewish Film Society screens *The Wooden Gun* (*Roveh Huliot*), a gripping coming-of-age drama set in 1950s Tel Aviv. With guest **Mark Clamen**. Sunday, Sept. 26, 4 and 7:30 p.m. $15-$10. Rush seats on sale 15 minutes before each screening. 416-924-6211, ext. 606, film@mnjcc.org

• • •

At the Galleries

• Koffler Centre of the Arts presents MIXEDFIT, an off-site exhibition featuring the works of artists **Millie Chen**, **Emelie Changur**, **Hannah Claus**, **Stefan Hoffmann** and **Dan Perjovschi**. The works have been silkscreened onto T-shirts, which are for sale. Opening reception and fashion show is at Balisi, 711 Queen St. W., Tuesday, Sept. 21, 7 to 9 p.m. The exhibition continues at four Balisi stores to Nov. 28.

• Artist **Miron Semec** (1959-2005) struggled with life and found solace in art. An exhibition titled *{Disabilities} Enabling Abilities* showcases 51 of his works, some of which seem to bear homage to **Chagall**, **Modigliani** and **Van Gogh**. Bezpala Brown Gallery, 17 Church St. Reception and silent auction, Sept. 22, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. 416-907-6875.

• Works by **Robert Canali**, **Liam Crockard**, **Alex Fischer**, **Rafael Goldchain**, **Kate McQuillen**, **John Monteith**, **Dominic Nahr**, **Ed Ou** and **Noel Rodo-Vankeulen** are featured in the inaugural exhibition of the O'Born Contemporary Gallery's new exhibition space, 131 Ossington Ave. Sept. 25 to Oct. 23. 416-413-9555.

A sharp critique of Israel's occupation

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Miral, screened at the Toronto International Film Festival last week, merges the story of four strong-willed Palestinian women with a sharp critique of Israel's occupation of the West Bank.

The focus of Julian Schnabel's feature film, adapted from a book by Rula Jebreal, is Hind Husseini (Hiam Abbass), a Jerusalem-based educator from a prominent Palestinian family who establishes an orphanage and school for Palestinian children in 1948. Husseini wants to give them a secure home, a sound education and an unwavering Palestinian identity.

As this politically infused film partially unfolds through newsreel footage against the backdrop of Israel's birth and the violence of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the second character, Nadia (Yasmine Ali Massri), an Israeli Arab from Jaffa, is introduced. A victim of sexual abuse, she is arrested after a racist incident on an Israeli bus. The third character, Fatima (Ruba Blal), a Palestinian nurse and would-be terrorist, carries a bomb into an Israeli movie theatre, hoping to strike a blow for her people's cause.

Nadia's daughter, Miral (Freida Pinto), completes the circle of Palestinian women. For reasons that later become clear, Miral's father, Jamal, an Israeli Arab cleric (Alexander Siddig), entrusts her upbringing to Husseini. In time, Miral and Husseini form a mutually affectionate relationship.

The first Palestinian uprising erupts in 1987, and Miral falls in love with one of its leaders, Hani (Omar Metwally). Considering herself a Palestinian rather than an Israeli Arab, Miral is a passionate nationalist. Husseini, fearing that her orphanage may be closed by the Israeli authorities if Miral becomes personally involved in the intifadah, urges her to remain on the sidelines.

Miral, which is dedicated to people who think that peace, or a two-state solution, is possible between Israelis and Palestinians, is thoroughly pro-Palestinian in its sympathies.

Hani, the Palestinian militant whose views eventually take a somewhat dovish turn, is the primary vehicle for articulating the Palestinian position. He compares the Jewish settlers in the West Bank to a cancer, blames them for the impasse and says they want to get rid of the Palestinians in the West Bank. As well, he complains that new Jewish immigrants have more rights than native-born Palestinians.

The Israeli Jews in *Miral* come off as heavies. An Israeli army patrol storms into a Palestinian refugee camp, while a bulldozer demolishes a house. No reason is given for the raid or the destruction of the building. Miral, having been accused of belonging to an "enemy organization," is mercilessly whipped by an Israeli policewoman.

While *Miral* rallies wholeheartedly behind the plight of the stateless Palestinians, whose grievances must be addressed, it gives Israel and Israeli Jews short shrift, which is patently unfair.

Toronto cantor featured in new documentary

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Cantor Simon Spiro visited Poland for the first time in July 2009 with trepidation.

The cantor of Toronto's Beth Tzedec Congregation had talked about going there with his late father, whose parents and four siblings all perished in the Holocaust. Spiro and his father never made the trip, but the point of last year's Cantors' Assembly mission to Poland and Israel, in which Spiro took part, was for participants to use music as a healing tool.

A 52-year-old native of London, England, Spiro is one of half a dozen cantors featured in a 91-minute documentary about the 2009 trip, *100 Voices: A Journey Home* (100voicesmovie.com). The film also features composer Charles Fox, whose songs include *Killing Me Softly With His Song* and *I Got a Name*.

Spiro will introduce the film and stay for a question-and-answer session following the premiere, a one-night-only screening, at the Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Grande Cinemas on Sept. 20 at 7 p.m.

The timing, immediately following the Toronto International Film Festival, is coincidental, said Spiro in an interview at his home. The film will be also be screened at SilverCity Richmond Hill, and Cineplex Odeon Varsity Cinemas. Information about screenings in Ottawa and Montreal is available at www.cineplex.com/events.

As well, the movie, which highlights the resurgence of Jewish culture in Poland, is being screened from Sept. 22 to 28 in New York and Los Angeles to qualify for Academy Awards consideration, and on Sept. 21 only, in almost 500 American cities.

The Cantors Assembly, which is affiliated with the Conservative movement, is the largest cantors' organization in the world.

Participating cantors were accompanied by congregants, including a Toronto contingent organized by Spiro's wife Aliza, herself a Conservative cantor who now works as a singer and songwriter.

Cantors Beny Maissner of Holy Blossom Temple and Eric Moses of Beth Sholom Synagogue also took part.

Among the most memorable parts of the trip for Spiro was an evening at Warsaw's opera house. There's never been Jewish music there, he said. That night, the Polish national anthem and *Hatikvah* were both on the program.

Thousands of Polish non-Jews attended the event, Aliza said.

The program started with non-Jewish children from Poland singing *Ani Ma'amin*, together with Jewish children from California.

Spiro, who performed cantorial music "exactly the way it was on the original record recorded in 1920," said that the evening was "amazing."

The film also shows a memorial service at the gates of Auschwitz, paying tribute to the 1,300 cantors who perished in the Holocaust.

Poland – Warsaw in particular – was the epicentre of Yiddishkeit before the war, said Spiro, who experienced "a roller coaster" of emotions when he was there.

Thinking about his father's carefree childhood, he was disheartened by the staggering loss of Jewish life, and particularly by the contrast between badly neglected Jewish cemeteries and lovingly tended Catholic ones. As well, he said, there was guilt that accompanied lighter moments.

Cantor Simon Spiro, front right, with his wife Aliza beside him, attended a service at the Auschwitz barracks.

But Spiro said he had to go back to bear witness and pay homage to those who perished. "Every Jewish person must go there," he said. This year, he and Aliza returned to Poland with a group of 45 people to show them what the 2009 group had seen. He said it was easier the second time, although it was still difficult.

"It's not about who won and who lost," said Spiro. "But I have to be [there] with a kippah on my head. The Holocaust is the largest calamity that ever befell the Jewish people, and I'm here."

— With files from JTA

Arts & Travel

Leonard Cohen's '72 tour documented on DVD

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

It's April 21, 1972, and Leonard Cohen is backstage weeping, visibly moved after an emotional concert in Jerusalem that ended a 20-city European tour.

The month-long tour was filmed by veteran English filmmaker Tony Palmer and released in 1974 as *Bird on a Wire*. After a brief, limited run, the movie seemingly disappeared. However, last year the original raw footage was re-discovered and Palmer was able to restore this historic movie for DVD release

Bird on a Wire is an amazing documentary of the Canadian troubadour in his prime. Palmer was given complete and intimate access to Cohen, filming him on stage, backstage, on the bus and in hotel rooms. In one scene, we see Cohen sitting on the ground, smoking a hookah in the Old City of Jerusalem, taking it all in like any other tourist.

Poster advertising the Israeli shows

The movie begins a couple days before the Jerusalem concert, at a sport hall in Tel Aviv where Cohen is performing. There seems to be a lot of commotion offstage, and we see Cohen berating the hall security "the men in orange" for their heavy-handed tactics in keeping people back from the stage. "Let's not end this in violence," he says. "There's no point in starting a war right now."

"They were nasty, those people," he says backstage about the security after he was forced to end the show early.

Bird on a Wire follows Cohen and his band, which included singer Jennifer Warnes, performing at intimate venues across Europe. It's not just a concert film. The live performances are interspersed with interviews in which Cohen talks about a range of topics. From his voice – "I don't have a good voice, everybody knows that" – to the difficulties of performing personal songs night after night on stage, and to Judaism:

"Are you a practising Jew?" he is asked. "I am always practising," he says. When asked if he knows Hebrew, he says, "I can read the prayers but don't know what they mean."

The film shows see him engaged with a young woman with star-struck eyes who's trying to seduce him after a show in what might be Germany, and a similar incident in Israel, with a woman inviting him to a party. Both times, Cohen turns them down.

Depending on his mood, Cohen frequently engaged in banter with his audiences between songs, inviting them onstage if they couldn't hear him well, or ironically invoking the ghost of Joseph Goebbels, asking his Berlin audience, in German, "Do you want total war?"

At one show he tells his audience, "This is the first day of Passover." When one fan reminds him that it's actually the last day, Cohen laughs. "See, that's how confused I am."

That tour of '72 was marred by numerous sound problems. After one show in Denmark, some fans complained to him offstage that they weren't able to hear anything. Cohen pulls out his wallet and offers to hand them their money back. Amazingly, the fans complain that he's ripping them off with the currency exchange.

It's the final show in Jerusalem that is the most striking. Before the show we clearly see Cohen licking what looks like an LSD blotter. Halfway through the show, Cohen walks off stage, quoting Kabbalah and telling his audience that he just wasn't delivering a good show that night.

Backstage he tells his manager that he isn't going back out and they should give the audience their money back. His manger (I think that's who he is) tries to convince him otherwise. "Some of those people out there didn't want to be in the army and kill people," he tells Cohen. "Sometimes you just have to do it."

A stoned Cohen jokes about being "bombed in Jerusalem" and after chain smoking cigarettes and shaving, he goes back on stage to deliver an amazing encore that included *Famous Blue Raincoat*.

After the encore, his fans call him back onstage. Emotionally, he comes out and tells his audience he is too broken down to sing anymore. Backstage, tears dripping down his face, he says, "I've never seen anything like that."

One small bit in this movie was hard to watch. During his performance of the song *Story of Isaac*, the filmmaker threw in needless, graphic footage of people burning from napalm fire in Vietnam. Keep your finger on the fast-forward button for that. I also felt that bonus footage, especially a commentary track putting the tour in context of the time and place, would have been appreciated.

Otherwise, *Bird on a Wire*, out this week, is a must-have for Cohen fans. Songs on the DVD, shot at various cities across Europe, include *Suzanne*, *Sisters of Mercy*, *Chelsea Hotel* and *So Long, Marianne*.

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Books & Authors

Alan Furst is a master of thrilling spy novels

By JEREMY DAUBER
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

Alan Furst

Tradecraft. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the relevant definition of the term is "skill or art in connection with a trade or calling; spec. skill in espionage and intelligence work." As the legions of fans of Alan Furst's spy novels know, Furst is a master of tradecraft in both the general and specific senses. Not only is he an expert in the details and methods of historical espionage – the codings, dead drops and shadowings of yore – but, unlike some of his contemporary counterparts, he is also a remarkable practitioner of the writer's art, wrapping those details and methods in lush, elaborate settings and rich characters.

Notice I didn't mention anything about plot. Not that plot isn't important to Furst's novels, it's just not central. Whatever action the characters take, wherever they direct their attention and blood and sweat, is a very small part of the gigantic operation that lives and breathes all about them, as great powers and armies clash.

And that's something Furst's characters, and his readers, are well aware of. There are no Jack Bauers (the lead character in the TV series *24*) or Jason Bournes (a fictional character in the novels of Robert Ludlum and subsequent film adaptations) in a Furst novel, who get the president on the phone and single-handedly stop wars. A mission is completed, or sometimes it isn't; the main characters learn what it was all about afterward – or sometimes they don't. As in real life, or even in the TV show *The Wire*, the stories are compelling without having to play for ultimate stakes. Process is (almost) all.

Most of Furst's best-known novels, including *The Polish Officer* (1995) and *Night Soldiers* (1988), are set in Europe, in the run-up to and during World War II, which helps the general reader, who knows the historical outlines well enough to let Furst suffice with filling in the details, understand the broader context.

His most recent novel, *Spies of the Balkans* (Random House), though, is set in a less well-known part of the story: the Mediterranean theatre, in the period leading up to the German invasion of Greece in 1941. Furst does a wonderful job of giving us the necessary background and sketching the atmosphere of Salonika, that remarkable crossroads of a city, as the rumours fly and the preparations for war ratchet up.

Those in the know are getting out of town, or hoarding ammunition, or burning files, or laying plots and counterplans. If wars are won and lost before a shot is fired, then Furst gives us an indelible portrait of what the pre-battlefield looks like.

Our tour guide in *Spies of the Balkans* is a senior police official, Constantine Zannis, whose years of experience handling the most delicate of political cases for the Salonika municipality make him perfectly equipped to read the writing on the wall.

As the novel gets under way, he becomes increasingly embroiled in the secret machinations overwhelming the region: the creation of a private rescue line for endangered Jews in Germany, which leads to an operation for the British government, which leads to larger doings in Yugoslavia. All, in their own way, small parts of very big things. But small, covert actions are just as dangerous as big, explosive ones, and the other side is famously known for its attention to detail.

Each small mission, each story within the story, is can't-wait-to-turn-the-page suspenseful, even if these episodes work better as a constellation of images than as a full-fledged plot. Zannis shadows a German arrival who may, or may not, turn out to be a Nazi spy in his city. Zannis teaches tradecraft to a Jewish woman married to a German officer to help her save Jewish children.

Zannis shakes down small-fry criminals for their invaluable connections in other countries. An unexpected British spy tells Zannis how bureaucratic ineptitude means a valued British resource is at risk and in play. Zannis attempts to disguise himself and the amateur foisted upon him so the SS officer seated next to him in a Paris nightclub won't twig to his mission. And there are others.

True, some of the personal touches – Zannis' relationships with various women and an ongoing encomium to his dog – fall a little flat by comparison, but that's why such books are called "thrillers" and not "novels of psychological exploration."

Spies of the Balkans isn't Furst's best novel. It's not on the same scale or of the quality as *Dark Star* (1991) or *The Polish Officer*; the writing isn't quite as fully realized, the miniaturist perfection of the wheels within wheels of operations not as deeply excavated. But that's a high bar indeed, and the secret of tradecraft is that its experts have such bred-in-the-bone quality that even their less than best is still quite good indeed. It shouldn't necessarily be your first Furst, but if it is, it won't be your last.

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Multi-tasker merges music with math

Michelle Eisen, 26, performs with the kids' band Leading Notes.

By Rita Pollakov
Staff Reporter

Michelle Eisen doesn't need a calculator to teach math. She needs a flute.

Eisen, 26, is one of four University of Toronto students who started Leading Notes, a musical group that performs in schools for kids aged around four to nine.

The band, which was formed last year by Eisen and some of her fellow Institute of Child Study classmates, includes flutes, banjos, guitars, vocals and a puppet.

"I've been involved in music for a long time, but it's hard to stay involved in that when you're in school," said Eisen.

It wasn't long until she met Erica Coutts, Erica Ellis and Alex Morley, who were just as interested in music.

The group is made up of Eisen, who plays the flute, saxophone, guitar and sings; Ellis, who plays guitar and does vocals; Morley, who plays the banjo, concertina, guitar and sings vocals, and Coutts, the puppeteer who plays percussion, guitar and sings.

So far, Leading Notes has played to some 1,000 children in the Toronto area since January 2010. Their songs are about exploring different instruments and teaching math and literacy.

"Right now we have a song that teaches about the time tables, a song about telling the time and about water capacity," Eisen said. "That was definitely a challenge, that song, but the kids are singing it. You see them singing the songs and doing the actions. They're like, 'Yeah, I got it.'"

Eisen, who is thinking of getting into medicine after completing her master's degree and teaching certificate at U of T, has always been drawn to music.

"This is where my Jewish roots kind of come in," she said, explaining that her parents were into Jewish choral music and sang in Beth Tzedec Congregation's choir. "There was always music in my house, but most of it was Jewish music," she said, adding that she sang in a choir at Hebrew school.

"Singing kind of happened for me as soon as I could make a noise. The piano as well, I think they probably went hand in hand," she said. "I feel like the piano's an extension of what I can hear in my head."

In Grade 7, Eisen picked up the flute. In Grade 9, she picked up the baritone saxophone and last year she started playing the guitar.

"Once there's an instrument available, I want to be playing it," she said, adding that she also writes her own songs.

"[Music] is exciting. It's like when you catch a fish. You get this kind of rush."

But keeping music in her life has taken a lot of creativity. Especially since she likes to multi-task. Along with playing in the Leading Notes, Eisen is also completing illustrations for two children's books she's recently written, which feature insect children and teach life and coping skills. Eisen hopes to publish her first book by December.

"My career path has been a little funny. I have a lot of different interests. I would love to go into music even still, but I've always loved to teach and what I want to do is go into medicine."

Leading Notes, a band that teaches subjects like math through music, has performed at schools and a hospital. From left are Erica Ellis, Michelle Eisen, Erica Coutts and Alex Morley.

With Leading Notes, Eisen can combine teaching with music. And every once in a while, she'll add a little math.

"Putting something into musical form automatically makes it fun," she said.

"I love math. It's that problem-solving aspect to it. I want people to love math, because every year kids get older, they tend to like it less and less until they're in Grade 7 or 8 and feel totally lost."

Eisen finds it easier to teach using song.

"In terms of teaching things like time, that can be really confusing when you're first teaching a child a quarter past two. But this song, everyone got perfect on that part of the test," she said. "[Songs are] a way for them to actually connect to the math."

While Eisen would like to continue Leading Notes after she graduates, she's also started writing music for an older crowd.

"It's been growing. I do compose music for people my own age, but that's more of a newer thing. It was more classical pieces, things that would never really leave my house, but this summer, I've had some time to be inspired," she said, adding that she's switched to jazz and may start performing outside of Leading Notes this year.

Until then, the group should be playing two shows at Indigo bookstore locations sometime soon and would like to release a CD by March.

"I just think music is such a great thing that can be pushed to the wayside often," Eisen said. "It's a great release for stress, a great way to express yourself. It's enjoyable, and often kids aren't exposed to it, especially if they're not growing up in a musical household."

This is where Leading Notes comes in.

"It's taking [kids] outside their box and opening them up to new possibilities for themselves. Even being aware of what's the difference in the way a flute works versus an accordion," she said.

If Eisen does go into medicine, she'll continue to keep teaching and making music, she said.

"I don't see music going out of my life anytime soon."

For more information about Leading Notes, visit www.leadingnotes.blogspot.com.

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Twins' slugger turning into a real fan favourite

By HARVEY ROSEN
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — The unrelenting search for that relatively rare bird, the Jewish pro athlete, has turned up another candidate.

On June 3, the Minnesota Twins called up third baseman Danny Valencia, adding to the list of Jewish major leaguers.

Since the call-up, Valencia has become a fan favourite. In 216 at-bats, the newcomer from Boca Raton, Fla., hit .343 along with 16 doubles. He has also whacked a grand slam homer off American League Cy Young winner Zach Greinke of the Kansas City Royals to record his first big league round tripper and added 26 RBI and has an on-base-percentage of .382.

The son of Michael and Mindy last year had 218 at-bats in AA New Britain and 269 in AAA Rochester, totalling 38 doubles 14 homers and 70 RBIs. According to Twins' manager Ron Gardenhire, who was impressed with the infielder at 2009 spring training, when, as a non-roster invitee, he batted .429 prior to being returned to AA, Valencia can hit both the fastball and the breaking ball.

In late July, the 6-2, 210-pound 25-year-old also had back-to-back games with four hits apiece, a first for any Twins' rookie.

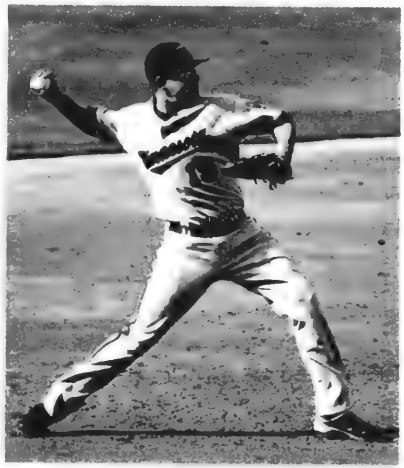
Being a standout at the great American pastime isn't foreign to Valencia. He was an all-star in the Appalachian, Midwest, and Florida State Leagues, and as a youngster, he dreamt about being a major leaguer.

In 1996, he pitched for the Boca Raton Babe Ruth League 12-and-under all-star baseball team that captured the Florida state championship. Just a year after that, he both pitched and hit for the Boca Lightning travel-baseball team that won 27 games and lost only two and won the South Florida All-Star Travel League title.

Valencia continued to develop. He played shortstop for four years in high school and was voted all-county as a junior in 2002 and offensive player of the year after boasting a .430 average. As a senior in 2003, he batted an almost unheard of .575.

Interestingly, during his sophomore year, Valencia played first base for the University of Miami Hurricanes alongside then-third-baseman Ryan Braun, a fellow Jew. Braun now patrols left field for the Milwaukee Brewers. Valencia hit .300 that year, drove in 63 runs and was named to the all-regional team.

In 2005, after Braun was drafted high in the first round and turned pro, Valencia replaced him at third base in his junior college year and hit .324.



Danny Valencia *[Minnesota Twins' photo]*

It was somewhat surprising that despite his stellar performances at all levels, major league scouting reports weren't particularly laudable, so much so that at the 2006 baseball draft, the sweet-swinging Valencia wasn't plucked until Round 19 of the draft, 576th overall.

POST PATTER:

As Blue Jays fans were anxiously awaiting a major trade as the July 31 trade deadline approached, Canada's only major league team acquired veteran minor league first baseman Mike Jacobs, who was quickly assigned to the Jays' AAA club in Las Vegas. Some ball fans imagined that Jacobs, who was in the Mets' farm system, might well be a member of the tribe.

An incident in the spring of 2006 should dispel that rumour. At the time, Jacobs was having a decent season with the Florida Marlins. In a bid to boost attendance, the team decided to have a promotion called "Jewish Heritage Day." Believing that Jacobs was a Jew, they gave out T-shirts with his name to young fans who attended the game. They forgot, however, to ask Jacobs if he was in fact of Jewish heritage, but he isn't. Apparently Jacobs was very good-natured about the faux pas.

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NBA delegation causes stir during Israel visit

JTA

JERUSALEM — Ten past and present National Basketball Association (NBA) players visited Israeli President Shimon Peres at his Jerusalem office recently.

The visit by the hoopsters, under the auspices of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), generated much excitement in the halls of the president's residence, with staff members vying to take photos with the players.

"We're here to stand in support of Israel," Allan Houston, a former star with the New York Knicks and now in the team's front office, told Peres.

Omri Casspi of the Sacramento Kings, the first Israeli to play in the NBA, was part of the delegation.

AIPAC brought the players to Israel to educate them about the United States-Israel relationship, since they are influential with the American public, an AIPAC official stated.

Peres was given a basketball autographed by all the players as well as an official game jersey. Peres passed the ball to his aides, who passed it among themselves after the presentation.

Other delegation members included onetime Toronto Raptor Jerome Williams, the "Junkyard Dog"; David Wood, who last played for Milwaukee in 1996-97; Dwight Howard Sr., the father of Orlando Magic all-star Dwight Howard; and Memphis Grizzlies general manager Chris Wallace.

The players held a basketball workshop and training session for teens after the visit, under the auspices of SportsPower International, a non-profit organization that uses current and former NBA players as role models to make a positive impact on international youth. Later that day, the Maccabi Haifa professional basketball team scrimmaged against a team of former NBA all-stars.

My father's legacy

The Senior Side of Life

The call came from my sister, Diti, in Chicago in the early morning. "The hospital called – Daddy's not doing well. I am going over now."

Our father had been admitted the night before after a few days of attempts by Diti and my father's caregiver to treat, in his retirement home, an apparent infection of sorts. Getting some enhanced help was posing a logistical problem. We decided that even though it was not what we had hoped for when we had discussed care, we agreed that he could only get what he needed for perhaps another reprieve in a hospital. From the emergency room assessment, it sounded as if his dehydration and infection could be treated successfully and maybe we would get some more time with him, even though his function and ability to engage had been declining for some while.

I called the hospital myself, suspecting that the "he is not doing well" message meant he had died. Many health-care providers do not give messages of death over the phone, preferring to break the news in person. I called from Vermont, where I was on vacation, and when I introduced myself, the nurse revealed that our father had died, comfortably, without suffering and without any attempts to resuscitation, which had been declined when he was admitted.

His era was over. As I drove home to Toronto, I reflected on my father's legacy to all who came into contact with him, and especially to me and my sister. Many who sent condolence messages to me said that even though they had never met Max in person, through my writings about him in this *CJN* forum and my other writings, they felt that they knew him.

Remembering our parents and their values is important to all of us – it is an essential part of our lives and often gives sustenance when we are facing difficult quandaries and decisions or when we want to emphasize a point. My father had that kind of influence on my life through his magnanimous nature, continuous desire and willingness to help anyone in need, and very strong sense of social justice.

When I was thinking of a few stories to tell about him at the small memorial service that my sister and I were arranging at her synagogue, I recalled how every Saturday morning he would take Diti and me to the local public library, where he would read international newspapers and we would find books to take home. It became a ritual that I undertook with my own children, and it sowed the seed for my love of books and writing.

As we left the library, he would always say, much to our childhood irritation, the same thing – "the library is the greatest invention of mankind" to which we would ask, "Why, Daddy?" to which he would answer, "Because within its walls, it has all the knowledge of mankind."

My father taught us to figure out how to fix things (he was an engineer), how to be curious and how to analyze and solve problems. When my junior high school math teacher was on sick leave and we were given a geography teacher as a replacement for six months, my father taught me algebra, as the teacher was out of her depth in that one.

Mostly, my father taught me the value of the human condition and how important it was to be a mensch, of which he was the personification. I will miss him dearly, but his legacy will endure in my life and that of my children and grandchildren.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents (Dundurn Press). His latest book, Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare, follows his previous book, Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey. All can be researched at his website: http://www.drmichaelgordon.com.

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Say yes to soup

About Nutrition

By LISA WEINBERG

As the weather cools down, we start to think of warming up with a bowl of soup – and there are many reasons to indulge.

I have written before about the fact that it takes our metabolism about 20 minutes to shut off. This means that when you feel hungry and then eat your dinner – or the first helping anyway – usually in five to seven minutes, your brain is still firing the hunger cues for another 10 to 15, causing you to continue eating even though your stomach is full.

This can lead to significant overeating. So, how do we prevent it? One way is to make a conscious effort to put one appropriate helping on your plate, eat more slowly and then wait for 20 to 30 minutes before deciding to eat more.

Another great way to slow things down is with soup. Soup is effective because it's hot and takes a long time to eat. It's also primarily a liquid, which is filling. This may be just the thing to stretch out your dinnertime and let you spend at least 20 minutes eating.

Think, too, of all the conversation potential in those 20 minutes. Dinnertime should be family time whenever possible.

So, what kind of soup? Are all soups OK? Not really. If you are watching your weight, then steer clear of soups full of carbs like barley, pasta and potato, and avoid cream soups. Choose vegetable varieties (mushroom, tomato, cauliflower, broccoli, squash, carrot, zucchini, onion and mixed vegetable soups). Minestrone is also a good choice, as is chicken soup loaded with chunky carrots, celery and onions instead of noodles, kreplach and matzah balls.

Soup is also a great way to get some vitamins and fibre from vegetables or by tossing in a few legumes such as beans. It's also a fabulous way to use up leftover vegetables. And most kids like soup.

Don't have time to make your own soup? No problem. There are plenty of great soups to buy. Some of the fresh jarred varieties are fantastic as are some canned ones. Just read the label carefully and watch the salt content. Enjoy!

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. You can also follow Weinberg at http://twitter.com/lisaweinbergrd If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

Returning to Israel: a phobic point of view, Part 2

URBAN WRITER

I present you with Part 2 of my return to Israel as an agoraphobic – someone afraid of open spaces. This article is in honour of you who experience anxiety and wish you could be there in Israel, too, but haven't found the strength. And I present this to you who have made the journey. Well done. Shanah Tovah. Peace in Israel and the world.

• • •

We climbed into a van that would take us to Jerusalem. We waited in the hot Tel Aviv sun to depart the airport. It was clear Israeli scheduling hadn't changed dramatically since 1994.

And then it happened.

A father of a paraplegic woman and the driver of our van twisted and turned, trying desperately to get the embarrassed woman into the vehicle. Her shirt had crept up in the back. She pulled it down. Finally, they managed to seat her as we, the foreign travellers, smoothed out our creases of discomfort.

I was in Israel and I remembered what I had missed. It was the camaraderie. It was all coming back to me – that despite Israel's thorny disunity, there is an aspect of the people that exudes warmth and an organic sense of unity. This stems from the fact that the predominant character trait in the Middle East is hospitality. It also emanates, I'm sure, from the reality that Israelis are surrounded by millions of enemies. It makes sense to stick together.

The driver did not demand anything from the father. The father simply offered up a calm thank you. The three of them – father, driver and daughter – were passengers in a moment where all concerned understood their roles, and like a mother coddling a sick child through the night, lived up to what was expected of them with a quiet graciousness, a Jewish generosity.

I was in Israel and would be there for the next week. That night, I visited the Kotel with my colleague and was encouraged by some of the Wall professionals to join a minyan, give tzedakah, become religious and join a yeshiva. I was annoyed and elated. When else in my life would I interact with such piquant people who believed it was entirely acceptable, in fact imperative, to stand in judgment of others and virtually insist they change their lives?

I was in Israel, and few people I passed on the street wished me Shabbat Shalom. And why should they? Everyone in my sphere was a Jew and such salutations would be far too demanding and time consuming. Would I wish "Happy Canada Day" to everyone I met back home?

I was in Israel and aghast that Israelis are friendlier and far less nervous than ever. I wasn't sure if that augurs well for national security, but it did make for a more pleasant time. The driver who took me to my father's gravesite was calm and communicative. The poor man had lost his brother two weeks before. We talked about it. We mourned together. (He refused to use a GPS. We passed the cemetery a dozen times. It was OK, though, because I was back home.)

On returning to Toronto, I felt courageous at having travelled 6,000 miles, to Israel and then flying another 6,000 miles home. While my week was not anxiety-free, and I have no immediate plans to return to Israel, I did it. Phobics will understand my victory.

I hadn't been in Israel since 1994 and I truly believed I would never return. On June 25, however, I passed through the gates of Jerusalem and I was home again.

Be brave. Take some meds. Israel awaits.

Comment at http://avrum.net

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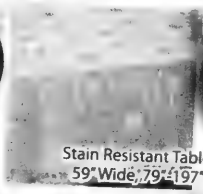

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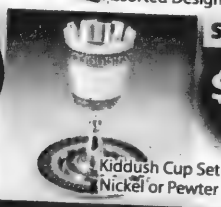

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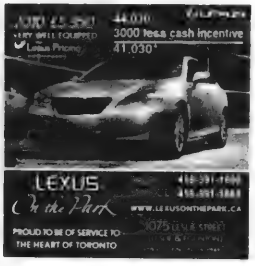

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Russia sticks with missile sale to Syria

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JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu admitted on Sunday that despite intensive diplomacy, Israel has failed to dissuade Russia from selling advanced missiles to Syria.

Speaking at Sunday's weekly cabinet meeting, Netanyahu said Russia's plan to go ahead with the delivery of P-800 anti-ship missiles to Syria is problematic for Israel.

"We have been aware of this deal for some time, and there were discussions with the Russians at every level," Netanyahu said.

Syria signed a deal to buy the P-800 Yakhont supersonic cruise missiles from Russia in 2007. Israel says the weapons pose significant danger to its naval vessels in the Mediterranean and could upset the strategic balance in the region.

"To our regret, the deal is now proceeding in stages, and that is problematic for us," Netanyahu said, adding that the Syrian missiles were part of the reason for Israel's recent decision to upgrade its air force with new American F-35 warplanes.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

"We are dealing with a new arsenal of missiles and rockets, and there has to be a military response to that," he said.

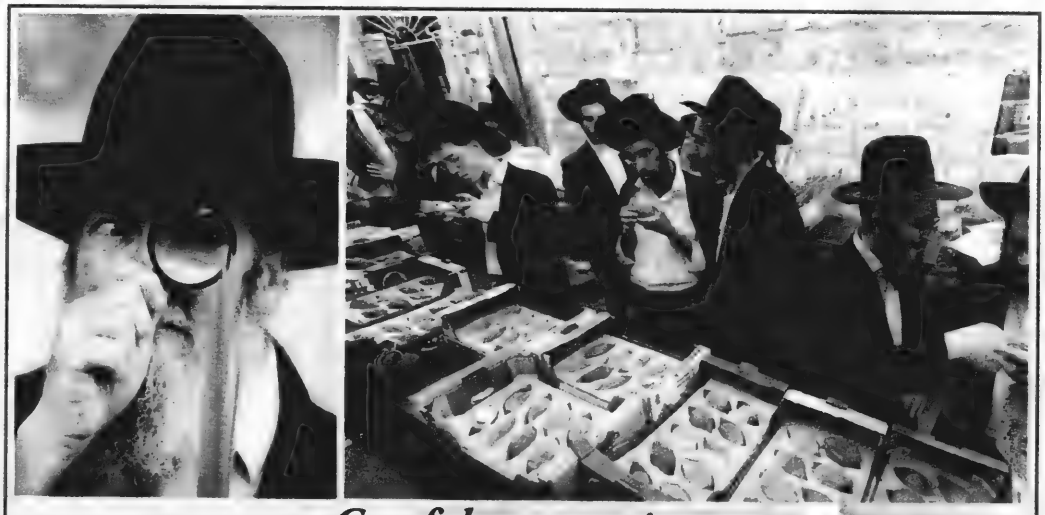
On Friday, Russian Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov announced that Russia would go ahead with its sale of advanced anti-ship missiles to Syria, despite recent attempts by U.S. and Israeli officials to thwart the planned deal.

The Israeli defence establishment is greatly concerned about Russia's plans to go ahead with a sale of advanced arms to Syria, a defence source said Saturday.

"Israel views [arms sale] with great concern," the senior defence official said. "The weapons will eventually be turned against Israel."

The arms deal, signed in 2007, involves the sale of advanced P-800 Yakhont supersonic cruise missiles to the Syrian military, weaponry Israel considers capable of posing significant danger to its navy vessels in the Mediterranean Sea.

Continued on page 37



Careful preparations

Observant men in Jerusalem demonstrate the punctilious care with which they examine lulavim and etrogim before they make their purchases of the *arbah minim*, the four species, in preparation for the holiday of Sukkot, which began on Wednesday evening. [*Flash90 photos*]

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U.S. said to have offered to absorb 100,000 Palestinians – please see page 37

The News in Brief

Canada

New Academic Award

CALGARY — The Calgary Jewish Community Council has created a new award to fund students and faculty at Mount Royal University who are researching the Holocaust and human rights. The $1,800 award, to be handed out annually to pay for research expenses, was created with an $18,000 donation in recognition of the school's Holocaust Education Program, a 26-year-old initiative that now hosts some 2,700 high school students annually.

Greenspon Joins *Star*

TORONTO — Edward Greenspon, former editor-in-chief of the *Globe and Mail*, started a new job last week as vice-president of business development at the *Toronto Star* and the Star Media Group. Greenspon was editor of the *Globe* from 2002 until his firing in 2009. In addition to his newly created executive position, he'll write a weekly column, the paper said.

Drive Seeks $1.15M

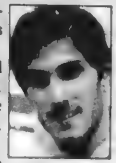
HAMILTON — Hamilton's 75th annual UJA campaign is aiming to raise $1.15 million, its campaign chairs announced earlier this month. The goal for the 2011 drive represents an increase of $80,000, or 7.5 per cent, over last year's total of $1.07 million and would bring the campaign back to the high it reached in 2008, before the effects of the recession began to be felt, the *Hamilton Jewish News* reported.

World

Deputy Sues Sheriff

LOS ANGELES — The Jewish sheriff's deputy who arrested actor Mel Gibson for drunken driving is suing his department for harassment he says he's endured since the July 2006 incident. Because he reported the requests of superiors to remove Gibson's anti-Semitic tirade from the initial arrest report, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has passed him over for deserved promotions and retaliated in other ways, James Mee charged in his suit. Mee said the request by his superiors stemmed from Gibson's celebrity status and friendship with Sheriff Lee Baca. Mee agreed to the separate report, but he was accused of leaking it to a Hollywood website.

Billboard Featuring Israeli NBAer Defaced



Omri Casspi

SACRAMENTO — A billboard featuring Israeli-born NBAer Omri Casspi was defaced with a swastika a second time.

The billboard was discovered vandalized on Sept. 16, the second time in about a week. It was painted over before most people were able to see it. The first attack took place Sept. 8, Erev Rosh Hashanah.

Casspi, a forward for the Sacramento Kings, is the first Israeli basketball player in the NBA. He called the first incident "hurtful" in an interview with the *Sacramento Bee*.

The Anti-Defamation League announced a $1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of whoever painted the swastika. Kings co-owner Joe Maloof said the team would match the ADL's reward.

Both acts of vandalism are being investigated as possible hate crimes, but police said they have no leads.

Union Backs Boycott

LONDON — Britain's national trade union again voted unanimously last week to support a boycott of goods made in West Bank settlements and of firms profiting from the area. Delegates to the Trade Unions Congress also condemned the Histadrut, Israel's national trade union, for backing the Gaza blockade and Israel's action to stop the aid flotilla in May. It reiterated its support for the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Palestinian trade unions. In practice, the resolution, which is similar to one adopted last year, doesn't have much effect beyond rhetoric. Protests outside supermarkets that sell products from the settlements hardly materialized.

Banker Resigns

BERLIN — A German official resigned from the country's central bank board over remarks about Jews and Muslims widely condemned as racist. Thilo Sarrazin asked German President Christian Wulff on Sept. 10 to allow him to resign. The Bundesbank's board had already asked Wulff to fire Sarrazin, who threatened to fight the decision. In his new book *Germany Abolishes Itself*, and in public comments surrounding its release, Sarrazin has blamed Muslim immigrants for what he considers a decline in German culture. He's also said Jews and others possess superior genes.

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MK fights 'war of ideas' for Israel

By MICHELLE BITRAN
Special to The CJN

Israel is facing an entirely new kind of war, a war of ideas, member of Knesset Einat Wilf told a rapt audience of Jewish young adults at The House, a Jewish social meeting place in Toronto last week.

Wilf, 39, sits in the Knesset on behalf of Israel's centre-left Labor party and she serves on the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee. She arrived in Toronto last week during the Knesset's annual break to begin a month-long series of speaking engagements that will take her throughout Canada and the United States.

"The war has mutated again into another arena," Wilf said, "and this time, it's the arena of ideas and images." She explained that since 1948, Israel has been in a constant state of war. First, it was traditional military war, followed by terrorism and then economic warfare, including the boycott of Israeli products.

The war of ideas, Wilf said, is the latest arena of warfare, wherein Israel's enemies seek to undermine the basic Zionist idea of Israel's right to exist as a homeland for the Jewish people. "Israel is a small country, and it cannot survive for long in a world that doesn't believe it has the right to exist," she said.

According to Wilf, the war of ideas is fought primarily in the media and on university campuses. It is for this reason, she explained, that young Jewish people around the world are on the front lines.

Wilf worries about the growing trend of Jewish youths distancing themselves from Israel because of the controversy that surrounds it. "Many people have responded with the idea that if Israel is not perfect, then [they] want nothing to do with it," she said.

"I've noticed a very disturbing trend. This generation has found that Israel is not that perfect creation on which they have been reared. It's a grey, complex reality. Many people have resorted to intellectual laziness and decided to distance themselves from Israel," she said.

She emphasized the importance of engaging in the moral dilemmas that face Israel instead of running away from them and disassociating from Israel altogether. "Being moral in conditions where you do not have to face moral dilemmas is not much of an achievement," she said, explaining how Jewish morality is unique in how it is taught in the context of dealing with real-life issues, as opposed to avoiding them.

Einat Wilf

When asked about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its perception in the West, Wilf was quick to point out that the Palestinians maintain a culture of resistance against Zionism instead of building a culture of construction and self-determination. "Resisting may be heroic," she said, "but it's also kind of infantile."

Wilf, who has studied extensively in Europe and the United States, added that, thus far, the West has been sympathetic to the Palestinians, but she believes this contradicts traditional western values of taking responsibility for oneself and of being proactive. She explained that a nation, like a person, grows up only when she or he stops "assigning blame to everyone around."

Audience member Maya Strasser, 23, came to Wilf's talk after spending a year living in Israel. "I thought it was interesting because she repeated a lot of things that kind of mirrored my own opinions about Israel," she said.

Continued on page 19

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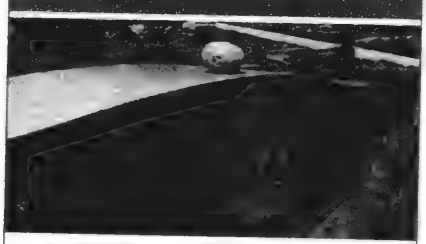

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Hope versus reality

From the editor's desk...

September is a busy, eventful sometimes calming, sometimes vexing month. It brings us the annual High Holidays of Tishrei. Not to be forgotten, it also brings us the high-level meetings of the General Assembly of the United Nations. ("High-level meeting" is a direct quotation from the public documents of the United Nations itself.)

The 65th session of the United Nations opened last week on Sept. 14. At the opening session, the president of the 65th session, Joseph Deiss, former minister for foreign affairs of Switzerland, delivered a stirring plea to member-delegates. His words attest to both the lofty ideals that were the driving inspiration for the creation of the UN and the grotesque Salvador Dalian surrealism that mostly characterizes the organization today.

"I hope that this session will meet *the great expectations placed in us.* We have an obligation to deliver results. The issues to be discussed are too serious for that obligation not to be our primary motivation, which pushes us *to move beyond our purely national interests and truly work for the benefit of all,*" Deiss told the delegates at the opening session.

Deiss focused upon three broad areas: (a) ensuring the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals of significantly reducing poverty, hunger, disease, maternal and child deaths and other ills by 2015; (b) invigorating the role of the UN and the General Assembly in global governance; and (c) promoting sustainable development.

I have highlighted the words that illustrate the hard-cast dichotomy between what the UN was intended to be and what it actually is today.

The original founders of the UN, admittedly most of whom carried a western vision of governance, democracy and human rights, envisioned a world in the horrible wake of World War II, in which individual national sovereignties would not always trump the broader, global, collective good.

None of us seriously opposes the objectives Deiss articulated. But who among us in the affluent, democratic West and especially among the supporters of the State of Israel any longer holds "high expectations" of the UN?

Who among us carries the slightest scintilla of even scant hope that the members of the UN could ever "move beyond our purely national interests and truly work for the benefit of all?"

Two structural tensions within the very idea of a "United Nations" create the dichotomy between hope and reality.

The inherent paradox between inviolate, national sovereignty and its subordination for the sake of the collective is the first structural tension. As we know, as we see even from the policies of our own government, rightly and wrongly, nation-states do not easily surrender control over decision-making aspects of their sovereign independence when they believe it is not in the national self-interest.

The second tension stems from the propensity among the 192 member states in the UN to aggregate in a number of self-defining, self-reinforcing blocs. When it comes to voting in the various bodies of the United Nations, there is indeed strength in numbers. Israel has been the ever-constant victim of such bloc-voting.

Thus, for example the Organization of the Islamic Conference can quickly summon 56 votes, the Arab League 22 and the organization of the (self-styled, so-called) Non-Aligned Movement of states a possible 118 votes.

Of course, there are many other blocs of member-states, operating inside and outside the UN, some of whose principles we might support and whose alignments we might cheer. But they tend to be smaller in membership and voting heft than the blocs we do not cheer.

Starting this week, we will see the annual parade of international dignitaries making their way to the rostrum of the General Assembly.

What they say in front of the rolling cameras is occasionally – perhaps even often – not as important as what they might say privately in camera in the company of other world leaders without the clicks of shutters and audio tapes affronting their senses.

But not always.

For example, it is hard to imagine Iranian Prime Minister Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who is slated to address the General Assembly, saying something privately that will be at odds with what he has been saying publicly, ad nauseum. Indeed the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations has urged UN delegates to walk out on the Iranian leader as soon as he tries to ascend the rostrum.

Whatever the reaction that accompanies the Iranian leader's visit to the UN, the very fact that he represents all that the UN was intended to oppose, proves the wide, sad disparity between the original hope and the disheartening reality.

* * *

Readers will notice Rabbi Ilan Acoca of Congregation Beth Hamidrash in Vancouver has picked up the pen in our monthly column that gives us a glance at life through a Sephardi Window. Rabbi Yehiel Ben Ayon can no longer continue with the column. We thank him effusively from the bottom of our hearts for having been our teacher, for having written so well, for having cared and communicated with such love about the subject for nearly a decade and a half. We have all been his students and how grateful we are.

– MBD

See JN

TEARFUL TIME OF YEAR

An Israeli woman mourns next to the grave of a fallen soldier during a memorial ceremony at the Mount Herzl military cemetery in Jerusalem commemorating the victims of the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

[Flash90 photo]

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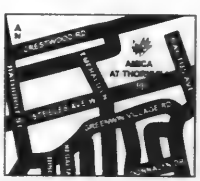

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Greater Toronto Area

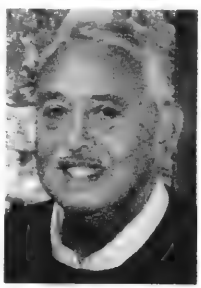
Conservative shuls beef up high school program

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Toronto-area Conservative shuls are expanding the educational options they offer to high school students.

For the past dozen years, Adath Israel Congregation has offered a supplementary Jewish studies program for teens.

But this fall, its principal, Cantor Eli Kirshblum, has enlisted clergy from seven local synagogues to serve as faculty for the program and a new sister location at Beth Tzedec Congregation. At one time, Beth Tzedec had the largest such program among Conservative shuls, but it hasn't offered one for a number of years.



Cantor Eli Kirshblum

Kirshblum, Adath Israel's cantor emeritus, is the educational director of the reconfigured, two-branch school, which will be known as Congregational High School.

The school, which launches Oct. 4 with a combined barbecue and orientation, is under the aegis of the Canadian Council of Conservative Synagogues (CCCS). CCCS and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto are funding the program, and the tuition of $395 includes course materials and supper.

There's no Jewish education prerequisite, although some students in the past have had a day school background, Kirshblum said. Others have attended supplementary school or have not had a formal Jewish education, he added.

The CCCS was formed in 2008 shortly after Adath Israel, Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue and Beth Tzedec left the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the umbrella body for Conservative congregations in North America. Beth Sholom Synagogue, which was previously unaffiliated, has been part of the CCCS since its inception.

Of the other congregations that are involved with the school, Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation and Beth Tikvah Synagogue remain affiliated with the United Synagogue and have not joined the CCCS. Beth Torah Congregation, previously unaffiliated, is also a CCCS member.

Kirshblum, who chairs the CCCS' education committee, said that Beth Tzedec, now the south branch of the Congregational High School, will serve Beth Sholom and Beth Torah, as well as its own congregation, while Adath Israel, the central branch, will also serve Beth David, Beth Emeth and Beth Tikvah.

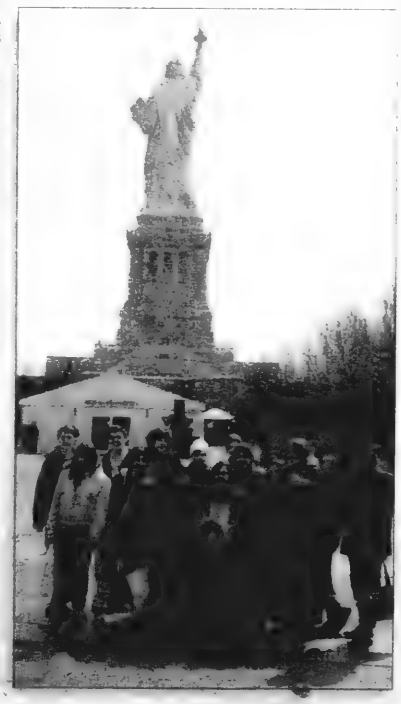
Non-members are also welcome at the school, Kirshblum added.

Classes will run on Mondays from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., with an optional third hour if students want to take Hebrew for a high school credit.

Core classes will focus on contemporary issues such as biomedical ethics, Israel, God and faith, parent-child relationships, and current events "We can deal with topics they never have, as well as dealing with their world from a Jewish perspective," Kirshblum said.

There is no homework, and no marks are given out. Students who have attended at least 75 per cent of classes for the first two years receive a $1,500 grant toward an Israel program (or $2,000 after three years with the same attendance record).

Kirshblum said the school aims to challenge its students and "make their Judaism come alive for them, so they can get a sense of what the Jewish approach is on certain important topics."



High school students visited the Statue of Liberty on a March break trip to New York in 2008.

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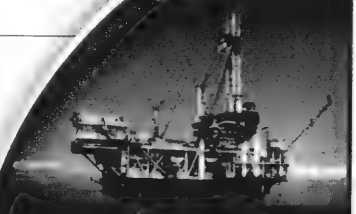

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Moscow mischief may prove deadly

Last Friday, Russian Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov announced to the world that Russia is indeed proceeding to complete the sale of advanced P-800 Yakhont supersonic cruise missiles to Syria. Frequent, multi-level Israeli and American efforts to convince the Russians to cancel or postpone the agreement have failed.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu acknowledged the failure on Sunday when he advised his cabinet, "To our regret, the deal is now proceeding in stages and that is problematic for us. We are dealing with a new arsenal of missiles and rockets and there has to be a military response to that."

Israel and the United States are deeply troubled by the sale of the missiles to the Syrians.The weapons are intended to target Israeli and possibly American naval vessels in the Mediterranean. More ominously, however, as it has done in the past, Syria will likely transfer the missiles to Hezbollah. "The weapons will eventually be turned against Israel," a senior Israeli official warned on Sunday.

These very worrisome security concerns have been emphatically conveyed to the Russian defence establishment. Netanyahu and Defence Minister Ehud Barak met with Russia's decision-makers earlier this month. In fact, during Barak's visit to the Kremlin, the two countries signed a military co-operation agreement. Ironically, in announcing that bilateral agreement, Serdyukov said "It's very important to us that *in the transition to a new image* [our emphasis], the Russian armed forces use the experience the Israeli armed forces have and the work they have done." Russia covets Israeli defence technology, especially that of the unmanned airplanes. Moscow has already bought 12 of the drones and is training its personnel to operate them.

Even Israeli President Shimon Peres' direct importunings of Kremlin leaders have fallen on deaf ears.

There may no longer be an Iron Curtain encircling Russia, but peering into Russia's geo-strategic, geo-political domain and seeing clearly the outlines of the emerging country is still a fool's game. To which "new image" would the Russian defence minister have us believe his country is transitioning? Russia trades with the West, is part of the influential "G" groupings with the West, wishes to look like the West, uses the most advanced consumer gadgets of the West, but still contends with the West with the same old-time Cold War mischief in its heart. It must be more than nostalgia that drives Russian Prime Minister Vladmir Putin.

Putin's decision to deliver the cruise missiles to Syria harken back to the worst days of the Cold War. He has placed Israeli lives directly at risk. Moreover, he has potentially impaired Israel's ability to defend its borders and its citizens. The consequences for the Jewish state may prove quite deadly.

Israel and the West must not place any trust in Russia. The new Russia may still be the old Russia. It simply cannot be trusted.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Inflation in Israel rose by 3.9 per cent in August 1985. The figure was nearly double what had been hoped for in the first month of a new austerity program, but it was one of the lowest increases in recent years. Since the beginning of 1985, inflation in Israel had amounted to 160 per cent.

Dry Bones
HAPPY HOLIDAY
WE TRAVEL TO THE FUTURE IN OUR SUKKOT HUTS
SAILING THROUGH GOOD TIMES AND SURVIVING THE BAD TIMES
IT'S A FANTASTIC TRIP THAT IS CALLED
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CUPW president's views a disappointment

As distasteful as I find the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement and its recent foolish attempts to challenge the blockade, I'm of the belief that it may be possible to have productive discussion with its proponents. How disappointing it was to read the answers given by Denis Lemelin, the president of the Canadian Union of Postal Works, in response to the questions asked by your reporter in "CUPW calls for end to Gaza blockade" (Sept. 2). Lemelin's answers show not only a lack of knowledge in regards to the circumstances surrounding the blockade, but also a pitiful lack of intellectual curiosity in regards to the subject. Lemelin responds, "That's what you say," when asked about the Hamas charter's reference to the destruction of Israel and the killing of Jews. Both of the these subjects are discussed openly in the Hamas charter.

Russell D. Blumer
Toronto

* * *

Murdered 'settlers' are murdered Jews

Two men and two women, one of whom was pregnant – were murdered in a terrorist drive-by shooting near Kiryat Arba, east of Hebron, on Aug. 31. My husband, Darrell Sherman, went to the funeral in Beit Chaggai. He described the event as the most gut-wrenching scene he has ever witnessed. Six children sat at the feet of their murdered parents. The speeches were difficult, especially those of the families. The morning before the terrorist attack, Darrell said that the time of peace talks is the most dangerous time. I asked him if this is peace talks, what will so-called peace hold in store?

The Jewish world needs to be screaming right now. Is our own blood not worth it? Are we so self-doubting that we can't stand up for ourselves? Parents trying to get home, to get their kids ready for the first day of school, were brutally shot down. Isn't bloody murder enough for us to scream bloody murder?

Are the settlers the only Jews mourning these losses? Aren't Jews in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and the rest of the world also in shock, distraught and angry? Why do the newspapers keep referring to the murdered "settlers?" Why not murdered "Jews" of our own country, Israel, of which we "settlers" are citizens? An unborn soul was taken. Six children, a wife, a husband and countless others have been affected by this horrible event. Keep Israel and all of its souls in your prayers. And scream, especially any North Americans reading this – scream, defend and scream some more!

Ruth (Froman) Sherman
Neve Daniel, Israel

* * *

Unfair to Canadian government

It is with the greatest respect that I write to chastise Jean Gerber on her description of the Canadian government with regard to the census form issue ("A shameful decision on the census long form," Aug. 19). To refer to our government as "an evil presence" is not fair.

On the same page as Gerber's column is a column by Gerald Gall, describing Jewish life through the years in Shanghai ("The Jewish experience of Shanghai"). He cites the population count of this Jewish community through these years, both past and present. One must suspect that there were no census forms involved, long or short.

I am confident that our ably staffed and capable community organizations will be able to do their good work under the new circumstances. As before, not only will they be able to determine that poverty exists in our communities, but more importantly, who the impoverished are and how to help them.

To attach nefarious motives to our present government, one that leads the way in its support of Israel and the fight against anti-Semitism, is not warranted.

Sam Mitnick
Cote St. Luc, Que.

* * *

The existence of God

Rabbi Bernard Baskin's column on "The God I believe in" (July 8) is well written and straight from the heart, but, unfortunately, it misses the point. What he is really advocating is the spirituality that one experiences in daily life, for example, in visiting aged, suffering parents, in devoting time to fellow human beings, in feeling love and in the search for justice.

Rabbi Baskin, however, fails to recognize that by assuming the Judeo-Christian notion of the existence of God, one also assumes God's omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence. Now, the attribution of those qualities to God leads to an endless debate about free will and God's lack of intervention in human affairs, even despite fervent prayers.

Rabbi Baskin must also recognize that innumerable other peoples of the world do not necessarily share his view of God. One can certainly feel very spiritual watching a sunrise, but this hardly leads to the proof of the existence of any form of God.

Laurence M. Tanny
Montreal

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1551

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

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What does it mean to be a sustainable Jew?

By FRED WINEGUST

Have you ever thought of Sukkot as a holiday that celebrates the sustainable Jew?

In ancient Israel, Sukkot had a major agricultural focus. The celebration was a thanksgiving for the fruit harvest and the blessings of nature in the year that had passed. Today, Sukkot is a Jewish festival for which we step out of the comfort of our own homes and enter temporary dwellings where we are exposed to the vagaries of the weather while performing the mitzvah of *leshev basukkah*.

As you sit in the sukkah, think about the roof. The schach must be made from some product of the Earth, which is no longer attached to the Earth. Wood of all kinds, including bamboo poles, leafy branches and branches of pine trees, are considered good for schach.

Another aspect of Sukkot is the bringing together of the etrog, lulav, hadassim and aravot. According to the midrash, each of these four represent different mixes of aroma and taste, and in a way represent the different mixes of Torah observance and good deeds of Jewish individuals. When we bring these four items together, they represent a communal whole.

Sukkot is also connected with water. The Talmud teaches that during the festival of Sukkot, HaShem judges the world over its water. On the final day of the holiday, special prayers are offered, imploring on High to provide rain and sufficient water.

All of this ties together harvest, lulav, etrog, hadassim, aravot and water; they are all part of a natural system that takes carbon dioxide out of our air and converts it to oxygen. The plants that we use to supply the sukkah's schach and which make up the lulav/ etrog combination depend on water and are not destroyed in the process, but continue to grow and regenerate year after year.

From year to year, the weather we are in contact with over the Sukkot period changes, depending on the timing of the arrival of the holiday. This small slice of outdoor weather started me thinking about the climate we are living in, and what going into a sukkah would mean in the years to come.

Are we as a people, in the Diaspora or in Israel, taking actions that minimize our impact on the environment and leave this world a better place for our children?

Do we know what is happening to our environment and why? Do we know the actions we can take that can make a difference? Do we know and act? Do we know yet fail to act? Do we act without knowing the reason why? Do we do nothing?

Are we as Jewish individuals, families, communities or as a people doing what we can to influence others to live a more sustainable life through knowledge and actions?

I began to think more about this question after returning from a 10-day family adventure to the American Rockies. For years, I have regaled my family with stories of my late 1980s business trips to Vail and Boulder, Colo. I convinced them of the value of enjoying the fresh mountain air and seeing the snow-capped mountains and glaciers, even in the summer.

When we finally reached the mountains, which are more than 14,000 feet high, my family was struck by the lack of snow and the small size of the few remaining glaciers. I'm sure those of you who have been to the Canadian Rockies in Alberta have seen a similar glacial retreat at the Columbia Icefield.

My youngest son, Zev, wanted to know what happened and where all the snow went. The simple answer to an 11-year-old was, "It melted." The comeback of an 11-year-old, raised on the Discovery Channel and *Mythbusters*, and his four siblings, who were raised on Bill Nye the Science Guy, was, "Why?"

"It melted" was not going to satisfy them. It took a visit to the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR)in Boulder to put the answer into perspective. The scientists at NCAR are part of a team of 300 scientists, representing 160 research groups in 48 countries who contributed to a report titled *State of the Climate in 2009*.

This report documented measured decreases in snow cover, sea ice and glaciers, and increases in air temperature, humidity, ocean heat and temperature, sea level and temperature both land and sea. The report also led to the July 29 *Globe and Mail* headline "Signs of warming Earth are unmistakable" and an Aug. 30 *Maclean's* magazine cover story called "Extreme weather warning."

When the NCAR tour guide found out that I was recently trained by former U.S. vice-president and environmental activist Al Gore to be a volunteer presenter for the Climate Project, she asked me to explain the issues behind global warming to the 30 people on the tour. An NCAR exhibit on the second floor enabled me to explain the reasons behind the melting glacier

I explained how the sun emits radiation and how most of this radiation is absorbed by the Earth and warms it. Some of the energy is radiated back into space by the Earth in the form of infrared waves and some of this outgoing infrared radiation is trapped by the Earth's atmosphere and warms it. Increased levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere end up trapping more infrared radiation, causing a further increase in temperatures.

The answer was more than enough to satisfy the curious, but not enough for my eldest daughter, Tamara. She said, "Cousin Jeff says that all of this is occurring due to natural and not man-made causes."

"What are these greenhouse gases anyway?" added my 17-year-old son, Marc.

No need to answer all of these probing questions right away, as it was time to go see the dinosaur bones at Dinosaur Ridge, west of Denver. Perhaps there was a way for my family to discover that both natural and man-made elements can play a role in global warming and species extinction.

Seeing dinosaur tracks in 60-million-year-old exposed stone took their mind off the problems of melting snow and global warming.

When we reached the Field Museum in Chicago, we saw an evolution exhibit featuring dinosaurs. Part of the exhibit hypothesized that the changes we have seen on Earth over a period of time have been influenced by changes in climate. One of the key displays was about natural cycles of climate change, explained by the Milankovitch cycles. These cycles are made up of natural variations in the relationship between the Earth and the sun; the orbit of the Earth around the sun; the degree of the Earth's tilt; the direction of the Earth's axis of rotation. This phenomenon is part of existing climate science.The observed cyclical temperature increases are not caused by increases in greenhouse gases, but due to natural warming and cooling cycles.

The current theory is that the end of the dinosaurs was caused by climate change resulting from a meteor hitting the Earth. The impact sent so much particulate matter into the atmosphere that the sun was blocked, which preventing the sun's radiation from heating the Earth and led to a dramatic cooling of the Earth. The Milankovitch cycles did not have anything to do with the extinction of the dinosaurs.

The Field Museum exhibit showed that man-made and naturally occurring gases can have a similar climate-changing impact, in the direction of heating the planet. This was my chance to tell my children what greenhouse gases are.

Some members of the Winegust family sit atop the Cottonwood Pass, west of Buena Vista, Colorado. From left, are Zev, Marc, Yardena, Adira and Tamara Winegust.

[Tamara Winegust photo]

Different human-caused greenhouse-gas pollutants are increasing the amount of infrared radiation being trapped, leading to these temperature increases. There are six families of greenhouse-gas pollutants, which appear in various proportions and are being tracked, inventoried and targeted for reduction.

Electricity generation, industrial and agricultural activities, landfill, heating and cooling, deforestation and transportation are just some sources of greenhouse-gas emissions. These gases include carbon dioxide (CO2), methane, black carbon or soot, halocarbons, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds and nitrous oxide.

The measure of CO2 concentration in the atmosphere was below 300 parts per million (PPM) in the 800,000 years prior to the Industrial Revolution, when scientists believe that the Milankovitch cycles operated without the need to accommodate for any human-generated activity.

A CO2 concentration of 350 PPM has been declared the "danger" number. Recent scientific measurements put us at a CO2 concentration of 390 PPM, and the growth in the number is accelerating. With more greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, more infrared radiation is being trapped, leading to more heating. As the PPM number continues to rise, we are seeing the effects of melting ice and the other factors documented in the *State of the Climate in 2009*.

Various environmental accords setting targets to reduce greenhouse gases to 1990 levels, or to percentages of levels measured in an earlier year, by a certain target date are trying to slow the acceleration of atmospheric CO2 concentration and then, if possible, reverse it to less dangerous levels.

My hope is that by gaining a better understanding of the various sources of greenhouse-gas pollution, we can inspire ourselves to take the first steps in personal, community and business action, and become sustainable Jews.

Can we change energy consumption patterns, alter product supply chains, exploit business opportunities to commercialize scientific discoveries, or find new ways to apply technology to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions?

There is an immediate problem and an urgent need to act. There are steps you can take that will have a positive measurable impact. Using energy-saving light bulbs and implementing home and office retrofits of lighting, heating and air-conditioning systems can measurably decrease energy consumption and allow coal-generated electricity plants to be turned off. These are some of the steps you can take now.

As we enter the period of Sukkot and put ourselves closer to nature by sitting outside under a green canopy in our sukkah, we should start to think about the type of world we are living in today, what we will be leaving to our children and grandchildren tomorrow, and the sustainable actions we will need to take as Jews, as individuals, as a community, as a country and as members of humanity, to ensure that we leave the world in a better state.

Fred Winegust is an independent consultant who focuses on the business value of sustainable technology.

Opinions

The threat of piety

Pompous defenders of Jewish rights are quick to label liberal Jewish critics of Israeli government policies as self-hating Jews. Yet they often ignore, at times even celebrate, sinister enemies of Israel who manifest their passion for power in the guise of piety and in the name of Torah.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

Particularly pernicious are the haredim who live in Israel but refuse to be of Israel. We owe the highest respect to every genuine Orthodox Jew, but anybody who abuses Judaism in the name of religious fervour deserves our contempt.

Too many haredim in Israel may be of that ilk. Some are said to engage in subversive activities to which secular politicians, fearing a backlash at the polls, turn a blind eye. We in the Diaspora often collude in silence. Our own religious insecurities move us to misguided reverence for fake manifestations of authenticity.

Thus when Rabbi Yitzchak Shapira and a co-author recently published a book giving ostensibly halachic endorsement to the killing of gentiles, even non-Jewish children, he and his coterie got enthusiastic support from admirers as they refused to submit to a police investigation by claiming disdain for the law of the state.

Mercifully, many thoughtful Israelis do react against such antics. Columnists, not only in the liberal *Ha'aretz*, have expressed alarm at the trend to "Talibanize" Israel.

Writing in the *Jerusalem Post* last month, Daniel Gordis of Jerusalem's right-leaning Shalem Centre wrote about Israel's collective shame when men like Rabbi Shapira and his many supporters are able to get away with it.

Similarly, the mass circulation *Yediot Achronot* has reported that many haredi schools insidiously subvert the Israeli educational system. They take money from the state for undertaking to teach secular subjects which they then ignore. That's allegedly one reason why only nine per cent of haredi Israelis hold high school diplomas; 65 per cent are unskilled and unemployed and often live on the welfare of the state they despise.

The paper quoted the economist Dan Ben-David, who said that without basic education among the rapidly growing haredi population with its high birthrate, "Israel will not be able to exist in two decades."

If observers like Ben-David, Gordis and many others are right, the erosion of Israeli society by sinister powers in the name of piety constitutes an infinitely greater danger than leftist academics who, unlike most haredim, serve in the Israel Defence Forces and pay their taxes, but express critical views about specific policies.

Piety can be a lethal weapon in the quest for power as it threatens the Jewish state by abusing the freedoms of Israeli democracy.

The many messages of Sukkot

Here we are in the midst of Tishrei, soon to welcome in the nine-day festival of Sukkot, Shmini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah. Strange as it is, soon after our new year of 5771 is celebrated, we gather again under the full moon of the Hebrew lunar month to celebrate the last of the three pilgrimage festivals in the cycle of Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot. But why is it the last holiday if the new year has just begun?

Seymour Epstein in Toronto

The Jewish calendar has four different days of new year, and the holiday cycle begins in the northern hemisphere spring with Nisan, while a date in autumn marks the counting of years from Creation, as it were. This isn't too complex for folks who are used to a calendar year starting Jan. 1, a school year starting the day after Labour Day, and various fiscal years starting whenever some corporate structure decides.

But what is it about Sukkot that makes it a fitting holiday for our autumn and that of the Land of Israel? In Israel, the final harvests are in, and Sukkot is usually seen as a celebration of a good harvest. But do the symbols and rituals of Sukkot point only in that direction?

Take first the four species of lulav (date palm), etrog (citron), hadas (myrtle), and aravah (willow). The tradition teaches us that each of these species represents a different admixture of qualities, where taste symbolizes knowledge of Torah and aroma symbolizes good deeds or mitzvot.

The etrog has both good taste and a fine aroma. The fruit of the lulav, the date, has taste but no aroma. The hadas has aroma but no taste. And the sad willow has neither. Bringing them all together in their combined beauty is a profound prescription for Jewish unity – one might even say proactive pluralism. But it's also an admission of human frailty and imperfection. Individually, very few of us can boast of etrog perfection, and those who do are certainly not etrogim. Holding on to each other and respecting even the role and place of the willow, we can aspire to a fullness that none of us can achieve alone.

The sukkah as a symbol is as complex at least. First, its form as a word and its actual being as a structure are one and the same. It must be the only piece of human architecture whose name is also its blueprint. Its first letter, *samech*, has four walls. Its second letter, *kaf*, has three. It ends with a *hey* that is built of two-and-a-half walls. Three optional plans for a kosher sukkah! It's meant to house us for all the days of the festival, but it's flimsy, non-permanent and its roof leaks. Yes, we have made our sukkot beautiful in the various countries we've lived in for the past 2,000 years, but the original plans were for a structure that reminds us more of the instability and danger of nature rather than its beauty and bounty. It's in the sukkah that we wonder how to be thankful even in a year of poor harvests, especially on a holiday that stresses the joy of celebration (see Deuteronomy 16: 14-15).

I think the secret of the sukkah is to be found in a book that we read just before Sukkot on Yom Kippur afternoon, Jonah. In the enigmatic Chapter 4, Jonah builds a sukkah to shade himself from the sun. In the very next verse, God creates some vegetation to shade Jonah, but this time to save Jonah from his own evil. (The words for shade and save sound similar in Hebrew and may even come from related roots.) Does the sukkah, then, offer some physical shade, but cause us to ponder the questions that go beyond the material world?

I could continue with the ritual reading of a book as strange as Kohelet, but my readers have already guessed at the message. Sukkot, like all the other sacred days of our calendar, doesn't have one single message, but rather a complex set of teachings to be learned over many cycles of celebration.

Chag Samayach!

Temporary homes

As we ease into Sukkot, our festival of temporary abodes, the Canada geese are making their way south to their temporary shelter from our inclement winter. I see them graze in large numbers on my campus. York University, it seems, is along their flying path, one of the way stations to and from their more temperate home.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Twice yearly, gaggles of them settle on our grassy meadows, our green commons, lawns between buildings, even sodded strips between rows of cars in our parking lot. Wherever you turn, you see them in large clusters. Then, suddenly, they are gone.

I once remarked to the former president of the university that I sometimes think of these geese as enchanted students, with long overdue incompletes or other obligations to fulfil, transformed into these honking birds and yoked to our campus until something magical frees them from the spell. But enchantment aside, Canada geese share with our students a relationship to our campus that is at once temporary and recurring, a way station between what came before and what comes after. The university campus is something of a home, but not the only home and not forever.

The migrating patterns of Canada geese exemplify the paradox of Sukkot: the permanence of our temporary spaces, the temporariness of our permanent ones. Where is their true home? They lay eggs each summer at the same nesting grounds; they sustain and strengthen themselves on the bounties of gentler climates at the same refuges. They travel in set ways, stopping to rest and eat in the same fields.

Is home where they breed and grow their families? Is home where they take out turf during their goslings' adolescence, where the families find material conditions that best sustain them? Is home the familiar places between those two spots, a place of restorative succor when strength gives way?

During a period of several years when I lived in Toronto but worked in the United States, I travelled twice weekly through the Philadelphia airport. Located amid marshlands just south of the city, the airport was contiguous with a rest stop of these peripatetic geese. During the right seasons, I would see gaggles of them foraging as I exited or entered the airport. I felt a kinship with those Canadian geese, fellow flyers, bound to or away from a Canadian home.

Some Canada geese choose not to migrate at all. Urban spread has created conditions that allow some flocks access to food and shelter even during winter months. Other flocks have established permanent residence in auspicious grounds along what was once their migration path; nesting, feeding and growing all in one area. Still other flocks have established themselves in regions where they were taken by human hands, such as New Zealand. Thriving in homes established by their own volition or by force, they create, if you will, a diaspora community of Canada geese.

Does a trace of the true north linger somehow, in the lilt of their honking, in the unanswered urge to take flight at certain seasonal changes?

The homes we have left, those we have made, those we have lost, those we yearn for, all leave their traces, complicating for us the very idea of home. Whether on a personal, familial, or national level, we know that while the idea of home may be fixed and permanent, no individual home can be.

The festival of Sukkot, while commemorating the temporary desert huts of the Israelites travelling from the inhospitable yet familiar home of slavery to the yearned-for but daunting promised home of the future, reminds us of the impermanence of all our homes and the imperative to make home for ourselves and for others however we can.

We might think of homemaking, then, as an act of *imitatio dei*. The 11th-century Hebrew poet Yehuda Halevi grappled with the unsettling pull of the unknown homeland of the Holy Land, destabilizing him in the home he knew in Spain. He wrote:

Me'az me'on ha-ahava hayita
Az hanu ahavay ba-asher hanita.

Ever since You were the home of love for me,
My love has lived where You have lived.

(translated by T. Carmi)

The Kirshner File

Iraq remains a work in progress

Seven years after the United States and its allies invaded Iraq, toppling the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein and boldly changing the balance of power in the Middle East, Iraq has entered a new, uncertain phase in its often turbulent contemporary history.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

On Aug. 31, the United States officially ended its combat role in Iraq, transferring that onerous responsibility to Iraq's army and police and thereby paving the way for the full withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq in 2011.

In announcing the milestone, U.S. President Barack Obama was true to one of his key campaign promises. Before he assumed the presidency, Obama opposed the war, saying it had been a mistake of the first magnitude and a waste of national resources. Once he found himself in the White House, he acted decisively on his beliefs.

Declaring it was time "to turn the page," Obama said he would focus on domestic issues, namely the wobbly economy, and on the sputtering war in Afghanistan, which has become America's longest.

About 50,000 U.S. troops will remain in Iraq until the end of 2011, less than one-third the number of soldiers stationed there at the height of the "surge" in 2007, when some 20,000 reinforcements were sent to prop up security in Baghdad and Anbar province in the face of a mounting insurgency.

U.S. President Barack Obama

The duties of the American garrison in Iraq will be to support and train Iraqi security forces, protect U.S. diplomats, civilian workers and facilities, and carry out counter-terrorism operations.

Given the current instability in Iraq, which is still very much plagued by sectarian violence pitting Shiite Muslims against Sunni Muslims, there is a better-than-average possibility that a residual American force will remain behind once the bulk of American soldiers are withdrawn.

The reason is clear. On the eve of Obama's speech proclaiming an end to U.S. combat operations, insurgents brazenly launched a series of attacks in 13 cities and towns from Mosul in the north to Basra in the south.

The roadside mines, car bombs and hit-and-run shootings claimed the lives of more than 50 Iraqis, putting the United States and the Iraq government on notice that the insurgency is still a major factor to be reckoned with and that the last chapter of the war has yet to be written.

Observers will not be surprised if the United States leaves a permanent military force in Iraq after 2011. In a recent *New York Times* op-ed piece, Paul Wolfowitz, the deputy U.S. secretary of defence from 2001 to 2005 and one of the architects of the 2003 invasion, wrote that the United States has vested interests in Iraq and must, therefore, maintain a military presence there, like in South Korea and Germany. As he put it, "At a minimum, we need Iraq to be a stable country, at peace both within its borders and with its neighbours. And we should help Iraq to one day become a leader of political and economic progress in the Middle East."

There are compelling reasons why the United States may have to stay in Iraq long after 2011.

Iraq, still a work in progress, continues to be beset by an insurgency, which rises and falls in intensity. The insurgents are a mix of disaffected Iraqi secular nationalists who lost their positions after the collapse of Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime, Islamic radicals from Iraq and other Arab countries who subscribe to the tenets of Al Qaeda and common criminals trying to take advantage of a generally chaotic situation.

The insurgency erupted shortly after the Americans conquered Iraq in a lightning "shock and awe" war whose overarching objective was regime change. With too few troops on the ground, the United States was hard-pressed to suppress the insurgency, which grew by leaps and bounds and which of late has ominously spread into the fortified Green Zone, the centre of power in Baghdad, and the international airport area.

As of last week, more than 4,400 U.S. soldiers had been killed by insurgents, most of them having been the victims of roadside bombings.

Since the surge, American casualties have fallen sharply. But the insurgency is still a disconcerting fact of life in Iraq, and it is highly doubtful whether the reconstituted Iraqi army and police will be able to deal with it without the Americans' assistance.

Rampant sectarianism, the bane of Iraq since the invasion, is yet another reason why an American presence will be required in Iraq for many more years.

The minority Sunnis, who ruled Iraq until 2003, have yet to come to terms with the post-war Shiite order. With American approval, Shiite politicians have taken control of Iraq, ushering in a new political era but leaving a festering sense of resentment in Sunni ranks.

At the height of the turmoil in Iraq in 2005 and 2006, Sunni insurgents bombed Shiite mosques and institutions, hoping to throw the country into a state of civil war. Iraq, for a while, descended into that terrible abyss. But with the surge in place, Iraq avoided the spectre of a full-blown, open-ended civil war.

Nonetheless, Iraq has yet to resolve a political impasse that has kept the nation on edge since the general election in March. The election, the fruit of an ambitious U.S. plan to convert Iraq into a functioning Arab democracy, failed to produce a decisive outcome, leaving Iraq badly fractured along sectarian lines.

Iraq's Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki

Nuri Kamal al-Maliki, the Iraqi prime minister and probably Iraq's leading Shiite politician, won 89 parliamentary seats, falling far short of forming a majority government. His chief rival, Ayad Allawi, a Shiite who represents many Sunnis and who was once prime minister himself, won 91 seats. The remaining seats are held by a melange of Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish parties.

Through indiscriminate bombings, the insurgents have attempted to exploit the deadlock, while the Americans have encouraged the formation of a coalition government to defuse the crisis. Joe Biden, the U.S. vice-president, was recently dispatched to Iraq by Obama to promote a power-sharing agreement, but he returned to Washington empty-handed, leaving the impression that Iraqi politicians are a bickering, self-serving and ineffectual lot.

In the meantime, al-Maliki presides over a caretaker government that seems incapable of fully delivering such basic services as electricity and potable water supplies.

For the Americans, this is a source of profound disappointment. Ten days before launching the invasion of Iraq, the then-president of the United States, George W. Bush, promised Iraqis that "the life of the Iraqi citizen is going to dramatically improve."

With Washington having invested $53 billion in reconstructing Iraq, its biggest nation-building project since the Marshall Plan after World War II, a modest measure of progress has been achieved.

According to a report issued by the International Monetary Fund, the Iraqi economy is expected to grow by seven per cent annually for the next few years. But there is a long way to go, since Iraq was virtually broken by United Nations sanctions from 1991 onward.

Apart from helping Iraq with its slow and painful recovery, the Americans will be needed to contain Iranian influence. In retrospect, the downfall of Saddam Hussein was a strategic windfall for Iran. For the past seven years, Iran has upgraded economic relations with Iraq, meddled in Iraqi domestic politics and reportedly supplied insurgents with weapons. If the Americans withdraw all their forces from Iraq, Iran could well be the main beneficiary, a development that would suit neither the United States nor Israel.

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Bnai Torah celebrates 50th anniversary

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Congregation B'nai Torah will kick off its 50th anniversary year with a gala dinner Oct. 6 and follow up with a mission to Israel this winter, among other activities.

The north Toronto congregation, located on Patricia Avenue, is made up of a warm group of people who get along well despite differing philosophies and who are well-educated Jewishly but still want to learn, said Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky, who will be installed officially at the event.

Rabbi Milevsky became the Orthodox shul's leader 13 months ago. His predecessor, Rabbi Raphael Marcus, died in 2007 of cancer after having served B'nai Torah for 27 years.

Rabbi Marcus' legacy lives on at the shul, Rabbi Milevsky said. "He was concerned for the welfare of every individual."

Longtime members recall previous rabbis going back to Rabbi Shlomo Jakobovits, brother of the late former British Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits. Rabbi Sholom Gold followed him, and then Rabbi Shmuel Stauber.

Founding member Marvin Wenner, 73, a board member and past president, remembers the days before the shul had a rabbi, when as a young married student he attended services in a nearby apartment. Within a year or so, they moved to a storefront on Transwell Avenue.

Mark Lane and his family moved into the area in July 1961, when Bathurst was just a narrow road north of Finch Avenue.

Lane, now 81, recalls attending the congregation's first High Holiday services at Pleasant Avenue Public School, for "the grand amount of $5 a ticket."

Over the next few years, the congregation grew, and it shared the storefront with Eitz Chaim Schools before the school opened a branch just west of the shul's current location.

B'nai Torah members broke ground for an addition to the shul in 1982. With shovels, from left, are the late Hymie Weinberg, Gerry Barron and Izzy Kaplan, along with 50th anniversary celebration chair Jack Kahn. Rabbi Raphael Marcus is at far right, front.

When the fledgling congregation purchased its land, a decision was made that it would be "a small institution… so we could pay for it," said Wenner.

The congregation used a pre-fab structure before its own synagogue was built about 40 years ago.

The women's balcony was added at a later date, and, at first, the congregation had moveable chairs on a concrete floor in the sanctuary, said Wenner. Some of the pews now in the men's section were given to B'nai Torah by Shaarei Shomayim Congregation when it sold its building on St. Clair Avenue West, he added.

B'nai Torah's membership has declined from up to 350 families at its height to between 200 and 250 in recent years, in large part because of one of the values it espouses.

A strongly Zionist congregation, B'nai Torah has many former members and children of members living in Israel.

Part of the 50th-anniversary Israel trip, scheduled for Feb. 20 to March 3, will be a reunion with former members and children of members who have made aliyah.

Jack Kahn, chair of the 50th anniversary celebrations and a past president of the congregation, said the shul claims the largest such group in the city, numbering in the hundreds.

The shul is also planning "a major Shabbaton," inviting former members who have moved north to Thornhill or farther south in the city, said Kahn, a member for 42 years.

B'nai Torah is "still a vibrant congregation," said Lane.

Shul president Jack Martell – 65, and also a longtime member – was particularly enthused by this year's Rosh Hashanah services.

"This was an effort to try to get the whole congregation excited and singing along, and it worked beautifully," he said of the davening led by a few members who had made a CD of the tunes they would use. The CDs were distributed to congregants so they could become familiar with them before the holidays.

In the past few years, Martell and his wife have been involved in a different type of musical endeavour at the shul, arranging classical music concerts.

"We want [the shul] to be a pleasurable place for learning, for davening and for socializing," he said.

The congregation is "working on many different fronts to attract new young families," he added.

Among the initiatives are mortgage assistance, get-togethers and classes geared to young families.

To read complete story, please go to cjnews.com

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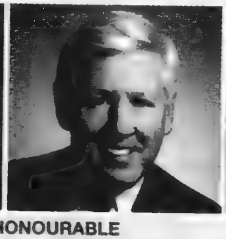

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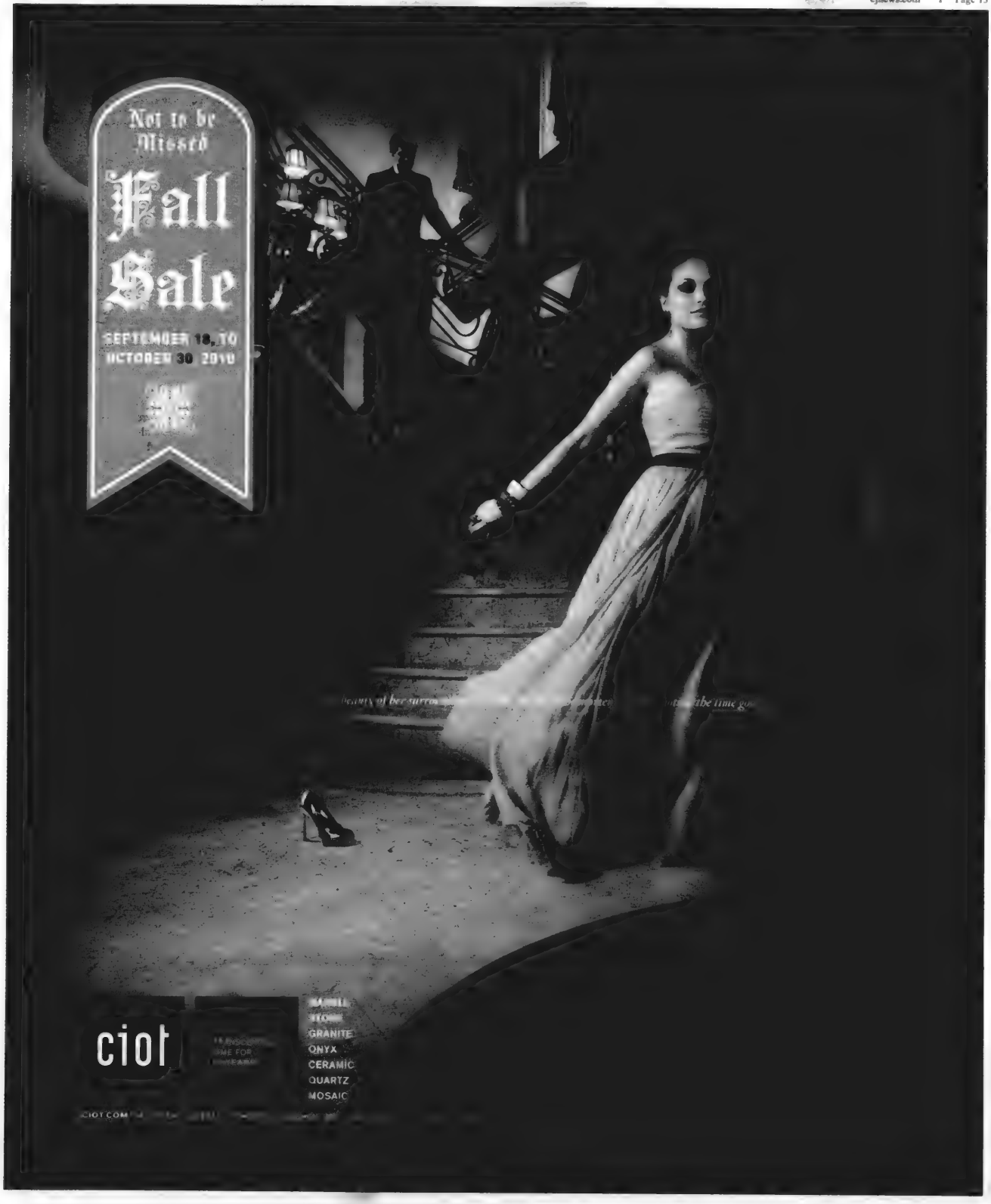
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Holocaust Memorial marks its 18th anniversary

Holocaust survivors and their families commemorated the 18th anniversary of the Holocaust Memorial in Earl Bales Park with a Yizkor service on Sept. 12. Some 250 people attended the ceremony, including Thornhill MP Peter Kent, MPP Monte Kwinter and former Toronto mayor Mel Lastman. Seen clockwise from left are participants gathered around the memorial, Lastman speaking to the gathering, Kwinter, second from left, participating in the candlelighting ceremony with survivors and their families, and children lighting candles.

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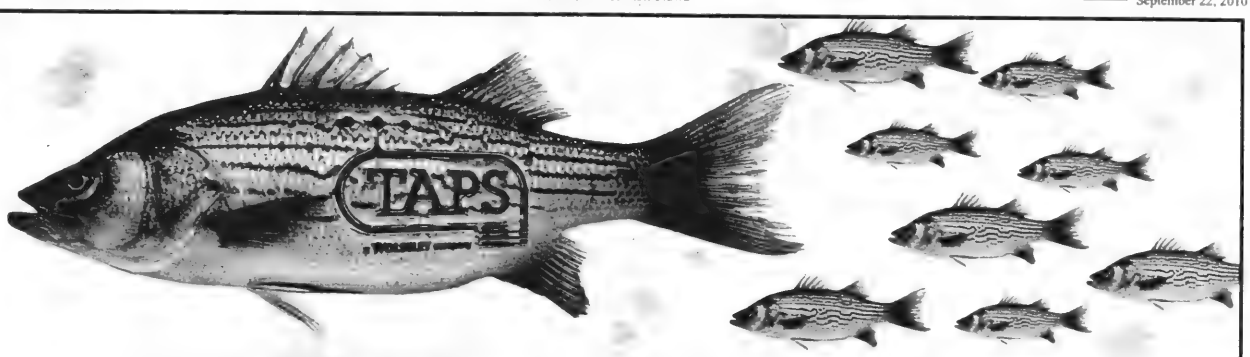

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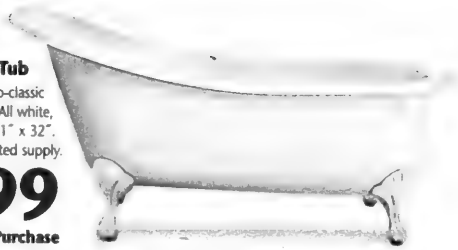

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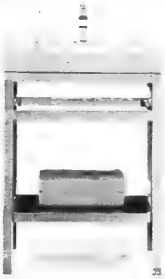

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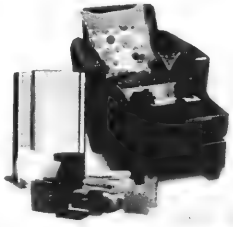

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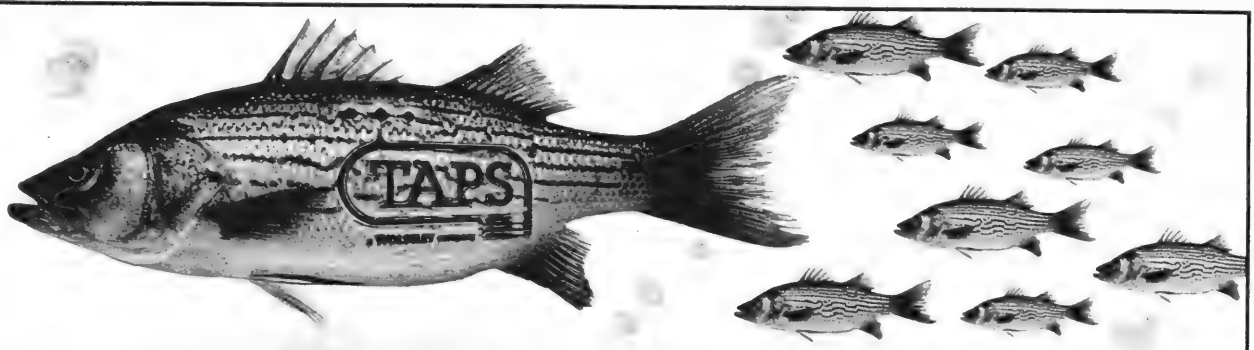

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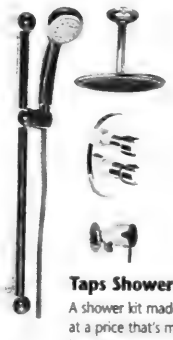

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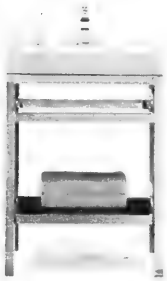

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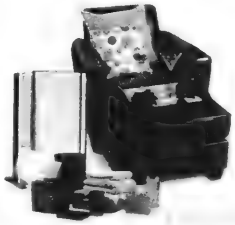

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Time stumbles with shoddy journalism

The Sept. 13 *Time* magazine cover story by Karl Vick, "Why Israel Doesn't Care About Peace," has caused a storm of protest over its insistence that Israeli Jews are too busy making money to care about peace with the Palestinians.

The cover image, with the title boldly centred, is a large Magen David made up of daisies meant to emphasize the "We don't care" attitude. The cover is insidious, if not defamatory. So, too, is the way Vick begins his piece (a condensed version of which appears online): two Ashdod realtors, Heli and Eli, are introduced as the typical Israeli Jews so committed to commerce that they wouldn't dare think of letting rockets fired from Gaza disrupt their sales.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Following this Shylock-like hook, Vick sums up what he claims is the attitude of the majority of Israeli Jews: "In the week that three presidents, a king and their own prime minister gather at the White House to begin a fresh round of talks on peace between Israel and the Palestinians, the truth is, Israelis are no longer preoccupied with the matter. They're otherwise engaged; they're making money… A watching world may still define their country by the blood feud with the Arabs whose families used to live on this land and whether that conflict can be negotiated away, but Israelis say they have moved on."

If they've moved on, exactly what negotiating process is Israel engaged in, once again, with the Palestinians?

Vick apparently isn't concerned about such inconvenient facts that only serve to contradict his thesis.

Indeed, contradictions abound.

On Sept. 2, the day *Time* posted an abstract of Vick's story online, Richard Stengel, the managing editor, appeared on MSNBC's *Morning Joe* show to promote the story and to praise Vick, his new Jerusalem bureau chief. While insisting that "most Israelis don't care about peace anymore, don't think it's possible," Stengel said that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "is a little bit out ahead of his constituents."

But he later contradicted himself when, appearing on media critic Howard Kurtz's CNN show *Reliable Sources*, he said that "there are plenty of people who argue… that, in fact, Netanyahu is just giving the appearance that he actually wants peace, and to negotiate, because really he wants the U.S. to help him with Iran."

So which way is it? Either Stengel believes that Netanyahu is "out ahead" of his constituents and committed to peace, or he believes that Netanyahu's "with them" in not caring about the peace process at all. If it's the latter, then Stengel is, in effect, calling Netanyahu a deceitful manipulator. But he can't have it both ways.

Vick, too, is full of contradictions and inconsistencies. He first attempts to back up his thesis by referring to a "March poll," which he doesn't reference, showing that just eight per cent of Israeli Jews consider the conflict to be their " most urgent problem." Yet he then acknowledges that with former Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's rejection of "a striking package of Israeli concessions at Camp David" in 2000, and the "suffering wave of suicide bombings" inflicted on them, Israelis "saw no reason to keep hope alive." Vick, however, failed to note that current PA President Mahmoud Abbas rejected a package of even greater concessions from then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert in 2008. No wonder Israelis are disillusioned.

None of this justifies *Time*'s thesis that Israeli Jews are indifferent about peace. Israeli polls have consistently shown over many years that about 70 per cent of Israelis are prepared for difficult compromises with the Palestinians, as long as they feel they have a reliable partner who's genuinely committed to peace and will end the conflict once and for all. Today, they understandably lack that assurance. But their wariness ought not be confused with callous, selfish indifference – let alone greed.

In perhaps the ultimate inconsistency of his piece, Vick acknowledged this fact when he wrote of "the huge Israeli majority who in poll after poll say a two-state solution is best, but are dubious that it will ever happen, because the Palestinians won't play ball."

At bottom, what we have here is nothing but shoddy journalism from a major and still influential U.S. publication, brought even lower by its resort to anti-Semitic stereotypes. It marks the pathetic descent of *Time*.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Wilf challenges youth to stay engaged

MK seeks to forge 'new contract' between Israel and world Jewry

Continued from page 3

Wilf stressed the importance of speaking to Jewish youths worldwide about Israel and challenging them to stay informed and engaged. She left the crowd at The House with an optimistic message. "I think, ultimately, that just how Israel has come out triumphant from all the various previous challenges, it will come out from this one, too," she said.

Speaking with *The CJN* in a wide-ranging exclusive interview on Sept. 14, the day after her talk, Wilf spoke openly about her desire to forge a "new contract" between Israel and world Jewry and her eye-opening experience with Canadian support for her country under the current Conservative government.

On the former, Wilf said that according to the "old contract" Israel told Jews in the Diaspora that there were only two ways to be a good Jew from the Israeli perspective: by giving money, and lots of it, or making aliyah. "Today, this [contract] is not relevant to the vast majority of Jews."

Wilf proposed that a new contract reflect the realities of life in an interconnected world. "It should be much more in tune with the lives young people live today, very mobile, very connected lives, fluid lives. The notion that you're connected to one place from age zero to 100 is, I think, nonsensical. People have more of a sense that they can have a relationship with the country. They can come, they can stay for a few years, leave, come back and have professional and personal network."

She suggested Jews everywhere make Israel their first "or second" home.

"I don't mean buying real estate in Jerusalem," she said. "I mean that Israel becomes a major relationship in your life, physically. It should be a place you can go and spend some of your life and go and come back. There are numerous ways to make Israel your own, it's not just about living there all your life."

Asked about her view of Canada in her new role as an MK, Wilf said she found the country's support for Israel "remarkable."

"It's not well-known in Israel how good a friend Canada has become under Prime Minister [Stephen Harper]. And to the extent I can bring that message back to Israel, I will," she said.

Wilf speculated that Israelis haven't yet latched on to Canada's political support for their country because they still, mistakenly, view it as a place hostile to them due to past media coverage of events here.

"[Israelis] still have a sense in which Canada is a place where there is a strong Palestinian community, where there is a lot of anti-Israel activity," she said.

"They remember [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu's aborted visit to [Concordia University] in 2002. So there's always this thinking that Canada is more of a European-style country and less of a North American one. Even the educated class [in Israel] have not been aware of this big change in Canada."

With files from Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf

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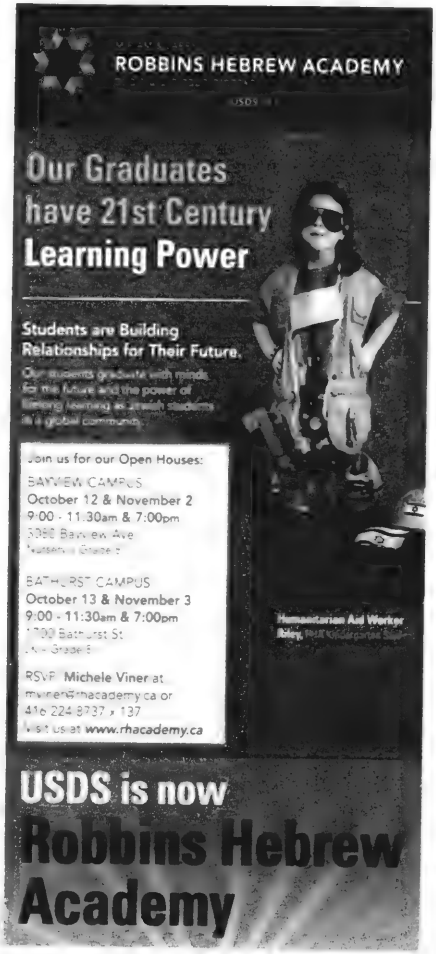
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How do you make a lulav shake?

Jewish & Digital
By Mark Mietkiewicz

To make a lulav shake, mix one quart lime sherbet with two litres ginger ale. Pour into a tall, clear glass. Insert "lulav" (celery stalk) and lemon slice and serve. **[http://bit.ly/sukk14]**

OK, now that I've got your attention, let's look at some Sukkot sites for kids.

Children can learn about Sukkot at several sites written just for them, such as Virtual Jerusalem Holidays **[http://bit.ly/sukk01]** and TorahTots. **[http://bit.ly/sukk02]** Teachers will appreciate the holiday backgrounders and activities provided by the Jewish Agency for Israel. **[http://bit.ly/sukk03]**

Hebrewpodcasts.com teaches conversational Hebrew through everyday situations. Although many of the features require payment, you can enjoy the audio podcasts free. Learn a few words of Hebrew as Rena, Noa and Danny prepare to build, decorate and sleep in their sukkah. **[http://bit.ly/sukk04]**

How many board games have you played that call for "a die, a copy of a Jewish Bible and access to your pantry?" That's what you'll need to play the ingenious Kitchen Table Harvest Game in your sukkah. This game has spaces on its board – which you can that mention food. For example, if you happen to land on the square that says "Proverbs 15:17," look up the verse and you'll find the quotation "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." Then go into your kitchen to look for herbs (or if applicable, an ox). The first person to collect 10 food items is the winner. **[http://bit.ly/sukk05]**

Still on the game front, now that your kids are knowledgeable about the holiday, it's time to play *Jewpardy* (just as in the TV game show *Jeopardy*, responses are always delivered in the form of a question.) Here's a sample: **[http://bit.ly/sukk06]**

Sukkot is one of the three ____ holidays.

a) What are happy?
b) What are pilgrimage?
c) What are high?

If your kids have access to a sukkah, here are some decorating ideas for them. Instead of stringing up yet another paper chain, follow the instructions at VJ Holidays to create a harvest-time "food chain" using cranberries, crabapples, popcorn, peppers, onions and small eggplants. **[http://bit.ly/sukk08]**

The Shema Yisrael Torah Network has Sukkot-related drawings that can be printed and coloured. Traditional pictures show the construction of a sukkah and men and boys shaking the lulav and etrog. **[http://bit.ly/sukk09]** On a page from the Jewish Theological Seminary's Kids' Corner site, you'll find a young woman shaking her lulav. **[http://bit.ly/sukk10]**

It might be a few years before your kids are ready to build their own genuine sukkah, but meantime plenty of miniatures can be crafted from materials such as Popsicle sticks. **[http://bit.ly/sukk11]** Or how about a wearable one mounted on a hat? **[http://bit.ly/sukk12]**

Follow the lead of the kids at the Hebrew Academy of Tidewater in Virginia Beach, Va., and make an edible sukkah. With construction materials such as graham cracker walls, a pretzel-stick roof and Trix cereal decorations, you can have your sukkah and eat it, too. **[http://bit.ly/sukk13]**

Have a very happy holiday.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based website producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be contacted at highway@rogers.com.

(*Jewpardy* answer: b)

Our unique sense of security

CLASS ACT
By Daniel Held

When I went to synagogue on Friday night with my friend, Avi, I was surprised by his sense of awe.

It wasn't the beauty of the song or the flow of the rabbi's sermon that enamored him, but the glass entranceway to the building. Avi is a Turkish Jew visiting North America to complete a medical observership. In Turkey, after the bombing of an Istanbul synagogue in 2003, entering a synagogue is a 10-minute process of identity checks and metal detectors, bomb-resistant walls and double-lock doors. Young men undergo training and volunteer with the Jewish community's security agency and serve as guards protecting synagogues and other Jewish agencies.

I see the newly constructed glass entrance of my synagogue as bright and airy architectural design. To Avi, the glass was unsettling. While he admired the freedom it represented, he also seemed to edge away from it, keeping his distance from the perceived vulnerability.

I am a proud member of the first generation of Jews to live free from existential threat. Not only is my synagogue secure with glass windows and doors that open to the street below, but I'm blessed to live in a multicultural society that embraces my religion. I wear a kippah wherever I go, I can send my children to Jewish schools, camps and youth groups, and I can board an airplane, fly to Israel and return freely a week later. These freedoms afforded by our open society are unparalleled in Jewish history.

This warm relationship with society at large offers my generation tremendous freedom, but at the same time, it distances us from the narrative of Jewish history and from the experiences of many contemporary Jewish communities around the world.

When reading the Purim megillah, many of my peers and I cringe at the conclusion. After Mordechai and Esther save the Jews, King Achashverosh grants them permission to slay their remaining enemies. "So the Jews struck at their enemies with the sword, slaughtering and annihilating, they wreaked their will upon their enemies."

On the first day, the Jews killed 500 men in Shushan. Fearful that more enemies were in their midst, Esther appealed to the king for a second day of amnesty, and the Jews killed another 300. Without ever having faced an enemy, many young Jews can't relate to the fear of the Jews of Shushan and, therefore, struggle with the Purim genocide wrought by the Jews.

In a similar way, we're disconnected from Israelis. Be it Palestinian terrorism or the threat of a nuclear Iran, Israelis have always lived with an existential threat. This stark reality informs their sense of security and their relationship with the outside world. As young North American Jews form their understanding of Israel, Israelis and the peace process, they're often dismayed by Israel's seemingly hawkish behaviour.

The building of the security fence, Operation Cast Lead and Israel's response to the Gaza flotilla can only be understood when taken in the context of an existential threat. When we consider the increasing detachment of young Canadian Jews to Israel, we must recognize the difference between their experience and that of their parents, who grew up with images of the Six Day War, as well as that of their grandparents who survived the Holocaust and Israelis who live knowing the fear of an enemy.

The Jews of Shushan, contemporary Israelis, Turkey's Jews and countless other Jewish communities over the centuries have faced real and direct threats. While their worldview is informed by their insecurity, mine is shaped by my security.

Jewish Life

Israeli wine and Canadian cheese

Hillel House in Ottawa planned to hold its first social activity last week – a wine and cheese party. But the significance of this particular wine and cheese party goes beyond just drinking wine with a complement of cheese, as it was co-sponsored by the Israel Advocacy Committee (IAC) and the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee (CJPAC).

On Campus
By Justin Dahan

The event, called Israeli Wine and Canadian Cheese, was organized by a mix of students involved with CJPAC and the IAC, as well as supporters of both student organizations, which plan to work together in the upcoming year.

"The wine and cheese will be the first of many events that the IAC puts on to support Israel, and we will get to hear some great new ideas for this year's campaign in supporting Israel," IAC marketing and communications chair Ilan Orzy said prior to the gathering.

With their activities, the IAC and CJPAC hope to enable students to get more involved with political figures.

The plan for the first event was to provide an open environment for students who support Israel to meet each other in a social setting and to help build a strong bridge between the two organizations. With good co-operation between the two, we can expect a year filled with many events on campus to educate those who are unaware of what the truth about Israel is, as well as other events supporting Israel in different ways.

These kinds of activities should build a strong foundation for an attempt to ultimately rid Ottawa university and college campuses of Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) and, more importantly, hate crimes such as the one current IAC university president Mark Klibanov and his roommate, Nick Bergamini, had to endure in Hull, Que., when they were chased by a machete-wielding attacker for their support of Israel.

The aforementioned incident has become a major driving force for the IAC, because it provides a perfect example of the type of hostility that can result from anti-Israel events such as the annual IAW.

Last year, IAW was unanimously condemned by Ontario MPPs, who said the event is not constructive. Thornhill Progressive Conservative MPP Peter Shurman said that "Israeli Apartheid Week is not a dialogue, it's a monologue, and it is an imposition of a view by the name itself – the name is hateful, it is odious."

The IAC and CJPAC plan to become the flip side of the apartheid week coin and promote an open dialogue based on facts rather than religious dogma. Events such as the wine and cheese social should provide a strong start for the year.

It's expected that there will be more activities of this type and the result will be a more educated campus at Carleton University, the University of Ottawa and Algonquin College. With the strong presence of IAC and CJPAC, Ottawa should become a healthier, safer campus for Jewish students.

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The Canadian Jewish Shmooze

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http://canadianjewishnews.blogspot.com

Tolerance a Sephardi hallmark

The months of Elul and Tishrei are two of my favourite months of the year. The beauty of autumn coupled with the breathtaking landscapes and seascapes of Vancouver, one of the most beautiful cities in the world, remains striking every time I walk to my synagogue. But more than that, I am excited by the imminent holidays and the profound meaning underlying them.

Sephardi Window
By Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Beginning with Rosh Chodesh Elul and culminating with Simchat Torah, we strive toward tshuvah (repentance). It's a time for introspection and reflection regarding our relationship not only with God, but with our fellow beings.

The well-known acronym for Elul, "*ani ledodi vedodi li*" (Song of Songs 6:3) – I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine – alludes to the love we have for God and God for us.

The Chida, Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai (1724-1807), offers another, lesser known acronym for Elul. The verse "*ish lere'ehu umatanot laevyonim*" (Esther 9:22) – each person to their friend and gifts to the poor – speaks of two of four commandments we observe on Purim. We send portions of food to our neighbours and distribute money to the poor. The Chida explains that during the month of Elul, we are meant to reflect upon our relationships with our fellow human beings. It's the time when we ask for forgiveness and renew our journey with our fellow man.

As a Sephardi Jew, I find that the Sephardi tradition places great emphasis on unity and camaraderie. During the different holidays throughout the year, we sing traditional melodies in unison, creating a sense of harmony and solidarity.

In addition to Slichot and piyutim during the High Holidays, the melodies of specific chants composed by our Sephardi poets are chanted in the sukkah. In this way, the tunes are sung joyfully with one voice, demonstrating our unity with God – and among ourselves.

In my synagogue, we have a beautiful tradition harking back to the great Sephardi sage Rav Yosef Chaim of Baghdad, the Ben Ish Chai (1832-1909). Before beginning the Kol Nidre service, we beseech one another for forgiveness. What a hopeful way to begin this holy day, all congregants coming as one to serve God by tending to our own, very human relationships.

One of the most powerful messages I have ever received was from a rabbi who told me that in Sephardi countries, all Jews had a sense of belonging to a synagogue and the Jewish community, irrespective of their levels of observance. People were non-judgmental, and the rabbi would converse easily with everyone. This Judaism in no way compromised any Jewish law or concept. Rather, it was a Judaism that was tolerant and accepting, *adam lachavero* (each of the other). It's an ideal I try to implement in my community.

Instead of each attempting to press his own case exclusively before God at the price of delegitimizing others, for whatever reason, each helps to ensure his own tshuvah by according love and kindness and the benefit of the doubt to others. The judging of our neighbours is, after all, best left to them—and to God. Only our love, kindness and respect can help them – and us – in our respective tshuvot.

Let us all adopt this important message during these holy days – to recognize the humanity of others and to show tolerance to those who are different without compromising our own convictions. This very Jewish approach goes a long way to assure room for each and joy for all.

Rabbi Ilan Acoca is spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Hamidrash in Vancouver.

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Camp offers alternative holiday service

By SHARON CHISVIN
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

Shortly after moving back to Winnipeg with my young family in the early 1990s, I was invited to join my sister and a couple of her friends for an informal alternative Rosh Hashanah service they were organizing at our Winnipeg Beach cottage.

Almost 20 years later, that informal get-together has evolved into the annual Camp Massad Rosh Hashanah service, a family-friendly, interactive alternative service that attracts almost 200 people each year.

The Rosh Hashanah service initially moved to Camp Massad about 16 years ago largely because it outgrew our family cottage and because Massad happened to be located nearby. The fact that most of us who were involved with the service were also Massad alumni was also a major factor.

Since taking over sponsorship of the service, Massad has proudly promoted it as an informal, participatory, family-orientated alternative to traditional synagogue services. Like Massad itself, a Hebrew immersion Zionist camp that has flourished about 60 kilometres north of Winnipeg for almost 60 years, the Rosh Hashanah service emphasizes the building of community and the joyful celebration of Judaism.

The service, which took place on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, features a laid-back blend of traditional prayers, Torah insights, contemporary readings, humour, song and shtick. It has been led all these years by the same three volunteers, my sister, Leah Braemer, a Hebrew bilingual elementary school teacher, Miriam Baron and Shelley Werner, who provide musical direction and accompaniment. The Massad Alumni Choir, which performs at about a dozen rites of passage and community events throughout the year, is also integral to the service.

The success of the service relies heavily on audience participation. Children are called up to read many of the prayers and responsive readings, and are encouraged to march down the aisles behind the Torah and gather around the shofar blower – a local school principal and Massad alumnus – calling out tekiah and shvarim. All of the congregants are invited to join the choir in singing a variety of liturgical melodies, contemporary Hebrew songs and a few now-classic songs written expressly for the service by Baron and Werner.

In lieu of a Torah reading, a small band of mostly Camp Massad alumni perform a shtick that traditionally revolves around the major Rosh Hashanah themes of repentance, renewal and review. This year's shtick, hosted by Katie Kugel and Pauline Keegel, parodied many of the big news stories of the year, including interviews with environmentalist "Al Gornish," literary critic "Booker Prize" and a clip from the blockbuster movie "*Avinutar*."

Each year Braemer adds new readings and reflections to the service to keep it fresh and engaging, and to gear it specifically to the ages of those who will be attending. While most of the congregants return year after year, each new season also brings with it a few new faces. Many of the newcomers have heard through word-of-mouth about the relaxed atmosphere and sense of fun and community that prevails.

"The warm, informal atmosphere at the service is inviting and makes people feel comfortable," Braemer reflected. "The music and singing invite participation from all members and ages, and there's a strong sense of belonging to a community."

This sense of community was especially evident during two particularly poignant moments at this year's service. The first occurred when a young family brought their infant daughter up to the bimah for her baby naming. The second occurred when about a dozen Camp Massad staff and campers who happened to be at the service stood up to sing a tribute song for Gilad Schalit, the Israeli soldier who was kidnapped by Hamas, that had been written during a camp program earlier in the summer.

Following the service, apples, honey and challah are distributed and those in attendance are invited to make the short trek across the road to Lake Winnipeg for Tashlich. Standing on the shores of this great lake and bearing witness to the blasts of the shofar is indeed a profound experience, although, I must admit that this year, I skipped the ritual in order to help set up the dining hall for the kiddush.

Even this, the informal way in which the dining hall is set up, the simple luncheon food and the reliance on volunteers for most of the event's organization, set up and clean up, is reflective of what both Camp Massad and its alternative Rosh Hashanah service stand for. What matters at Massad, and at the service, is that everyone feels part of a family and part of a community, and that they can freely and fully celebrate their Jewish culture, religion and identity. The atmosphere at Massad is always warm, welcoming and inviting, and so, too, is the atmosphere at its annual Rosh Hashanah service.

This, of course, explains the increasing popularity of the service, which now attracts so many people that, as Baron says, Massad eventually will have to start offering an alternative service to its alternative service.

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Toronto's Jewish community responds to threats against Israel and Jewish life

Launched one month ago, UJA Campaign has already raised over $20 million

By Daniel Horowitz

Taking on the responsibility of chairing United Jewish Appeal Campaign 2011 is no simple task. However, UJA Campaign chairs Sherry Firestone and Jeff Rosenthal, and the chair of UJA's Women's Philanthropy Sarena Koschitzky, are not interested in what is simple; they are interested in what will make a difference in today's – and tomorrow's - Jewish world.

The trio - that participated in a whirlwind, four-day fact-finding mission to Israel prior to the August 24 launch of this year's campaign - is fully committed to doing whatever is necessary to make this year's pivotal campaign a successful one.

UJA Campaign 2011 has already raised more than $20 million toward its goal of $66 million in the wake of threats to our children, our grandchildren and our way of life created by the global movement designed to delegitimize Israel as a Jewish state. Campaign 2011 dollars will continue to fund transformative change for Jews in need here in Toronto, in Israel and around the world. At the same time, dollars raised beyond last year's campaign total will support initiatives designed to instill a strong Jewish identity in our young, including a deeper connection to Israel. In the course of doing so, UJA will provide the next generation with the tools they need to successfully answer the challenges posed by those who attack the core of the Jewish people through their efforts against Israel.

"Thousands of our young people – our future leaders – are not equipped to deal with today's dangerous climate," says Firestone, a partner in Monterra Capital Corporation, and a native of Vancouver who came east to attend the University of Toronto. "Without a proud and strong Jewish identity and a love of Israel, young people simply can't withstand the onslaught of those who seek Israel's demise. There are all too many who opt out of Jewish life entirely. We must take swift and bold action to empower our youth and give them the confidence to lead full Jewish lives with joy, pride, strength and conviction."

(l to r) Chairs of UJA's 2011 Campaign, Sherry Firestone & Jeff Rosenthal, and the chair of UJA's Women's Philanthropy, Sarena Koschitzky.

"Each and every day we, and particularly our young, are inundated with negative messages about Israel and its nature as a Jewish state through the news media, electronic media, and on campus," says Rosenthal, co-founder and managing partner of Imperial Capital Group Ltd. "Among other goals, the current anti-Israel offensive is designed to wither ties of young Jews with Israel. In light of these challenges, UJA is seeking to raise an additional $2.5 million during this campaign."

UJA has already initiated many effective programs in Toronto, designed to enhance young people's Jewish identity, including their attachment to Israel. Additional funds would allow UJA to do much more with these initiatives as well as new programs. For example, UJA seeks to cut the annual Birthright Israel wait list by 50% as well as focusing on sending more children to Jewish summer camp, enhancing Jewish education – both day and supplementary, and much more.

"Experiences such as Birthright Israel have a proven track record, but because of attacks on Israel and the lies that our young are being saturated with day in and day out, we need to act fast to help them combat this," explains Koschitzky, a veteran community leader with a strong family legacy in voluntarism and tikkun olam. "Rather than make small, incremental increases to these programs, we will take a dramatic leap forward with this year's UJA campaign to make sure our young people are connected to Jewish life."

To donate to UJA Campaign 2011, call 416.631.5700 or visit ujadonations.com

Telethon volunteers come together to create one Super Week

By Dara Newton

This past Sunday, September 12, close to 300 committed community volunteers gathered in the Lipa Green Centre's Tamari Family Hall, in support of United Jewish Appeal's 2011 Campaign. It was a Super Sunday indeed, with over $1.5 million raised.

During the subsequent Super Week – Monday through Thursday – an additional 400 volunteers took to the phones and through their efforts, over 4,000 gifts were received.

UJA's 2011 Campaign, chaired by Sherry Firestone and Jeff Rosenthal, is focused on raising funds to fortify our next generation's Jewish identity, including its connection to Israel.

"Super Sunday was electric. I was so impressed with the CHAT students who were so polite and energetic and IMPACT Toronto, who even gave up the first night of NFL football to come and spend the evening making calls on behalf of UJA," enthused Janice Tkatch, chair, along with David Weinberg, of UJA Campaign 2011 Telethons. "These young people were so upbeat and excited to be a part of Super Sunday and be able to help those who are vulnerable from our community, Israel and abroad."

"From nine a.m. until nine p.m. there were great volunteers coming through the doors," said Weinberg. "Before making calls they all had the opportunity to watch the UJA Campaign video, which sings and raps the message 'It's all about strength, courage, pride and love.' The volunteers during Super Week exhibited these four traits as well. It was wonderful to be a part of this Super Week and I encourage everyone to come out and be a part of the community as we make a difference."

Telethon volunteers filled the Lipa Green Centre's Tamari Family Hall on Super Sunday.

A special thank you to all of the groups that came out including JACS, Hillel, March of the Living, B'nai Tzedek, the hosts of the Guy's Afternoon shift - Richard Bennett, Matthew Diamond, Michael Florence, Jeff Rosenthal and Ben Weinberg; IMPACT Telethon chairs - Shelby Draper, Leila Kohn and Jonathan Tkatch; and IMPACT Telethon Vice-Chairs Lesley Henry and Adi Seitelbach, and all of the remarkable volunteers that participated.

To volunteer at United Jewish Appeal's next set of telethons October 3-7, please call 416.631.5819.

The chairs of UJA Telethons David Weinberg and Janice Tkatch.

On Campus

York opens new health science facility

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

It used to be a hockey arena.

Now it houses the latest functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) technology.

Last week, York University officially opened the Sherman Health Science Research Centre, a facility for research in brain and vision, biomechanics, virtual reality and robotics. Planning for the facility, which was completed in December 2009, started in 2007.

The $11.5-million centre, which was converted from an old hockey arena, was named after Honey Sherman, a York University Foundation board member, and her husband, Barry Sherman, president and CEO of the pharmaceutical company Apotex Inc., who donated $5 million to the project.

"Everybody who gives donations has to pick and choose as to where the need is greatest," Barry Sherman said.

"It's York University, an important Canadian university for teaching and research... we tend to concentrate our gifts towards health care. It's good for the scientists, the public and the eventual patients who will benefit. It's a gift to the City of Toronto."

The centre, located on York's Keele campus, is 50,000 square feet and accommodates 150 researchers and students. The facility includes a neuroimaging laboratory with an fMRI machine that's being used for research in areas such as dyslexia, migraines, aging and movement disorders. It also houses a visual and cognitive development project that studies how vision develops in infants, as well as a perceptual neuroscience laboratory and virtual reality laboratory.

Honey and Barry Sherman, centre, who donated $5 million to the new Sherman Health Sciences Research Centre, are given York University hockey jerseys at the centre's opening. Also pictured from York are, from left, Stan Shapson, vice-president of research and innovation; president Mamdouh Shoukri, and York University Foundation president Paul Marcus.

Sherman sees the facility's potential for interdisciplinary research as an asset to the university.

"It's very impressive, and it makes a lot of sense. [These fields] are interrelated. To make significant progress in any area you need people of various [fields]," he said, adding that he was particularly impressed with the neuroimaging lab.

"To try to understand the workings of the brain, you need that equipment," he said. "It'll be very useful in developing that understanding when it comes to brain impairment and issues like dementia."

Stan Shapson, York's vice- president of research and innovation, said the facility will provide an ideal work environment for both staff and graduate students.

"We didn't have these kinds of facilities for them yet, so they were doing great work, but you're doing work in a lab that's in the basement of a building. There's potential for interference when you're collecting data. It slows down your work and you're always adjusting equipment," Shapson said.

"Now you have state-of-the-art labs... [The students and researchers] will be able to do better quality work more quickly."

Some of this research includes studying loss of vision in the elderly, developing a robot-guided wheelchair and building robots that can function underwater.

Shapson hopes the facility will help the university forge connections with local hospitals.

"I think we had four presidents of regional hospitals at [the official opening]. That's wonderful. They're looking at this facility as something that could help them," he said.

With the new facilities and York's existing Centre for Vision Research, which is internationally renowned, Shapson sees the potential to attract new researchers and students, as well as to apply existing research to the health care sector.

"I think [this centre] is going to drive new ideas, innovations and treatments. At the end of the day, the hope is to deliver better health outcomes to Canadians," he said.

Ontario

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE
Ontario Court of Justice
Annual Advertisement

The Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee invites applications for Justice of the Peace appointments throughout the Province of Ontario.

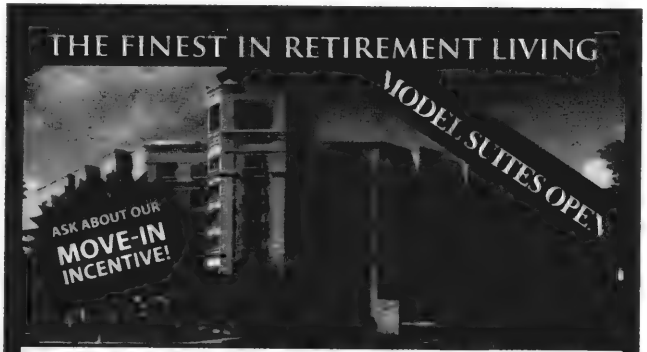
A Justice of the Peace is an independent judicial officer who presides in court over various proceedings under federal and provincial statutes. Applicants must meet minimum qualifications as set out in the *Justices of the Peace Act*. In addition to reflecting the diversity of Ontario's population, applicants should also display the fundamental skills and abilities, personal characteristics and community awareness attributes set out in the Committee's General Selection Criteria.

The Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee reviews and evaluates applications and classifies candidates as "Not Qualified", "Qualified" or "Highly Qualified". Classifications are reported to the Attorney General, who recommends candidates for Order-in-Council appointments to the Ontario Court of Justice.

For further information about the position, including qualifications and General Selection Criteria, the regions of the province, and the filing requirements for submitting an application, please visit the Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee's website at **www.ontariocourts.on.ca/jpaac/en/**

Applications must be submitted on the **current** prescribed application form and received by **4:30 p.m. on Friday, October 22, 2010.**

Pour voir cette annonce en français, consulter le site Web du Comité à **www.ontariocourts.on.ca/jpaac/fr/advertisement.htm**



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Class Acts

SUKKOT PREPARATION: Talia Pearl, left, and Sophie Sklar of Robbins Hebrew Academy's Beth Tzedec campus, show off the chain that Grade 6 students created to decorate the school's sukkah.

BACK TO SCHOOL: Grade 2 students Hope Schrier, left, and Rylee Glazer enjoyed the food, music and dancing at Bialik Hebrew Day School's parent-teacher association welcomed students and staff to the annual PTA back-to-school party on Sept. 13.

HOW SWEET IT IS: Rabbi Yonah Vilenkin, from Tzivos Hashem, conducts a honey bee workshop for Grade 2 students at Netivot HaTorah Day School on how the honey bee produces its honey as Binyo the "beekeeper" helps show his classmates how a hive works.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel tov to Dylan Kauffman on his bar mitzvah in Jerusalem. Parents, Nadine Azran & Kevin, sister Rachel; grandparents, Florence Kauffman and Rosa & David Azran.

Mazel tov on Lawrence & Kay Sandy's 70th anniversary and Kay's 90th birthday. Love, Howard, Rhona and Rachel; Len, Will, Stephanie, Ashley and Natalie.

Mazal Tov
Salim & Linda KOBROSSI

on your 60th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY
September 17, 2010
We love you!
Your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren
Toffy & Denise, Myrna, Carol & Colin, Sasha & Karen, Daniel & Erin, Uri, Ilan, Leah & Dave, Nati, Talia, Eliezer, Zachary, Jake, Jaime, Tammy

Happy sixth birthday Joshua, son of Fara & Michael Forman! We love you so much! Love, your sisters Jordyn and Samantha.

Happy 11th birthday Jordyn, daughter of Fara & Michael Forman! Have a wonderful birthday. Love, your brother Joshua and sister Samanatha.

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What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

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Deadline for Oct. 14 is Oct. 4. Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, the deadline for Oct. 21 is Oct. 7. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Wednesday, Sept. 22

SUKKOT AT SOLEL

Solel Congregation of Mississauga invites the public to their family Sukkot program. 5 p.m. Arts and crafts, decorate the sukkah, service and dinner. $6 per person, $20 for a family. 905-820-5915. Sukkot services continue Sept. 24 at 10 a.m.

Friday, Sept. 24

DOCTORS AGAINST RACISM

Join the Temple Har Zion community for Shabbat evening service at 8 p.m. A presentation by **Dr. Steve Samuel**, chairman of Doctors Against Racism and Anti-Semitism, follows. 905-889-2252 for more information.

TOT SHABBAT

Come celebrate and decorate Temple Sinai's sukkah with family and friends. Supplies will be provided for your children to make a special Sukkot craft. Dinner 6 p.m. Service 7:15 p.m. Adult members $16, children $9. Adult guests $20, children $10. Reserve by Sept. 22. Marcie, 416-487-3281.

Sunday, Sept. 26

'REFORM AND ZIONISM'

"Reform and Zionism: Do They Really Go Together?" with **Rabbi Dow Marmur**, rabbi emeritus of Holy Blossom Temple. Services at 9:45 a.m. followed by breakfast and lecture. Temple Sinai, 210 Wilson Ave. $5 at the door. **Marcie**, 416-487-3281.

GARAGE SALE

Huge contents/garage sale, all proceeds to Jewish Women International of Canada. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. 15 Doncrest Dr.

SUKKOT CELEBRATION

Oraynu Congregation's family Sukkot celebration. Oraynu Children's School, 131 Fenn Ave. 10 a.m. Non-members welcome. Adults $8, children $4, family $20. RSVP with **Roby**: 416-385-3910, roby@oraynu.org.

SINGLES DANCE

Shaar Shalom Singles, in conjunction with Intersynagogue Singles 45+, presents Let's Dance with DJ **Dave Jones**. Great music, dancing and a casual mix and mingle evening. 7:30 p.m. Shaar Shalom Synagogue, 2 Simonston Blvd. $8, includes coffee and cake. **David**, 416-224-9494.

SUKKOT CARNIVAL

Sukkot family carnival at Downsview Park. To Sept. 28. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 35,000 square feet of rides, games, food and prizes for the whole family. $15 all-day pass per child ages three to 18. Everyone else free. Proceeds to NCSY Toronto programs. www.ncsy.ca for passes.

PJ LIBRARY PUPPET SHOW

PJ Library presents Cascade Theatre's puppet show, based on the book *Something from Nothing*. 10:30 a.m. TanenbaumCHAT, Kimel Family Education Centre. 9600 Bathurst St. $10 per family, includes refreshments. Limited space. www.pjlibrary905.ca.

Other News

CHORALAIRS CHOIR

The Choralairs of North York are looking for new members. Rehearsals are Tuesday evenings from 7:15 to 9:45 p.m. at Earl Bales Community Centre, 4169 Bathurst St. New members always welcome. No auditions required. All you need is a love of singing and a sense of fun. For more information: **Sally**, sally1@sympatico.ca or 416-636-8247 or **Brian** at 416-631-0029.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

UJA Federation – Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto, needs volunteers available during the day, four hours a week with some flexibility, for the information desk. Computer skills and fluency in spoken and written English essential. Language skills in Hebrew and Russian an asset. **Barbara**, bbarak@ujafed.org, 416-631-5843.

Continued on page 27

I AM 80 AND HAVING A BALL

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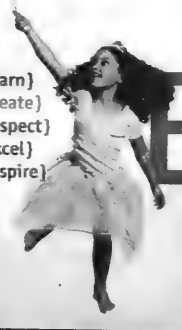

admissions@torontoheschel.org
call 416-635-1876 x 334

What's New

Continued from page 26

'RELATIONSHIPS SUCK'

"Sometimes Relationships Suck" program for teens Grade 7 and up, grouped by age and their parents to separately discuss teen dating abuse. Oct. 21, 7:15 p.m. Presented by Jewish Women International of Canada with BBYO, Young Judaea, Beth Tzedec Sisterhood, Beth Tzedec Men's Club, Jewish Family and Child, United Synagogue Youth and Pride of Israel. Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St. unit 211. Register at srstoronto.ca or 416-630-9313.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Heartlines bereavement group, an eight-week grief support program Hospice Thornhill, 220 Charlton Ave. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Oct. 8 to Nov. 26. Groups are limited in size, so sign up as soon as possible. **Karen**, 905-764-0656 ext. 227.

SHABBAT TORAH STUDY

Every Saturday at 9 a.m. **Rabbi John Moscowitz** discusses "Text and Context: How Learning Brings Life into Focus." Holy Blossom Temple.

'LOVING ISRAEL'

New Israel Fund of Canada presents **Daniel Sokatch**, CEO of New Israel Fund, speaking on "Loving Israel in Complicated Times." Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. For more information: 416-781-4322 or www.nifcan.org.

5K MYELOMA RUN

Join the Multiple Myeloma M-Moving Together Toward the Cure 5K Team in support of multiple myeloma research. Oct. 17, 8 a.m. Queen's Park. All proceeds support The Molly and David Bloom Chair for Multiple Myeloma Research at Princess Margaret Hospital. Register at www.mm5kwalk.ca or 416-946-6584.

PROSTATE CANCER NIGHT

PCCN Toronto and Side by Side support groups host a prostate cancer awareness meeting. Sept. 29, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Toronto Botanical Garden (Floral Hall) at 777 Lawrence Ave. E. **Leah Jamnicky**, urology clinical coordinator at the University Health Network speaks on "Women and Prostate Cancer." 416-932-8820.

SISTERHOOD TORAH STUDY

Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. **Rabbi Edward Goldfarb** discusses "How Did the 'Children of Israel' Become the 'Nation of Israel?'" The book of Exodus provides the narrative for this journey. Holy Blossom Temple.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

The Baycrest Volunteer Services Department needs volunteers urgently to assist clients with a web visiting project developed at Baycrest using Skype. If you are interested in helping clients connect with loved ones around the world via computer and are available weekdays, contact volunteer services at 416-785-2500 ext. 2572.

SIMCHAT TORAH

Solel Congregation of Mississauga celebrates Simchat Torah with Zebrina klezmer band. Oneg follows the service. Sept. 29, 7 p.m. 905-820-5915.

PYNK FUNDRAISER

Temple Har Zion presents local band GoFreddieGo, Oct. 23 at 8 p.m. Proceeds from the event support PYNK, Sunnybrook Hospital's young women's breast cancer program and Temple Har Zion projects. $25. Refreshments, cash bar, silent auction, raffles. 905-889-2252 or gofreddiego@bell.net for tickets.

RENTAL LISTINGS

List any rentals you have for free through the accommodation registry at UJA's Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto. Also available to those looking for a place to live. Contact 416-635-5600 or jinfo@ujafed.org. For more information, visit jewishtoronto.com and follow the link to "Doing Jewish In Toronto."

FINANCIAL LITERACY

JVS Toronto offers free workshops in "Financial Literacy for Jewish Agencies." If your agency is interested in hosting financial literacy workshops or would like more information, contact **Allen Stern**, astern@jvstoronto.org or 416-636-2481 ext. 217.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Beth Emeth Leadership Development Program includes seminars, institute-type learning and interactive participation. Open to anyone who feels they can benefit from leadership training. Now accepting applications. Maximum 25 students. Classes begin Oct. 7 and meet monthly on Thursdays from 7-9 p.m. **Rosalie Shadlyn**, 416-633-3838.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons for men and women. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. Everyone welcome. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Association of Jewish Seniors. Annual Sukkot lunch and entertainment. Sept. 28, 11:30 a.m. Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. Prepaid reservations required. Members $20, guests $25. **Tammy**, 416-635-2860 ext. 458.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, friendly atmosphere in a beautiful surrounding. Casino Rama Oct. 13, departs 10 a.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 p.m. Bingo Tuesdays, 12:30 to 3 p.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30 to 3 p.m. Sunday night dance Oct. 17 from 6-8:30 p.m. with live music. Line dancing Thursday resumes Sept. 23 at 10 a.m. **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Membership $25. All welcome.

LZA Senior's Cultural Club. Tuesdays 10 a.m. Discussion group at Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Lecture: "Rescued from Hitler's Net: The Jews of Bulgaria," with **Diana Mingail**. Sept. 28, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

All are invited to join Kolel and Prosserman JCC as they take Kolel's unique brand of adult education on the road. Space on each tour is limited and early registration is recommended. For full itineraries, prices and details call **Michelle** at Payless Travel, 416-922-0116 ext 1. For questions on content of the trips, contact **Rabbi Goldstein** at ext. 4472 or rabbi@prossermanjcc.com.

Tic Tac Two is a morning program for two-year-olds providing a stimulating and nurturing curriculum. It is offered 2, 3 or 5 mornings per week from September to June, and includes a weekly Shabbat program. Limited space left. For more information, contact **Kailah** at ext. 4351.

Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 4 from 1 to 5 p.m. Shabbat R and R, a free drop-in program of Shabbat-appropriate songs, stories, Jewish learning, activities and snack. Families of all levels of Jewish observance will feel welcome at this family-friendly event. No preregistration necessary. Room 205.

The week of Sept. 27 is the registration cut-off date for some programs. Call ext. 4235 or register online for courses including Latin dance, line dance, mah-jong, Habima Players (performing class), memoir writing, recorder, four-part lecture on the Jewish influence in Freud's interpretation of dreams, floral arrangement and more.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel services. Sunday 8 a.m. Thursday 7:15 a.m. Kosher breakfast included. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Pre-school programs – register now. New Shabbat club (3 to 6 years) with **Sarah Brodbar-Nemzer**. Ext. 277.

Get your kids active this fall at the MNJCC Fitness Centre. Programs include a basketball academy, floor hockey, boxing, Zumba, teen yoga (girls only) and karate. Programs start in September and October. Ext. 0 to register and for more information.

The 3rd Degree, to Sept. 25. 8 p.m. $30. Presented by Chicken Coop Theatre at the Al Green Theatre. Tells the story of Sir Henry Smythe, his wife, Lady Penelope, and daughter Caroline. 416-992-9248, www.the3rd-degree.webs.com.

Toronto Jewish Film Society screens *The Wooden Gun (Roveh Hulliot)*, a coming-of-age drama set in 1950s Tel Aviv. With guest Mark Clamen. Sept. 26. 4 and 7:30 p.m. $15 general admission, $10 ages 18-29 (7:30 p.m. screening only). Rush seats 15 minutes before each screening. Ext. 606, film@mnjcc.org.

Decorate the sukkah. Rooftop party and activities for Sukkot. Sept. 26, 12 to 1:30 p.m. Ext. 277.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Rabbi Paysach Krohn inspired more than 800 people last week when he delivered *divrei chizuk* – words of encouragement and strength – at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation. The shul was filled to capacity for the rabbi's Sept. 13th lecture, which was part of a series sponsored by the Kerzner family, in memory of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Kerzner, who were early supporters of Jewish education and Eitz Chaim Schools.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Benayon, Israel	Aug. 25/10	Private
Sugar, Edith	Aug. 26/10	10 Tichester Rd
Lerner, David	Aug. 26/10	1 Canyon Ave
Levinson, Sheldon	Aug. 27/10	57 Cherrystone Dr
Rosenberg, Saul	Aug. 27/10	243 Hillhurst Blvd
Bronner, Sandra	Aug. 28/10	167 Waterloo Ave
Kiobge, Anita	Aug. 28/10	57 Cottonwood Crt
Hazan, Suzanne	Aug. 29/10	500 Millwood Rd
Volkova, Khasyn	Aug. 30/10	Private
Perez Abergel, Marc	Aug. 31/10	226 Maplewood
Vari, Leslie (Laszlo)	Aug 31/10	130 Neptune Dr
Shabes, Elizabeth Hannah	Sept. 2/10	235 Old Yonge St
Benay, Rachel Rita	Sept. 3/10	650 Mt. Pleasant
Bensimon, Mary	Sept. 4/10	1 Royal Orchard Bl
Elloer, Leslie	Sept. 4/10	477 Glengarry Ave
Schreiber, Simon	Sept. 5/10	205 Cummer Ave
Geller, Bronislav	Sept. 5/10	14 Heron Hollow
Peters, Abraham	Sept. 7/10	650 Lawrence Av W

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Mair Michael Langer	Sep 6/10	111 Avenue Rd
Eva Kayfetz	Sep 6/10	7 Austin Cres
Rita Kagan	Sep 6/10	111 Avenue Road
Shoshana Hartman	Sep 6/10	3840 Bathurst St
Sheldon Kert	Sep 9/10	2500 Bathurst St
Doris Grodinsky	Sep 10/10	55 Ameer Ave
Sylvia Green	Sep 11/10	152 Regina Ave
Anita Katzman	Sep 9/10	131 Torresdale Ave
Jack Kelman	Sep 11/10	205 Wynford Dr
Frances Cugelman	Aug 30/10	3560 Bathurst St

HEBREW BASIC

PINCUS, Pamela ז"ל on Monday, September 13th, 2010 at her home. Pamela Pincus beloved wife of the late Charles Pincus z.l. Loving mother of Stephen and Beverley, and loving mother in law of Michelle and Peter. Devoted granny of Daniel, Lisa, Jonathon and Samary. Dear sister and sister in law of Cynthia and Selwyn Super. Memorial donations may be made to The Israel Cancer Research Fund www.icrfonline.org 416-487-5246 or to Beit Holochem Canada www.beitholochem.ca 905-695-0611.

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and grandmother
CORRINE WOODROW
(Chaya Esther Bas Dov) ז"ל

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
MIRIAM POSNER ז"ל
Sister & sister-in-law of Annalea & Saul Libstug
will take place
Sunday, Sept. 26th at 11:00 a.m.
Dawes Road Cemetery
Drillzer Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of
BEBE GANZ ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, September 26th at 12:30 p.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Dufferin St. N of Major Mackenzie
Kol Ami Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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Obituary

N.S. native was Israel's 1st tank driver

By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — Lionel Druker, a native Nova Scotian who became the first tank driver in the Israeli Army in 1948 and later operated thriving tour bus and sightseeing companies in Israel, passed away Aug. 25 in Tel Aviv at age 85.

Born in Sydney, N.S., Druker was the second son of the late Max and Jennie Druker. After graduating from Sydney Academy, he attended Mount Allison University, but left in the spring of 1944 to join the Canadian Army. When World War II in Europe ended in May 1945, he volunteered to fight in the Pacific until the end of the war. He resumed his studies at Mount Allison in the fall of 1945. A year later, Druker was accepted into Dalhousie University Law School.

Lionel Druker
[Photo courtesy of Yad LeShiryon in Israel]

In December 1947, a few weeks after the United Nations voted to partition Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state, Druker was elected national president of Canadian Young Judea, a branch of the Zionist Organization of Canada.

When it appeared likely that a war would erupt, he volunteered to help defend the new State of Israel. Having been trained as a tank operator in the Canadian Army, Druker drove the only Israeli tank and became captain of the first tank corps. The tank he drove has been memorialized and is still displayed on stilts at a museum in Latrun, between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

When a ceasefire was signed about 18 months after the start of the war, Druker had met Rachel Flasher, a Jewish native of pre-partition Palestine, and they were married.

Druker and business partner Arthur Goldberg, originally from Vancouver, started the tour bus company United Tours, as well as a tour company that they successfully ran for almost 25 years.

"Lionel's success can be partly attributed to his charm and personality," said his younger brother, Avvie, by telephone from his Sydney home. "I'm six years younger than Lionel and he left for university when he was 18 and I was 12, but in later years, as we'd visit here or in Israel, I recall Lionel as being great company and a good storyteller. He had a very interesting life."

Druker is survived by his wife, Rachel; sons, Dror (Aviva), Tamir (Illana), Eyal (Cloudia); six grandchildren, all in Israel, and his brother, Avvie in Sydney. He was predeceased by his brother, Sid, of Toronto. Burial took place in Israel.

Enrolment up at Winnipeg's Jewish day school

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — After a couple of years of treading water, enrolment is moving upward again at the Winnipeg Board of Jewish Education's (BJE) Gray Academy of Jewish Education, which serves kids in kindergarten through Grade 12.

Registration stands at 604 this year, compared to 572 last fall.

Head of school and CEO Rory Paul said that one-third of the new students are from families who have recently immigrated to Winnipeg. More significantly, the other two-thirds are locally born children who have switched over from both the public school system and prestigious private schools such as St. John's-Ravenscourt School or the University of Winnipeg Collegiate program.

"We have had to add a third Grade 3 and a third Grade 4 class this year," Paul said. The school already has four junior kindergarten classes.

Paul attributes the school's success to two factors: the excellence of its teaching staff – which he describes as "second to none" – and its overall quality of education.

"We have done a lot of work in the last couple of years to raise our level of Judaic studies to the top ranks in Canada, and we have worked hard to make certain that our general studies program is also top-notch."

Full tuition at the school is in the range of $7,000 per student. However, the BJE has a sliding scale based on family income and the number of students per family enrolled in the school.

Paul added that the BJE is broadening its mandate this year to include adult education.

"As a result of a two-year strategic planning process, the board has created a new position – co-ordinator of lifelong learning – whose mandate will be to work with the synagogues and the Rady Jewish Community Centre to expand Jewish education in the community with an emphasis on teens and younger adults," he said.

Jewish families also have the option of enrolling their younger children in North America's only elementary public school – and 100 per cent publicly funded – Hebrew bilingual programs, but it seems that each year the number of parents choosing that route continues to decline.

Enrolment in kindergarten to Grade 5 this year in the Hebrew bilingual program at Margaret Park Elementary School in Winnipeg's north end is just 37 students (although there may still be some late enrolments), down from about 50 last year. Class sizes range from four in Grade 2 to nine in Grade 5, with just six students registered in kindergarten (some classes are combined). At its peak 20 years ago, the program had about 180 students.

While the shrinking attendance in the Hebrew bilingual program at Margaret Park reflects the declining Jewish population in the north end, which used to be the heart of Winnipeg's Jewish community, the decline in enrolment in the Hebrew bilingual program (kindergarten to Grade 6) at Brock Corydon Elementary School in south Winnipeg – where most Jews now live – has been rather unexpected.

For years, the program was filled to capacity with about 180 students. Last year, for the first time, that figure dropped – by about 20 students. This year, enrolment has declined further – to 136 – including a kindergarten class of 12.

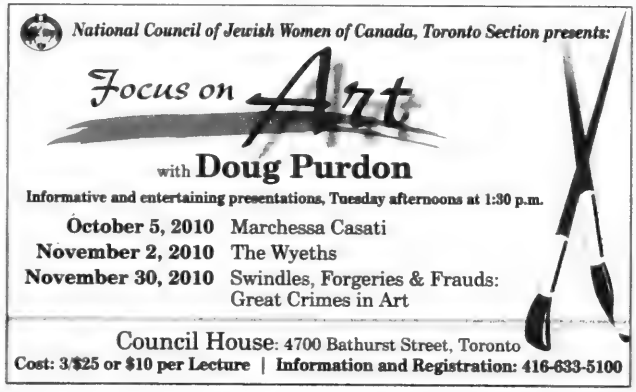
Principal Ira Udow said the decline may be because younger Jewish families and newer immigrant families are increasingly moving to newer suburbs outside the Winnipeg One School Division catchment area.

(Brock Corydon School is in the Winnipeg One School Division. While Winnipeg One is the city's largest school board, there are another five or six school boards in the suburbs.)

Ohr HaTorah Day School, which operates out of Herzlia-Adas Yeshurun Synagogue in south Winnipeg, had offered another alternative for observant families. Last year, however, the 11-year-old school ran into financial difficulties and was forced to scale back its program. This year, the school is only operating a daycare and kindergarten with a capacity of 40. All the spaces are full and there's a waiting list.

Chabad also operates a small school in Winnipeg. Currently, Oholei Torah School has an enrolment of 12 in preschool and another 14 in a kindergarten-to-Grade 8 program. For the time being, the preschool program is being run out of the home of Rabbi Shmuely and Adina Altein, while K-8 students are housed in the North End Lubavitch Centre.

The plan is to move all the students to the new south Winnipeg Lubavitch Centre at the beginning of November. The building is scheduled to be completed by late October.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Coast to Coast

Hamilton cantor finds her niche

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rebecca Moses, cantor-educator at Temple Anshe Sholom, in Hamilton, was looking for a specific type of congregation when she was invested as a cantor last year at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion School of Sacred Music.

"I found the place that I was looking for, which was a place that was going to be warm and engaging and welcoming, and a place that wanted to have fun with their services, and that was going to allow me to grow as a cantor, and to grow with me as a congregation – some place that really wanted to sing along, to learn new music, but still sing the old tunes as well," she said in a recent interview, shortly after her official installation as the temple's cantor on Aug. 29.

More than a year after joining the 400-family shul, Moses, 31, believes she's found what she was looking for.

A seventh-generation Jewish Texan on her mother's side (and fifth on her father's), Moses – who was born in New Orleans and raised in San Antonio – had no Canadian connection before taking on her new position at the temple in July 2009.

She sees her work as an educator, running the temple's religious school, as being "quite linked" to the cantorial aspect.

Cantor Rebecca Moses

In addition to the Judaic component of her cantorial knowledge, "the fact that I'm a musician means I get that kids don't always learn in the same ways."

Moses, who also has a bachelor of music in vocal performance, has been teaching for more than half her life, having started as a young teenager at her temple in San Antonio.

"I really learned to love Judaism through teaching it," she said. "We didn't necessarily go to synagogue, but the religious school was very important."

The temple she went to didn't have a cantor, but when Moses – a soprano who began singing and acting as a young child – heard a guest cantor at age 16, she started to think seriously about taking that path herself.

Although she studied guitar and piano in college, she doesn't necessarily play them now, she said.

"I have a wealth of congregants here who are extremely gifted, and I think it's more of my job to find them and to introduce them to the joys of Jewish music that I have found, by inviting them to share their unique talents with the congregation."

Anshe Sholom has a family jam band that leads Friday night services once a month, she said. Moses said she is excited to have "inherited" them from her predecessor, Laura Wolfson, who has retired.

Charged teen receives psychiatric tests

Compiled by CJN Staff

MONTREAL - The lawyer defending Maor Attar, 18 – who is charged with the first-degree murder of his younger sister – says his client isn't criminally responsible because he suffers from a mental illness.

At the first court hearing since Attar was charged with the Aug. 9 death of 14-year-old Shirel Attar, Daniel Lighter called Attar "a very sick young man" who may have experienced a psychotic episode associated with schizophrenia.

Lighter told the court that Attar may have been having auditory hallucinations when he allegedly beat and stabbed his sister at their Côte St. Luc home.

The Crown agreed to Lighter's request for more psychiatric tests for Attar before his next court hearing, set for Oct. 8. Attar has been held in the Philippe Pinel Institute since being charged, and did not appear in court at the first hearing on Sept. 8.

Daniel Sokatch
CEO, New Israel Fund

New Israel Fund of Canada
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Sokatch, a dynamic speaker, has been named to *The Forward*'s list of notable Jewish leaders.

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Coast to Coast

Kingston rabbi recovers from brain surgery

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Daniel Elkin is recovering from brain surgery. He can't move his left arm, which is swollen and painful. He gets headaches every now and then. And he's tired most of the time.

But he hasn't lost his sense of humour.

"It just keeps things light. To me, you know, being overly serious is not helpful," said Rabbi Elkin, 66, who has been the spiritual leader of Beth Israel Congregation in Kingston for the past 13 years.

This summer, the rabbi was told that he had a benign brain tumour near his pituitary gland.

He underwent surgery at the end of August at Toronto Western Hospital, where doctors were only able to remove around 75 to 85 per cent of the growth.

"They didn't want to cause any more disruption than they had to to the brain," Rabbi Elkin said, adding that his doctors don't know how leaving part of the growth in place will affect him.

"Apparently I've had it for quite a while, so I've been able to do what I was supposed to do with [the growth in place]. Now that 75 or 80 per cent has disappeared, I should be better off," he said.

The rabbi was released from hospital in early September and is recovering at home, although it's been a "tough grind," he said.

"I developed a pain in my left arm, and I can't move my left arm or hand. It's swollen," he said, adding that his doctors don't yet know why this is happening. "I've had headaches, which is not too usual, but they haven't been consistent."

Rabbi Elkin's wife, Gittle, is optimistic.

"The rabbi is doing great. He came out of surgery with a joke," she said. "Every day he's getting better. He's taking rehabilitative therapies and making good progress."

Before his surgery, Beth Israel congregants and Queen's University students read the entire book of *Tehillim* for the rabbi.

"We thank everyone who prayed for him," Gittle said. "Please continue praying. He still has a little ways to go."

Rabbi Elkin currently goes to rehabilitative therapy once a week. He's also visited his shul, where a cantor has been hired to take over until he's ready to come back.

"It's all speculation. Some people say [I'll be back] in three months. Some people say six weeks. We've just passed the three-week mark, so it doesn't look like it would be three weeks," he said.

Rabbi Daniel Elkin, spiritual leader of Beth Israel *[File photo]*

But Rabbi Elkin hasn't been alone.

Queen's students and congregants have been visiting, both when he was in Toronto and at his Kingston home, where last Sunday they helped the rabbi and his wife set up their sukkah.

"I can't do it myself. I think the support I received from the university kids is great," he said. "I think it's terrific. Visiting, having people visit you is, to me, a very important aspect of healing."

For Joey Fox, who's finishing his master's degree in engineering physics at Queen's and helped organize the sukkah-building, Rabbi Elkin is more than a spiritual leader. He's a friend.

"I met him in my first year [as an undergraduate at Queen's]. He was very kind, very sweet. I felt right at home [at Beth Israel]," he said, adding that Beth Israel is the only full-time synagogue in Kingston.

"In many other communities, rabbis play a very important role. They have to look after their congregation. Here, he has to care for the city."

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*Interested candidates should forward their resume and a cover letter in strictest confidence by October 5, 2010 to: **cemeterymgr@gmail.com**. While we appreciate all expressions of interest, we regret that we are only able to respond to those invited for an interview.*

Coast to Coast

Seven USY grads head to Israel

Compiled by CJN Staff

Seven Canadians are among 93 high school graduates who recently departed for Israel with United Synagogue Youth.

As part of USY's NATIV College/Leadership Program, they'll spend the next nine months studying, touring, volunteering and learning new leadership techniques.

According to USY director Jules Gutin, it's one of the largest NATIV groups in the program's 30-year history. Last year's group had 80 students.

USY is the high school affiliate of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

This year's NATIV students come from two Canadian provinces and 23 different U.S. states. The Canadians are Pnina Brown, Sean Haber, Ariel Segal, Tanya Werger, and Hilary Zarnett from Ontario, and Matt Goldberg and Oliver Jacobson from British Columbia.

The leadership training aspects of the program have enabled many NATIV graduates to assume leadership positions throughout the North American Jewish community. Several have become rabbis, while others have gone on to careers in Jewish youth work. Still others have risen to lay leadership positions in their synagogues and regions or have made aliyah. More than half of the staff members on USY programs this past summer were graduates of NATIV.

For more information about NATIV, visit www.nativ.org, or contact Avital Elfant, USY's central shlichah, at 212-533-7800, ext. 1118, or e-mail nativ@uscj.org.

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שיאר נינו

גידי קורן וחברים

סדר עדיפויות- יהודים קידוצקי

בכתבתי הקודמת דווחתי על רופא ישראלי, ראש מחלקת ילדים בבית חולים שיבא, שמנסה להציל ממוות ילד פלשתינאי שחולה במחלה קשה ונדירה. מחלה אשר דורשת טפול מסובך, ממושך ויקר שעולה למדינת ישראל מליוני דולרים. למרות שבית החולים פנה לרשות הפלשתינאית ולמנהיגי החמאס שיעזרו לשאת בנטל הכלכלי הכבד, ונענתה הבקשה בסירוב. אחד הקוראים, גבר יפה נפש, כתב לעתון שהקטע בכתבה על מימון הטפול "מרגיז ומעיד על בורות". הקורא טוען שלרשות ולחמאס יש דברים חשובים יותר בתקציב המוגבל שיוצא מקופתם הצנומה.

אני מודה לקורא, קודם כל על שקרא את הכתבה, ושנית על שפקח את עיני ולימד אותי שאכן אנוכי בור ואולי עם-הארץ.בשמחה למדתי מהקורא שלחמאס ולרשות הפלשתינאית יש סדר עדיפויות ודאגות חשובות יותר מאשר חיי ילד פלשתינאי רך. הפלשתינאים מקבלים כספי סיוע ותרומות שנכנסות לקופתם מונרמים נדיבים כמו אחמדינאג, ערב הסעודית ועוד ארגונים מוסלמים שוחרי שלום וחופש. אחרי הכל בכסף הנ"ל צריך לשלם משכורות ללוחמי חופש, למשפחות המתאבדים וגם לקנות טילים, חומרי נפץ, מחרטות ליצור מנזים, רקטות ועוד כל-טוב שזורם לרצועה דרך מנהרות השלום והחרות. עדין לא הזכרתי מימון לבתי ספר, גני ילדים ועוד מוסדות חנוך בהם מלמדים את הנוזלים לאהוב את השכן היהודי וכיצד לובשים חגורת נפץ וקלצ'ניקוב מעל החיתול.

אני מודה לקורא המלומד על שלימד אותי שחיי ילד פלשתינאי שווים פחות מאלף פצצות מרגמה בהם אפשר להרוג ילדים בשדרות, באשקלון ובעתיד גם בתל-אביב, אם יהיה לחבר'ה מעזה מספיק כסף לקנות טילים ארוכי טווח שיגיעו עד לעיר הגדולה. אני

אני גאה להחזיק בתעודת-זהות של מדינה אשר לא חוסכת מאמצים ואמצעים להציל ממוות ילד פלשתיאי, ולא אחד.

עוד על העדיפויות הפלשתינאיות -יוני דוחה הלוי

יוני דחוה הלוי, עורכו של "שלום טורונטו", הוא חוקר ומומחה בינלאומי לטרור. בתגובה לאותה כתבה שלח לי יוני את ההערות הבאות:

"המימון עבור טיפול רפואי בישראל נקלע למחלוקת בין הרשות הפלסטינית ברמאללה לבין שלטונות חמאס ללא קשר לישראל, אלא מסיבות של יריבות פלסתינאית פנימית שנפתרה לאחר זמן...האיחוד האירופי מעביר מידי שנה 500 מליון יורו לפלסתינאים כולל עזה וכסף רב נוסף מגיע מסוכנויות האו"ם ומדינות ערב. ממשלת חמאס התעשרה מנהרות עזה והיא משקיעה כספים בנדל"ן ובפרויקטים אחרים.

למרות "המצוקה הכלכלית" הרשות הפלסתינאית מעבירה מידי שנה בין 4-5% מתקציבה לסיוע לטרוריסטים המרצים עונשי מאסר בישראל ולמשפחותיהם. כולם, למעט האסירים הפליליים, זכאים לסיוע אשר גדל בהתאם למספר שנות המאסר בכלא, הווה אומר בהתאם לחומרת העבירות, ורוצח סידרתי האחראי לקטילת עשרות בפיגועי התאבדות יקבל קיצבה של אלפי ש"ח ויהיה זכאי למינו לתפקיד של מנכ"ל במשרד ממשלתי. זה סדר העדיפויות של הרשות הפלסתינאית ואין-עדיין אין-ולו מילת חרטה על הטרור". תודה ליוני.

"לבנון"

סרטו של שמוליק מעוז על מלחמת לבנון הראשונה הגיע לטורונטו ומביא שעה וחצי מרתקת שצולמו כולן בתוך טנק, מה שמאפשר לצופה חוויה מאוד נדירה . אני חייב להזהירכם שיש בסרט קטעים אכזריים וקשים לצפייה, אבל הוא עשוי בצורה מושלמת. הוא מציג את החייל הישראלי כבן אדם, ואיננו מנסה להשוות את איכות הפלחמה ואת חוסר התוחלת שבה. זה בעיני אחד הבטויים החזקים ביותר לחוסנה של הדמוקרטיה הישראלית שמאפשרת וגם תומכת כלכלית בסרטים כאלה. אין מה לומר- עם "בופור", "החולצה של באשיר" ועכשיו "לבנון"-הקולנוע הישראלי זוכה להרבה כבוד מקצועי.

תשע בסולם קורן.

Sukkot under the stars: vegetarian dishes for cool nights

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

Sukkot is a harvest festival, so festive fall menus typically include a variety of vegetables, fruits and vegetarian main dishes. Meals are often eaten inside the sukkah, an outdoor structure with a leafy roof partly open to the sky. The sukkah symbolizes the temporary shelters in which our ancestors lived during their 40 years in the desert.

When creating a Sukkot menu for family and friends, try to choose foods that are easy to carry into and serve in your sukkah. Stuffed vegetables (cabbage, eggplant, zucchini and bell peppers) and vegetarian main dishes are often on the menu. Soups are always a popular choice – you can serve them from a large soup tureen or slow cooker. There are two tasty vegetable kugels that can be baked in advance, then cut up and served at the holiday table. Try these wonderfully delicious ways to celebrate the harvest and the holiday! Enjoy…

* * *

Shayne Train of Toronto shared her recipe for this tasty vegetarian main dish that she demonstrated at a vegetarian cooking class several years ago – it was a big hit. Shayne writes: "My husband and two kids are vegetarian (no fish either!) and the other two like meat, but this dish satisfies everyone. I usually add cheese on top, but it can be left off for a pareve meal. Sukkot is one of our favourite holidays and we serve this to company because it's warm, comfort food for a chilly evening meal out in the sukkah."

SHAYNE TRAIN'S VEGETARIAN SHEPHERD'S PIE

1 tbsp. olive oil
1 large Spanish or Vidalia onion, chopped
2 or 2 large carrots, chopped
2 cans (19 oz. each) chickpeas
2 cans (19 oz. each) kidney beans
1 can (24 oz.) thick tomato sauce (such as Hunts Thick 'n Rich)
1/2 to 1 cup water (as needed)
1 cup frozen corn, thawed (optional)
3 baking potatoes (e.g. Yukon Gold)
1/2 to 1 cup water or milk
Optional: 2 cups shredded light mozzarella cheese
Optional: sprinkle of paprika

Heat the oil in a large nonstick pot on medium heat. Add onion and sauté for 5 minutes. Stir in carrots and cook until onions are golden, about 5 minutes longer.

Drain and rinse kidney beans and chickpeas in a colander. Add to onions and carrots.

Add tomato sauce and 1/2 to 1 cup water and mix well. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook about 20 minutes longer, until beans and chickpeas are softened. Stir occasionally.

Remove pot from heat and cool mixture slightly. Use an immersion blender to grind up the mixture. Don't mix until it's smooth – leave some chunks for texture.

Stir in corn (if using) and mix well. Pour mixture into a greased 9 x 13-inch baking dish and spread evenly.

Boil potatoes until tender. (Or to microwave them, keep the skin on and peel them after cooking.) Mash potatoes with either hot water (pareve) or milk. Add liquid as needed, until the potatoes are moist and fluffy. Spread mashed potatoes on top of bean mixture. For a dairy meal, sprinkle shredded cheese on top. For pareve, sprinkle paprika on top.

Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for 15 minutes to heat up and melt cheese, if using. If not serving right away, keep on low heat – it doesn't dry out. Yield: 8 servings.

* * *

Sylvia Kirshner of Toronto loves to serve different kinds of soups when the weather turns chilly. She often makes turkey vegetable soup or beet cabbage borscht for her family. A recent addition to her soup selection includes this heavenly harvest soup which is made with fall vegetables and aromatic spices. It's ideal for Sukkot.

Sylvia wrote: "The original recipe called for 1 pound each of butternut squash, sweet potatoes and carrots. My friend who included the sweet potatoes when she originally tried the recipe found it too sweet so we decided to eliminate them. To make up the difference, I've increased the quantity of squash and carrots to 1-1/2 pounds each. To keep the soup pareve, I make it using coconut milk rather than dairy products. This soup freezes very well but it must be reheated only on the stovetop, not in the microwave. You have to stir it while heating to bring the creaminess of the soup to the right consistency."

SYLVIA KIRSHNER'S HARVEST SOUP

1 tbsp. vegetable oil
2 medium onions, chopped
2 tbsp. fresh ginger, finely chopped
1 tsp. ground coriander
3/4 tsp. ground cumin
3/4 tsp. curry powder
1 1/2 lb. butternut squash, peeled, seeded and chopped
1 1/2 lb. carrots, chopped
8 cups vegetable broth or water
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 can light coconut milk (see Note)

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook about 5 minutes or until softened. Add ginger, coriander, cumin and curry powder. Cook for 1 minute. Add squash and carrots; stir well. Add stock or water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer about 20 minutes or until vegetables are very tender.

Puree in batches using an immersion blender or electric blender until very smooth.

Return mixture to saucepan and season with salt and pepper. Whisk in coconut milk. Heat thoroughly.

Note: For a dairy version, you can make this soup with 1 cup light sour cream or yogurt and 1 cup of coconut milk. Yield: 12 servings. Recipe doubles very easily and freezes well. Reheat on the stovetop, stirring often. (Do not reheat in the microwave.)

* * *

Matthew Goodman of Brooklyn, N.Y., is the author of a wonderful collection of recipes and essays titled *Jewish Food: The World at Table* (HarperCollins Publishers). In his introduction to kugels in his culinary treasure that celebrates the ingenuity of Jewish cooks around the world, Goodman writes: "There are just about as many types of kugel as there are ingredients that can be cut up, mixed and baked… Just as latkes can be made with many vegetables other than potatoes, so too can kugels stretch well beyond the typical potato and noodle varieties. This carrot kugel is sweet, moist and surprisingly light, a lovely accompaniment for beef or chicken."

MATTHEW GOODMAN'S CARROT KUGEL

2 lb. carrots, peeled and grated
1/3 cup lightly packed brown sugar
4 tbsp. butter, melted and cooled (or 4 tbsp. vegetable oil)
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1/2 cup matzah meal
1/4 tsp. vanilla extract
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt

Preheat the oven to 350. Grease a 9-inch square glass baking dish.

Place all of the ingredients in a large bowl and stir until fully combined. Pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish and smooth the top. Bake until the kugel is well-browned on top, about 55 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes. Serve warm. Serves 6 as a side dish.

* * *

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author and culinary consultant. Visit her website at www.gourmania.com, contact her at goodfood@gourmania.com or call 416-226-2466.

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Advertising Feature

Robbins Hebrew Academy – Architects of a new day school model

At Robbins Hebrew Academy, we are the architects of our future, and a leader in the education of Jewish children, with a program designed for 21st century learning. Through the creation of our new school model with critical thinking as its foundation, RHA is poised to be the first Jewish day school in Toronto to apply to be a candidate school for accreditation by SEAL (Standards in Excellence & Learning.)

SEAL is an association for independent and private schools that focuses on developing and promoting educational excellence, school improvement and leadership. SEAL is a proud member of the Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada and is accredited by the National Association of Independent Schools. RHA's Head of School, Claire Sumerlus, has been on the SEAL board for many years and brings her experience to this process.

RHA began the process by creating the vision of our mission: the ideal "relationships" needed for 21st century graduates. As critical thinking is foundational to the RHA vision, the curriculum at first was designed to honour this vision and make achievement of critical thinking more likely. Teachers began by building their understanding of "critical challenges" to determine what success looked like.

"We have embarked on a process of continuous school improvement in order to provide the best education in both General and Judaic Studies," said Ms. Sumerlus. "This process is inclusive and supports all types of learners, as we believe a Jewish education is important for all."

As "architects" Ms. Sumerlus has now created the detailed documents or "blueprints" that describe the richness of our curriculum. These documents are created to align with the SEAL accreditation process. To achieve these standards, RHA has delineated the best practices in teaching and learning to ensure the integration, scope, sequence and continuity of the program. "We used Schooling by Design (Grant Wiggins, 2007), Five Minds of the Future (Howard Gardner, 2007), The Global Achievement Gap (Tony Wagner, 2008), and other educational research sources to support the curriculum portion of our strategic plan that is being designed to achieve the school's mission," said Ms. Sumerlus.

Robbins Hebrew Academy students are fortunate to be on the leading edge of education with their LEARNING POWER.

For information contact Michele Viner, Director of Admissions, at 416-224-8737 x 137 or mviner@rhacademy.ca. Or, visit www.rhacademy.ca.

Health & Lifestyles

Shabbaton for families of kidswith special needs

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Six agencies have been working for more than a year to organize an upcoming Shabbaton for children and young adults with special needs, and their families.

The Shabbaton – under the auspices of DANI (Developing and Nurturing Independence); the Friendship Circle (affiliated with Chabad); Jewish Family & Child; Reena; Yachad, the National Jewish Council for Disabilities; and Zareinu – will take place at the Salvation Army Camp at Jackson's Point, an hour north of Toronto, from Oct. 8 to 10.

"We felt that it's really important for our families to have the opportunity to get together and to have a Shabbos experience together," said Arlene Margolese, Reena's manager of faith and cultural services, and of volunteer services.

"We have people from every denomination," she said. "The idea is that they will have a spiritual experience, and the opportunity to get together and relax... We felt the families would enjoy the opportunity to experience the warmth of Shabbat."

The facility is wheelchair accessible and can accommodate up to 100 people, said Susie Sokol, co-founder of DANI.

Both Margolese and Sokol described the venue with superlatives: amazing and fabulous. "Everything is well kept," said Margolese, "and the grounds are gorgeous."

To the best of their knowledge, the weekend is the first of its kind in Canada. Yachad has been running them in New York, however, for more than 20 years, said Galya Ouanounou, Yachad's program director in Toronto.

"It's an unbelievable experience," she said of the New York Shabbaton that she attended. "Parents told me they're not even involved with Yachad, but this is the one event they go to. It gives them so much support and knowledge... Everyone comes from different backgrounds. Their children are all different. I think they learn to appreciate their situation, and feel that they're not alone."

The weekend will include kosher meals and services, and programming for the children, as well as for their siblings.

A Saturday night program will feature live music and pizza for the kids, while parents will address the topic, "Ya gotta have a sense of humour!" over a marshmallow roast.

The cost of the weekend – which is subsidized through a grant from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto – is $75 per person.

For further information or to register, email torontoyachad@ou.org or call 647-889-7164.

LIFESTYLE ADVERTORIAL

IT'S 11AM. Do you know where your mother is?

For adult children whose aging parents depend on them for daily assistance with tasks such as transportation, shopping and even cooking and housekeeping, a vacation becomes the impossible dream. The availability of short term "vacation" stays in a retirement residence, however, make a vacation possible.

Many seniors, even if they are living in their own homes, are supported by family members who call or visit daily. Often lonely and at risk of falls, medication errors or other mishaps, some older adults rely heavily on their families to ensure they are safe, well-fed, properly medicated and connecting with other people daily. Adult daughters, the most likely providers of these loving services, can easily devote 20 or more hours weekly to the care of a parent – and the stress and worry is significant.

If anyone ever deserved a vacation, it is these overworked, stressed daughters. Previously unable to travel due to their relentless commitment to a parent, adult children can now give both mom and themselves a break through the Vacation Getaway program at Kensington Place Retirement Residence.

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Turkey to meet Ahmadinejad instead of Peres

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

JERUSALEM — Turkish President Abdullah Gul said Monday that he would no longer be able to meet with President Shimon Peres on the sidelines of a United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York, citing time constraints.

Gul will meet with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, however. Gul told reporters in New York that he expected the international row over Tehran's contentious nuclear program to top the agenda for many at the conference.

The Turkish newspaper *Today's Zaman* reported last Friday that Gul and Peres would hold talks, the first of its kind between the two countries' high-level government representatives since the Israeli raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla in May, during which nine Turkish nationals were killed.

Although Gul would not say that he had decided not to meet Peres due to tensions over the raid, he did tell Turkey's official Anatolia news agency: "We will not forgive Israel for those killed in the Israeli attack on the aid flotilla, even if Israel apologizes."

Last week, *Today's Zaman* quoted an unnamed official as saying that Gul had intended to tell Peres that relations between the two countries won't be normalized until Israel apologizes for the flotilla raid and pays monetary compensation to the families of those killed during the ensuing clashes.

Israeli Foreign Ministry officials said in June that Israel would not apologize to Turkey over the raid and that the demand for an official apology was mainly an excuse to allow Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan to cut diplomatic ties with Israel.

Turkey recalled their ambassador to Israel after the raid and has said it will not send an ambassador back unless Israel apologizes for the raid and pays the requested compensation. They have also threatened to impose sanctions against Israel.

Though there are no reports of a forthcoming apology from Israel, Gul reportedly said that "foreign ministers can meet with others from the enemy country even in the battlefield."

Turkey and Israel's escalated tensions have been eased several times, including a meeting between Industry, Trade and Labor Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer and Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu in late June.

Though the contents of the meeting were not disclosed, Ben-Eliezer reiterated the Israeli stance that there will be no apology for the raid because the Israel Navy acted lawfully.

In a separate incident on Monday, an envelope containing suspicious white powder was sent to the Turkish embassy in Tel Aviv. The powder was sent to a lab in Nes Tziona for inspection.

Sale of land to Israelis ruled punishable by death

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

JERUSALEM — The sale of Palestinian land to Israelis is punishable by death, a Palestinian Authority court ruled on Sunday in what Palestinian officials are saying is a necessary measure to ensure the founding of a future state.

Judge Ta'et At-Twil, according to a report by the Palestinian news agency *Ma'an*, ruled that selling, or attempting to sell, land to a foreign country was a criminal offence that could result in the death penalty.

In a statement released after the ruling, the Palestine General Prosecution said the move represented "a consolidation of the previous legal principle," adding that the "ruling aimed to protect the Palestinian national project to establish an independent Palestinian state."

Last year, a Palestinian military court sentenced a man to death by hanging for selling land to an Israeli company, with the prosecutor at the time saying that the defendant had sold land that didn't belong to him in the village of Beit Ummar using forged documents.

Land sales are considered treason by the Palestinians because of their long-running dispute with the Israelis, however the sentence is unlikely to be implemented.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas routinely withholds the required approval for executions. Several others are on death row as suspected informants for Israel.

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Ovadia Yosef atones to Mubarak after declaring Palestinians should die

By YAIR ETTINGER
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JERUSALEM — Three weeks after making hostile statements about the Palestinians, Shas spiritual leader Rabbi Ovadia Yosef is sending out a conciliatory message and is returning to his old positions in support of the peace process.

Yosef expressed support for the direct talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and wished "longevity" to the Arab leaders who are partners in the process.

"My position has been known and clear for decades, on the importance of achieving peace while preserving the security of the nation of Israel," the rabbi wrote in a letter to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

"We wish for sustainable peace with all our neighbours and we are very thankful to the honourable president for his direct involvement in the peace process in our region, which undoubtedly contributes and strengthens this important process," the letter continued.

Yosef wrote the letter to Mubarak, which was then sent from the bureau of President Shimon Peres to Cairo, translated into Arabic. He addressed Mubarak as "our esteemed and dear friend."

Peres offered the rabbi assistance in the initiative in an effort to improve the atmosphere created by statements made by the rabbi during a sermon three weeks ago.

"Let our enemies and those who hate us die," Yosef said then. "[PA President Abbas] and all these evil people should perish from this world. God should strike them with a plague, them and these Palestinians."

The statements were strongly condemned in Egypt and around the world.

Sources in the rabbi's home told *Ha'aretz* that since the statements were made, the rabbi "was very sorry" and looked for a way of sending a conciliatory message to the Palestinians.

"I support your efforts and praise all the leaders and the peoples – Egyptians, Jordanians and Palestinians – who are partners and wish the success of this important process of achieving peace in our region, and preventing bloodshed. May God grant you longevity and may you succeed in your efforts for peace and may there be peace in our region," Yosef wrote.

Israel Briefs

Talks were 'tough'

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas discussed "tough issues" at their meeting in Jerusalem, George Mitchell said. "They are tackling up front the issues that are at the centre of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," Mitchell, the U.S. Mideast envoy, told reporters following the meeting, the third between the two leaders in two days. "I will say that the two leaders are not leaving the tough issues to the end of their discussions. We take this as a strong indicator of their belief that peace is possible." Abbas travelled from Ramallah in the West Bank to Jerusalem on Sept. 15 for direct talks with Netanyahu at his official residence. They met first with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Mitchell.

Talks were held Sept. 14 in the Egyptian resort Sharm el-Sheik.

Havel joins Israel-friendly initiative

Israeli media reported that former Czech President Vaclav Havel joined an initiative to defend Israel in Europe and the West. The Friends of Israel announced the participation of Havel, a champion of human rights, during the group's inaugural Washington tour. Havel was not on the tour. Other former leaders on the initiative, founded in June, include Jose Maria Aznar, the former Spanish prime minister; David Trimble, the former Protestant leader in Northern Ireland and Nobel Peace laureate; and Alejandro Toledo, the former president of Peru. Havel, a playwright, was a hero of the left and right in the West during his decades of dissidence against Communist rule in the former Czechoslovakia.

In an address to the Council on Foreign Relations, Aznar said: "Defending Israel is ultimately defending our Western roots, the Western values that many in Europe, and some in America, seem to have forgotten."

Google eyes second Israeli start-up

Google reportedly will acquire a second Israeli start-up company. The Israeli business daily *Globes* reported that Google is paying "several million dollars" to purchase Quiksee, also known as MentorWave Technologies. Other reports put the purchase price at $10 million, though neither Google nor Quiksee has responded to the reports. The company's software reportedly enhanced Google's Street View feature by turning the video clip of a location uploaded to Google Maps into a virtual tour and an interactive experience, according to Globes. The Or Yehuda-based Quiksee was founded in 2002.

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Missiles expected to get to Hezbollah

Continued from page 1

Last month, *Ha'aretz* reported that Netanyahu had tried to sway his Russian counterpart, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, from completing the deal, reportedly saying the missiles could be transferred to Hezbollah and used against Israel Defence Forces troops, as was the case in the Second Lebanon War.

Speaking Friday, Serdyukov said that "the issue of selling the missiles to Syria was raised during the talks with U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates… Undoubtedly, it [the contract] would be fulfilled by the Russian side."

Responding to the *Ha'aretz* report last month, Sergei Prikhodko, a senior adviser to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, told RIA Novosti that Moscow would fulfil all agreements it had made with foreign countries and would not halt the deal.

"Lately, some Israeli media outlets have been actively disseminating information distorting Russia's position on the implementation of its obligations to Syria, including in the sphere of military and technical co-operation," Prikhodko said. "I would like to stress that the Russian Federation honours all the agreements that were previously signed between Russia and Syria."

In his talks with Putin last month, Netanyahu stressed Syria's transfer of advanced Russian anti-tank missiles to Hezbollah during the 2006 war, also mentioning the incident in which Syrian-acquired Chinese-made C-802 anti-shipping missiles were used by Hezbollah to target an Israeli destroyer.

Earlier this month, Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak made another reported attempt to stop the planned arms deal in conversations with both Putin and Serdyukov during his official visit to Russia.

Former Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert

U.S. offered to take 100,000 Palestinians: Olmert

JTA

JERUSALEM — The administration of former U.S. president George W. Bush offered to absorb 100,000 Palestinian refugees if Israel and the Palestinians reached a peace deal, Ehud Olmert said.

The former Israeli prime minister, speaking to the Geneva Initiative conference in Tel Aviv Sunday night, said that Israel had also agreed to absorb a symbolic amount of Palestinian refugees, a number he said to be fewer than 20,000.

Olmert said he had made the offer to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas during negotiations in 2008 as a resolution of the refugee problem, in line with the Arab League peace plan.

"If we had reached an agreement, it would have changed the map of the world and the entire Middle East. We are not to blame. If there is no agreement, it's because the Palestinian side was not prepared to take the extra step that we made," Olmert said.

He said that any resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must be based on the 1967 borders. He said the offer he made to Abbas also included giving control over Jerusalem's "holy basin," which includes the Old City, to a grouping of five countries.

Olmert said that the Obama administration is not hostile against Israel. "There is no difference between Bush's positions and Obama's positions," he asserted.

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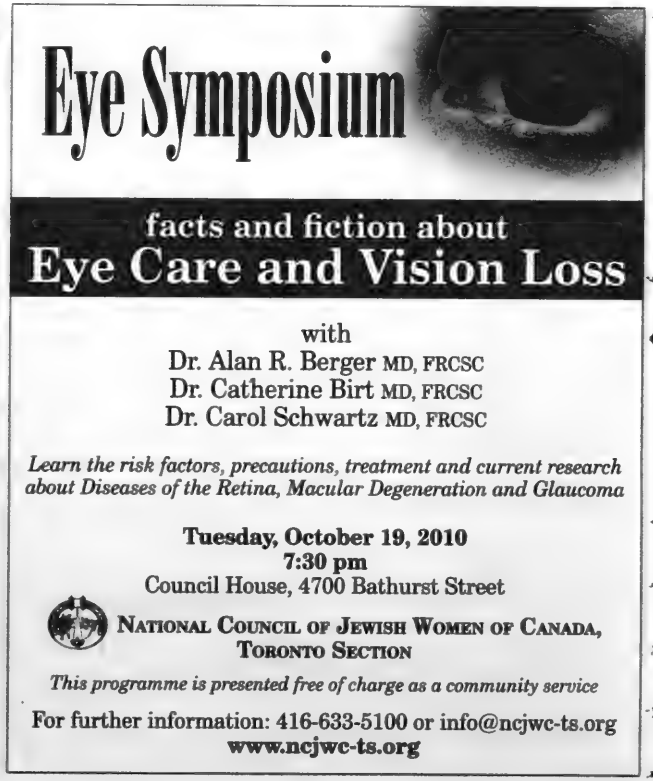
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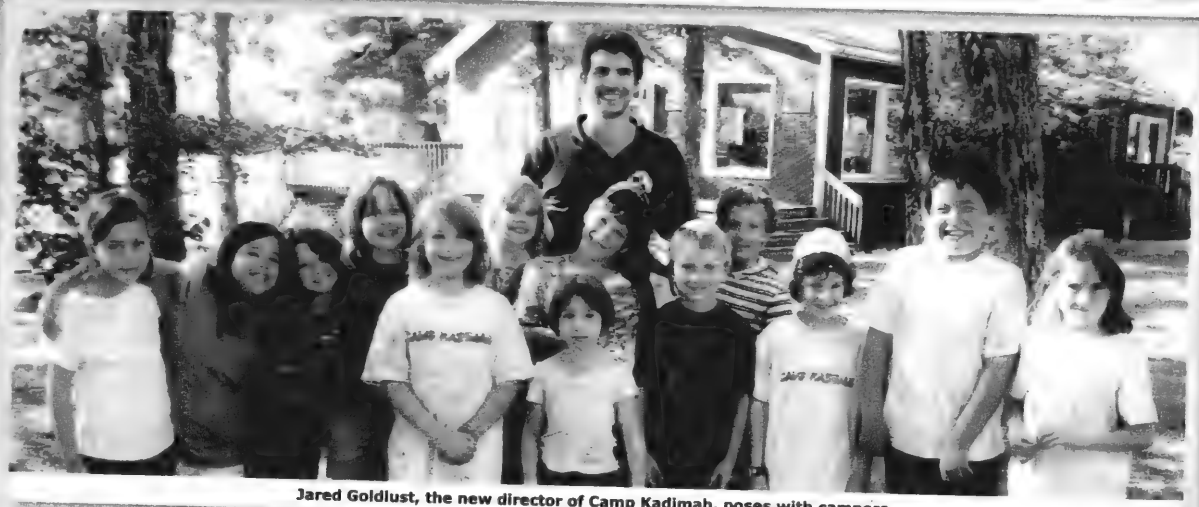
And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Brandeis graduate new camp director at Kadimah



Jared Goldlust, the new director of Camp Kadimah, poses with campers.

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

When Jared Goldlust was nine years old, he didn't like camp very much.

"My first camp experience, I went to Northland B'nai Brith," he said. "I was a very homesick child. My mom still has the letters. I really wanted to go home every minute."

Then, at 13, he went to Camp Kadimah, in Nova Scotia, and everything changed.

"When I got to Kadimah, I realized the staff members were on the lookout for me. They wanted to spend their summers with the kids," said Goldlust.

And now, at 25, he'll be continuing that pattern. Goldlust is the second person to receive the Robert and Elisa Spungen Bildner Fellowship, awarded by the Foundation for Jewish Camp to help foster the future of Jewish camping. The fellowship, or scholarship, allowed Goldlust to get a dual master's and MBA degree in Jewish professional leadership at Brandeis' Heller School for Social Policy and Management and at the Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership Program at Brandeis, where the Torontonian specialized in Jewish camping.

Receiving the fellowship was, for Goldlust, "an incredible opportunity. I knew I couldn't pass it up."

He received his bachelor's degree in recreation management at Dalhousie University before attending Brandeis, where he learned about the broader Jewish community.

"I always cared a lot about the Jewish community, but I never really delved into how it operated and organized itself," he said.

"I loved sitting in class [at Brandeis] and talking about how the Jewish community is engaging Jews around North America."

For Goldlust, Jewish camping was never just a past time.

The graduate spent several years as a counsellor at Camp Kadimah before taking over for the director while she was on maternity leave. Now, after graduating from Brandeis, he'll be the permanent director of Camp Kadimah. He'll spend some time in its new Toronto office while he gets ready for next summer.

"When I was all done school... I realized camp is the place I love," he said. "Most people [working] at camp have a mindset of, 'When am I going to move into the real world?' But I had the realization that camp could be the real world."

Even as a camper, Goldlust knew that camp was more than just a place to socialize.

"I was forced at times to go outside my comfort zones and encouraged, whether it's speaking in front of a large group, running a station during an evening program," he said. "I knew right away that I wanted to be a counsellor at Camp Kadimah. One big part of it is giving back to the place that gave to you."

For Eve Rudin, the director of camp excellence and advancement at the Federation of Jewish Camping, an organization that supports Jewish camping throughout North America, Goldlust was a natural candidate for the fellowship, which included a stipend as well as the initial scholarship.

"He received [the fellowship] in 2008. We were looking for someone who had a commitment to an experience in Jewish summer camp. Someone who desires to make that their profession in their career. Someone who has leadership qualities, charisma and was also going to be able to withstand the program," she said. "Jared stood out. He has very strong leadership qualities... I would say [we liked] his energy, his enthusiasm and commitment to the field."

For Rudin, the fellowship is an important step in fostering Jewish camping.

"Jewish summer camps... are the most effective way to build a Jewish identity for the future," said Rudin. "It's an immersive environment, where [campers and staff] can experience Jewish living. Every moment of camp is an opportunity for making it a Jewish experience."

Goldlust agrees. To the new director, Kadimah's camp ground is the ideal setting for creating a Jewish identity.

"What goes on at camp is the informal, fun element of being Jewish. It's the experience and socialization that's done in such a unique way at camp that's so very different than formal schools," he said.

"Camp creates an environment where... [campers] develop a strong sense of pride and Jewish identity, especially when they have Jewish role models who aren't much older than them."

Goldlust plans to enhance this at Kadimah in his new role.

"I have high hopes for this place... For me, moving forward is, 'How do I continue to develop our programs and people here so that we have an amazing summer camp?'" he said, adding that he'll be concentrating on forging connections in the new Toronto office, since many campers come from the city.

Michael Pink, the co-chairman of Camp Kadimah, is confident Goldlust will succeed.

"I've known Jared probably for the last five to seven years. I've watched him as a staff member move into more and more senior positions," he said.

"He'd make a great director because he knows and understands the Kadimah culture... he has the right mix of personality and academic background and maturity to run a summer camp."

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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By BILL GLADSTONE

CANADIAN JEWISH FICTION TO GO ONLINE

A Canadian-based Internet *Journal of Jewish Fiction*, dedicated to showcasing the finest contemporary Jewish writing in English (or English translation) debuts this month. The inaugural issue features works by an impressive list of contributors, including **Elie Wiesel**, **Chava Rosenfarb**, **Steve Stern**, **Nava Semel**, **Thane Rosenbaum**, **Gabriel Josipovici** and **Alan David Gold**

The journal's founder is **Nora Gold**, herself an accomplished novelist and short-story writer. The website's launch date is Sept. 29. www.jewishfiction.net

* * *

Israeli Bassist Performs: Israeli bassist **Avishai Cohen** makes his Toronto debut during the North American release tour of his CD, *Aurora*, recorded on the Blue Note label. Cohen mixes musical styles from **Bach** to **Stevie Wonder** with the Sephardi melodies he learned in childhood and material he learned while playing with jazz great **Chick Corea** and others in New York. Cohen sings in Hebrew, English, Spanish and Ladino. Isabel Bader Theatre, Tuesday, Oct. 19. $30, $45; students $18 in advance. www.avishaicohenmusic.com

* * *

Film and TV

• The Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *The Wooden Gun* (*Roveh Hulliot*), a gripping coming-of-age drama that's a classic of the Israeli cinema. With guest speaker **Mark Clamen**. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Al Green Theatre. Rush seats on sale 15 minutes before each screening; $15, $10. Sunday, Sept. 26, 4 and 7:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• The Toronto Jewish Film Festival's next Chai Tea & A Movie features *Broken Promise*, the Slovakian-made 2009 feature based on a true story about a Jewish boy forced to make some risky decisions in order to survive World War II. Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Centre, Yonge and Sheppard. Sunday, Oct. 17, tea 4 p.m., film at 5. www.tjff.com

• Actor-photographer **Leonard Nimoy**, Muslim sexologist **Heba Kotb**, Gay Christian broadcaster **Justin Lee** and Jewish pin-up girl **Jamie Sneider** are among the subjects featured in Sex + Religion, a new documentary series beginning on VisionTV Sept. 20 at 11 p.m.

* * *

Arts in Brief

•**Alan Lee**, **Michelle Cabral**, 13-year-old **Marianna Viele** and others star in *The 3rd Degree*, a musical comedy from Chicken Coop Theatre. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Sept. 21 to 25. $30. www.the3rddegree.webs.com

• *Sex Pies & A Few White Lies* is a one-woman show by **Monica Parker**, whose motto is, "Life is short, eat dessert first!" $25, $20, $10. City Playhouse Theatre, Sept. 24 to 26. 905-882-7469.

• Active Seniors at the Miles Nadal JCC plans an inter-generational program that includes a complimentary fall guided visit to the Royal Ontario Museum and get-acquainted lunches with students. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

• Russian-Canadian-Jewish cellist and conductor **Yuli Turovsky** and his renowned **I Musici de Montréal** open the new season of Mooredale Concerts on Sunday, Oct. 3. The program features works by **Elgar**, **Tchaikovsky**, **Turina** and **Godowsky**. 416-587-9411, www.mooredaleconcerts.com

•Back by popular demand, **Robert Adams** will review *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* by **Muriel Barbary** on Oct.5, 8 p.m. and Oct. 6, 2 p.m. at the University of Toronto's Hart House Theatre. For tickets, call 416-978-8849. Adams will also be reviewing **Elie Wiesel's** *The Forgotten* at a free event at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, 100 Elder St. Nov.2 at 7:30 p.m. 416-633-3838.

* * *

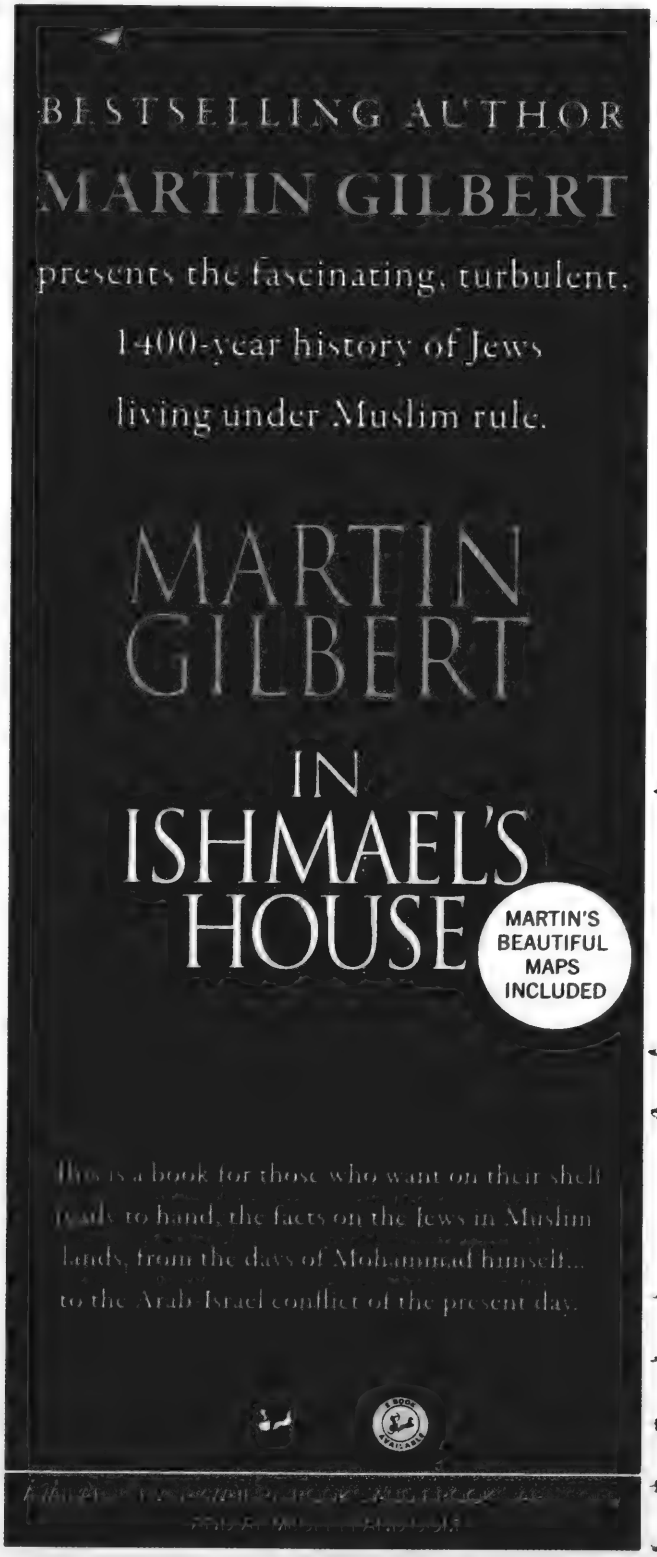
At the Galleries

• *El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You About Africa* is an exhibition of works by one of Africa's most famous contemporary artists, created over his 40-year career, before they travel to New York to inaugurate the new Museum for African Art. ROM, Oct. 2 to Jan. 2, 2011.

• Photographer **Rafael Goldchain** is among the artists featured in the exhibition *131*, at the O'Born Contemporary Gallery's new home at 131 Ossington Ave. Sept. 25 to Oct. 23. www.oborncontemporary.com

• Acrylic paintings by **Heeny Levy** are on view at the Annex Gallery, 1073 Bathurst St., below Dupont, until Sept. 26. 416-516-0110.

Untitled **by Rafael Goldchain**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to the Arab-Israel conflict of the present day.

A new 'sound' for Buster Keaton

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Toronto pianist and singer Fern Lindzon is participating in a unique project being put on by the Toronto International Film Festival.

"I was commissioned by TIFF to write a score for a Buster Keaton movie," she says. The score will be performed live when the silent movie, *Sherlock Jr.*, is screened at the Bell Lighthouse Theatre on Sept. 26.

"They were probably looking for something a little bit out of the ordinary," she says, and they wanted a klezmer flavour. "The film works very well with a klezmer groove."

Fern Lindzon

Lindzon will be joined on stage with five other musicians who will perform as the movie is played on the screen above them. "Hopefully, high enough so when I raise my arms, people won't see my underarms," she jokes.

Lindzon has never written a film score before, and worked on it for a couple of months. "I've probably seen some scenes a couple of hundred times, especially those scenes where the timing is split-second."

She says the score is not exclusively klezmer, but will include free improvisation and jazz.

The movie, which is ranked 62nd in the American Film Institute's list of funny films, is on TIFF's 100 Essential Films list. It features nutty chase scenes, bad guys, slapstick and a crazy dream sequence with astonishing editing.

"It's amazing what they could do in 1922 with scissors and tape," Lindzon says.

The free event is part of the city of Toronto's Culture Days, and it will be performed four times on Sept. 26 at 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. The Bell Lightbox Theatre is at Reitman Square at the corner of King and John streets, Toronto.

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Yearning for love in *The Matchmaker*

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Avi Nesher's coming-of-age film, *The Matchmaker*, brims with the yearning for romance and love, the pain and loss of the Holocaust and the wonderment of adolescence.

These deep-seated, roiling human emotions play out in the Israeli port city of Haifa in the summer of 1968, when Arik (Tuval Shafir), a 16-year-old curious teen, finds a job with Yankele Bride (Adir Miller), a reclusive matchmaker and Holocaust survivor.

Screened at the Toronto International Film Festival, *The Matchmaker* opens as Hezbollah rockets rain down on Haifa during the tumult of the Second Lebanon War in 2006.

As the jagged blare of an ambulance siren fills the air, Arik learns he has come into a substantial inheritance from the man who once employed him.

The film then flashes back 38 years, to the time Arik procured potential clients for Yankele, a mysterious, persistent and kind-hearted matchmaker and occasional smuggler who works out of a bakery near the seedy waterfront and whose mission in life is to match up lonely souls.

Dedicated to matching up people who seek "real love" as opposed to "hanky-panky," Yankele recruits Arik after he and his naughty friends try to deceive him in a juvenile practical joke. Their deception leads Yankele to Arik's father, an old, lost friend from prewar Romania.

Plunging into his work with zeal, determination and curiosity, Arik discovers a world far removed from his own experiences as he meets an assortment of unusual characters.

They include Clara (Maya Dagan), an attractive but fragile Holocaust survivor whom Yankele desires and who runs an illegal gambling den in her apartment; Sylvia (Bat-El Papura), the owner of a movie theatre who was subjected to Nazi medical experiments and who now hungers for a husband, and Meir (Dror Kenen), a socially awkward librarian who also has an eye on Clara.

Not surprisingly, Arik is hardly immune to the call of love. He falls for Tamara (Neta Porat), a demure young woman who looks especially striking in a bathing suit.

Boldly imaginative in conception and execution, *The Matchmaker* largely unfolds in what Yankele accurately describes as Haifa's "low-rent" district, a somewhat shabby, but colourful, neighbourhood dotted with bars and theatres and inhabited by new Jewish immigrants, Israeli Arabs and prostitutes.

Adir Miller, right, and Tuval Shafir in *The Matchmaker*.

Nesher, an able director who has a knack for creating a mood of plausibility in his movies, extracts credible performances from the cast.

Miller projects an air of mystery, while Dagan exudes personal tragedy Papura radiates sadness and desperation and Kenen emits both vulnerability and calculation.

Shafir, who carries much of the film on his young shoulders, turns in a remarkably mature performance.

The Matchmaker, which is 118 minutes in length, is a fine, sensitively made film about broken people from the old world trying to mend themselves in a new land.

The Debt, a thriller, jangles the nerves

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

After all the foreign intrigue, fisticuffs and bang-bang, *The Debt* is a good old-fashioned morality tale.

A Hollywood staple, in other words.

Screened at the Toronto International Film Festival last week and adapted from an eponymous Israeli movie, *The Debt* is a political thriller turning on vengeance and justice and set in Israel, Germany and Ukraine over a 30-year period.

Shifting easily between the 1960s and 1990s, John Madden's picture is ostensibly about a Mossad team tasked with the mission of capturing a Nazi war criminal, known as the Surgeon of Treblinka, in his lair in East Berlin.

Subliminally, however, *The Debt* addresses an important philosophical issue: How important is truth compared to country? This is the question that permeates the film, which stars the accomplished British actress Helen Mirren as Rachel Singer, one of the Mossad agents.

Unfolding to Thomas Newman's alternately pulsating and eerie musical score, *The Debt* opens at an airport in Israel in the mid-1960s as the three members of the Mossad team disembark from the belly of an airplane to a hero's welcome.

The young Rachel (Jessica Chastain), David (Sam Worthington) and Stefan (Marton Csokas) have just completed their mission with astonishing success.

The film fast-forwards to Tel Aviv, circa 1997, as the older Rachel (Mirren) attends a glittering book launching party. Written by her daughter Sarah (Romi Aboulafia), it celebrates her mother's central role in the capture of Dieter Vogel, a German physician accused of carrying out gruesome, inhumane medical experiments on Jews in the Treblinka death camp.

At this point, *The Debt* seamlessly fades back to 1965. Arriving in East Berlin, Rachel links up with the blustery Stefan and the reclusive David. She studies horrific photographs of the Holocaust, while she and Stefan practise hand-to-hand combat.

Vogel (Jesper Christensen), the object of their mission, works in a fertility clinic. Rachel visits him in the guise of a patient. As he examines her, he contemptuously refers to a Jewish colleague as an "old Jew," thereby confirming his ingrained anti-Semitism.

Having established Vogel's whereabouts, the Mossad squad hatches a daring scheme to apprehend him. But the plan goes awry and the agents are forced to watch over Vogel in a safe house until he can be flown to Israel to stand trial.

These scenes, shot in a grimy flat and a dark railway station, add to the mounting tension.

No pushover, Vogel refuses to co-operate. He initially refuses to eat and plays malicious mind games with them. While professing to admire the attachment of Jews to their roots, he spits out a series of taunts: Jews only know how to die and have no right to live. Rachel and her co-agents must exercise enormous self-restraint in the face of these gratuitous insults.

Much to their anger and embarrassment, Vogel manages to escape. Concocting a lie for the consumption of their superiors in Jerusalem, since failure is not an option, the agents return to Israel, covered in glory.

But three decades later, the case is reopened when a man in Kiev claims to be Vogel. Stefan (Tom Wilkinson), now a senior official in the Mossad, orders Rachel to finish the job. She reluctantly agrees, haunted by the spectre of her failure to capture Vogel in the first place.

As she homes in on her quarry, Rachel is torn by the moral qualm that her false cover story unjustly transformed her into a heroine. With ease, Mirren conveys the range of Rachel's emotions.

The Debt, cleanly and efficiently directed by Madden, works on two different levels. As a thriller, it jangles the nerves nicely. As a morality tale, it is suitably thought-provoking.

Israel's 'Elton John' makes his Toronto debut

Rami Kleinstein

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

TEL AVIV — Israel's "Elton John," pianist, singer and composer Rami Kleinstein, performs in Toronto for the first time next month.

Kleinstein, 48, brings his Intimate Piano Performance tour to the city's Glenn Gould Studio on Oct. 2, after stops in Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Kansas City.

"I'm really looking forward to it," says Kleinstein over espresso and cigarettes at the Idelson Café near the Tel Aviv port, where he moved recently. "I was in Toronto as a kid, but I never performed there."

The pop/soft rock legend says he thrives on playing for new audiences. "I think about it like going out on a date," he says. "It's much like courting. I charm the audience, and they charm me back. It's a give-and-take thing."

He gets particular joy from charming audiences in North America. "For me, I feel I have a special responsibility when I play shows in North America, like I'm extending a cultural arm, bringing a taste of Israeli culture."

Kleinstein was born in New York and moved to Israel when he was eight. His love affair with music started even before then. Recalls Kleinstein, he visited Israel for a year with his family before making the big move, and they had a neighbour with a piano. Even before he took lessons, he could play almost anything by ear. "That's why I say I didn't really choose the piano, the piano chose me," he says.

Musical talent is something that runs in the Kleinstein clan. Kleinstein's grandfather, from Latvia, played the balalaika in a band that travelled to Lebanon and Egypt to play for British camps in the 1920s and 30s. Kleinstein's father, a scientist, studied the clarinet, and his mother, the violin. Both of Kleinstein's daughters, Meshi, 18, and Noam, 9, are musically inclined, and this year Meshi was drafted to sing in an Israel Defence Forces entertainment group. "There is DNA," says Kleinstein.

Of course, the lessons didn't hurt. Kleinstein studied classical music with Israel's famous instructors, the Barenboims (Daniel Barenboim is a conductor), until he joined the army in 1980 and became director of the military band IDF 80. In 1985, he produced his first song, *Your Wonder Has Yet to Be Done*. The release of his first album in 1986, *The Day of the Bomb*, put both him and his ex-wife, Rita, one of Israel's superstar singers, on the map.

Since then, Kleinstein has released 10 albums, three of which went triple platinum and one of which went gold. He has produced live shows and albums for top Israeli musicians, including Gidi Gov, Yehudit Ravitz and Danny Bassan. He has even written a movie soundtrack. In 1995, he was named Israel Radio and Television's Singer of the Year on the release of his most famous album, *Apples and Dates*, and just this summer, *A Star Is Born*, the Israeli version of *American Idol*, did a retrospective dedicated to him and his work.

Although Kleinstein is an Israeli musician through and through, he says if you listen closely to his music you can hear the strong North American influence. He says his primary influences were Anglos – Bruce Springsteen, the Beatles, Paul Simon and James Taylor, to name a few.

"[My Israeli contemporaries] grew up on stuff that I didn't," he says. "When you hear my music, you can hear the orientation of an American."

Kleinstein takes this as part and parcel of being an immigrant. "There will always be a part of me that's missing here, in a sense," he says. "But as much as I have changed the Israeli music scene with my art, the Israeli music scene has had its influence on me. In the end, it's a fusion."

Recently, Kleinstein has been gripped by newfound inspiration. Ever since his divorce three years ago, he has been a fount of creative output. "After the separation, it took me time to find my own motion. I think I have found it now. I am at a very, very creative stage in my life right now," he says. "I am much more creative and focused than I have ever been. I am just bursting with creativity."

Part of this, he attributes to living in central Tel Aviv. "I think it's probably one of the most special cities in the world," he says. "I feel all this noise and motion, the vibe here, really working for me."

In addition to his piano-man concert circuit, he has his own band, the Council, and has been playing shows with all kinds of musicians – big bands, small bands, single acts – as well as producing concerts for other musicians and collaborating with artists and lyricists, among them Daniel Salomon, Danny Sanderson, Tamir Harpaz, and Yair Lapid. He also released a new double album this year, *Rami Kleinstein Live*, with three new songs.

These days, he aims to release a new song every few months. "It's really important for me to keep on pushing new stuff," he says. Kleinstein says this is the future of the music industry. "Music has evolved with computers and the Internet and Napster and iTunes, and albums with 12 songs are not as appealing to audiences as they once were. People don't buy albums, they buy songs."

That's not to say there is no room on the market for albums anymore, but the concept of the album has changed, and must really tell a story. Kleinstein recently commenced work on a compilation album of nostalgic songs from childhood. "This is a special project, a special playlist," he says.

Kleinstein comes to Toronto courtesy of Motek Productions, which has brought other Israeli entertainers to the city, including Berry Sakharof and the Idan Raichel Project.

For tickets ($35-95) to Kleinstein's Toronto show, call 647-899-0071 or visit www.motekproductions.com. Includes an open bar and appetizers at 8 p.m. and opening act, mentalist Haim Goldenberg, at 9:15 p.m.

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Darkness at the edge of town

It was for the best that Jonathan Franzen angered Oprah Winfrey, following her announcement that his novel *The Corrections* would be part of her program's Book Club. The resulting publicity surrounding his being disinvited from the show didn't hurt the novel's sales, and there was likely little the two could have discussed to any useful end.

Though Franzen is affable and thoughtful in his meetings with media figures, his fictional portraits of America are dark – they buzz with smart, ironic characters who find it impossible to be at ease – in a way that is at odds with Winfrey's goal of sunny uplift. As young Americans at the top of their field, Franzen and Winfrey might be said to offer uniquely contrary views of their country's successes and failures.

Franzen's new novel, *Freedom* (HarperCollins Canada), is as an examination of American verities, ideals and desires. Set in part in Minnesota in the middle years of this decade, it is not entirely removed from the calamity of Sept. 11, 2001. But it is more directly focused on contemporary environmental idealism and the apocalyptic fears that can drive such ideals.

The bravura early chapters of *Freedom* take place in St. Paul, Minn., and so, tell a story about a place and time that is fresh with particularity and exoticism for readers who live in or know American locales more readily found in fiction. The writer who haunts these sections is F. Scott Fitzgerald, who was himself from St. Paul, and whose masterful, lyrical critique of the American dream, *The Great Gatsby*, is one of the books readers might want to reach for upon finishing *Freedom*.

In interviews, Franzen repeats his desire to create popular narratives with characters and plot lines that grab readers through their sheer energy. In this, he succeeds in *Freedom*, with its detailed portrait of Walter and Patty Berglund, who stand as representative figures of their age. In his satiric portrait of Patty, Franzen confronts the idealism as well as the materialism and attendant emptiness that he sees at the core of his generation's middle-class ideals. Here, it is Philip Roth's *American Pastoral* that seems to underwrite the family romance that tears the Berglunds apart. Franzen shares Roth's fascination with the way that parents, meaning well but doing worse, create private disasters they cannot escape.

This aspect of *Freedom* may feel corrosive, or at least provocative to readers who hope that a child and a parent can share a straightforward, uncompromised friendship. Such things evade the Berglunds and most everyone else they come into contact with. It is from such difficulties between smart, self-conscious, often enervated characters that much of the novel's narrative energy comes.

One of Franzen's key differences from a writer like Roth is his disinterest in fixing his narrative in relation to a single community. Themes associated with Jewish American life have a strange and haunting presence in the novel, but Franzen is interested in "America" in the broadest terms, letting his narrative shift from the Midwest, to New York City and farther south to catch the broadest exemplary range of American social and private life.

In the novel's bigness (576 pages) – its length and reach and detail – it is reminiscent of the most challenging work by Don DeLillo, whose astringent, bleakly funny style lurks beneath the surface of Franzen's prose. And it is DeLillo's epic novel, *Underground*, which sets the tone for Franzen's discomforting portrayal of post-Sept. 11 New York: "Then came a freezing Thursday afternoon, a sky of uniform greyness, a light snow that made the downtown skyline's negative space less negative, blurring the Woolworth building and its fairy-tale turrets, gently slanting in the weather's tensors down the Hudson and out into the dark Atlantic..."

Reviews of *Freedom* have characterized it as a key novel for our time. Its dialogue with masterpieces such as *The Great Gatsby*, *American Pastoral* and *Underground* place it in an influential line of American self-examination begun almost a century ago. When you've got a good conversation going with such illustrious counterparts, you don't need Oprah's Book Club to get the word out.

Norman Ravvin's new novel is The Joyful Child, *from Gaspereau Press. He is Chair of the Concordia Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.*

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Coast to Coast

Israel, Canada to share work on F-35 fighters

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Canada and Israel experienced a brief frisson of diplomatic tension late last month when military technology developer Lockheed Martin granted Israel a lucrative maintenance contract on the development of its new F-35 Lightning II – a.k.a. the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) aircraft – despite not having invested in production of the warplane.

Canada and other NATO allies, such as Denmark, Italy and Britain, had all previously committed funds to develop the stealth fighter in order to secure domestic industrial contracts on the fighter.

In early August, Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak and Defence Ministry Director General Udi Shani visited the United States and met with senior officials in the Pentagon, as well as representatives of Lockheed Martin, to discuss Israel's role in the maintenance contract and purchase of the aircraft.

They agreed that Israel would buy an initial squadron of 20 F-35 jets – at a total cost of $2.75 billion (US) – from the first production series and would only install a few Israel-made systems.

The Americans, meanwhile, agreed that if Israel buys more F-35 squadrons from later production series of the aircraft, the installation of more Israeli-made systems would be allowed. Israel has expressed its desire to eventually purchase 75 planes in total.

To sweeten the deal, Lockheed Martin said it would buy parts and systems for the F-35 from Israeli companies at a cost of $4 billion.

The F-35 fighter aircraft *[Lockheed Martin photo]*

It's this latter incentive that had some Canadian military and industry officials asking why Lockheed Martin would offer such a deal to Israel, but the government shrugged off suggestions of any ill will toward the deal.

Jay Paxton, a spokesperson for the Department of National Defence, told *The CJN* that Canada "welcomed" Israel's purchase of the jets.

"The government of Israel recently signed an industrial participation plan with Lockheed Martin to facilitate Israeli participation in the JSF program. The plan is… similar to the one Canada signed with Lockheed Martin in 2006," he wrote in an e-mail.

Paxton added that Canada will also receive "a decrease" in the price of its jets as a result of Israel's acquisition.

"As well, Canadian industry will reap millions in additional contracts building parts for Israeli jets," he added.

In a Sept. 10 report in the *Vancouver Sun*, Defence Minister Peter Mackay said Canada has contributed nearly $170 million to develop the F-35 and that Canadian firms have already been awarded close to $300 million in contracts for the plane.

The government plans to spend $9 billion to buy the fighters for Canada's Air Force, but it has been criticized by opposition parties for not obtaining guaranteed industrial regional benefits from Lockheed Martin in exchange.

With files from Ha'aretz

Court rejects Israeli's refugee claim

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A Federal Court judge in Toronto has turned down a refugee claim by a Ukrainian immigrant to Israel, upholding a refugee board's finding that the man's refusal to serve in the military would not lead to persecution that warrants refugee status.

Judge Michael Kelen found that the refugee protection division (RPD) of the Immigration and Refugee Board had reasonable grounds to conclude that Yuriy Goltsberg left Israel because of the fear of terrorist attacks, not due to fear of persecution or any ground that would have met the legal definition of a refugee.

Goltsberg, who became an Israeli citizen, faced the same danger as other Israelis, and fear of terror is not grounds for a refugee claim, the judge ruled.

Furthermore, Goltsberg's claim he could not kill anyone while serving in the military is likewise insufficient, the judge said.

"[Goltsberg] in this case made no efforts to seek an exemption from Israeli military service, despite the availability of medical-psychological exemptions, and a specialized committee which exists to accommodate conscientious observers. The applicant provided no explanation for his failure to even make inquiries into the possibility of an exemption… It was open to the RPD to find that the applicant did not rebut the presumption of state protection, which in this case is particularly strong since Israel is a democratic country with specific mechanisms designed to accommodate persons similarly situated to the applicant."

Kelen also noted that the refugee protection division found Goltsberg waited three years after his arrival in Canada in 2004 before he claimed refugee protection.

"This is a significant delay, which the applicant [Goltsberg] failed to explain. It was reasonably open to the RPD to find that the applicant's explanation, that he waited to see if the security situation in Israel was improving, could reasonably excuse the delay. It was reasonably open to the RPD to find that the applicant's delay indicated that he feared terrorism and not his compulsory military service and draw a negative inference as to his credibility," Kelen ruled.

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Pressel finishes seventh at Canadian tour event

By HARVEY ROSEN
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — The last time a Jewish female pro golfer passed this way was in 1992, when the Du Maurier Ltd. Classic was held in Winnipeg at the St. Charles Golf and Country Club

Back then Amy Alcott was already a golfing legend. She would eventually be elected to the World Golf Hall of Fame following 30 seasons on the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tour, during which she won 29 championships, including five majors

Playing in that same tournament was a less-well-known 33-year-old golfer also pursuing her dream, Nancy Rubin, who was raised in a Conservative Jewish home in Pittsburgh. But while Alcott, 36 at the time, had already tasted the thrill of victory multiple times, Nancy had yet to capture a title following a dozen years of frustration. She played from 1980 to 1995, never winning a pro title. Her career best finish was a third-place showing in 1983 at the Inamore Classic, plus three top-20 finishes in 1990, when she earned a total of just over $50,000 (all figures US).

Fast forward to August 2010 and the CN Canadian Women's Open, a $2.25 million LPGA Tour event. Played again at St. Charles, another Jewish phenom graced the leader board, the talented and articulate Morgan Pressel, 22, who oozes personality.

Pressel finished the tournament in seventh place after rounds of 72-66-74-69 for a score of 281, just two strokes out of second and five back of the winner Michelle Wie.

Pressel earned $64,276 for her efforts, bringing her year's win total to $646,217, 11th overall among money leaders, only $20,000 behind Wie.

So far this season, she won the Japan LPGA Salonpas Cupher in May and finished second in the Evian Masters, which earned her $243,000. She's finished in the top 10 seven times.

Pressel, who has often stated that her Jewish faith plays a large role in her life, has taken home $3.5 million in winnings during her brief career.

Morgan Pressel

Her stats suggest she's at her best off the tee and on the green. At 77 per cent, she's fourth overall in keeping the ball on the fairways, and she's tied for first in putting when hitting the green in regulation, averaging 1.75 puts per green. She's also seventh on the tour in birdies, ninth in overall putting average (28.89 per round) and is 10th in scoring average at 71.08.

Pressel, who from 2006 to 2010 played in 114 tournaments and made the cut 101 times, was particularly impressed with Canadian fans and offered that "I always enjoy coming here to Canada. I've always felt we should come here more often because the crowds are so tremendous. Everybody really loves their golf here."

More than 65,000 spectators took in the tournament, just short of the event's record set in Ottawa in 2008.

On the Tuesday prior to the event, Pressel participated in a Callaway function, which included breakfast and a clinic at the largely Jewish Glendale Country Club.

The Tampa, Florida-born athlete was raised in a Jewish home the child of Mike Pressel and Kathy Krickstein Pressel.

At age 12 she became the youngest player to qualify for the U.S. Women's Open, a record that stood six years until it was broken by Alexis Thompson, another 12-year old only several months her junior.

She finished her amateur career as 2005 American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) junior girls player of the year after winning a total of 11 AJGA titles. That same year, Pressel won the U.S. Women's Amateur title and was a member of the champion Junior Solheim Cup Team.

The young prodigy turned pro after appealing to the LPGA to become a member one year prior to her 18th birthday. She played part-time on the tour while still attending high school.

In 2007, Pressel was one of three co-leaders starting the final round of the U.S. Women's Open in Denver. She was tied for first on the 18th but scored a bogey and lost by two strokes, finishing tied for second.

That same year, she earned her first victory at the Kraft Nabisco Championship and by so doing became the youngest-ever winner of an LPGA major golf tournament, seven weeks short of her 19th birthday.

Needless to say, sponsors sought her out in growing numbers after she captured two additional events.

Her meteoric rise was interrupted by tragedy when in September 2003, at age 15, she lost her mother, Kathy, to breast cancer. At that time, her grandparents, Evelyn and Herb Krickstein, a retired physician and pathologist who is also her coach, took her in while her two siblings remained with their father. Sister Madison now plays golf for the University of Texas.

Already a five-year tour veteran, Pressel spoke prior to the start of the CN Canadian Open at a sponsor's breakfast and shared her own surprise at being so successful at both the amateur and pro games at such a young age.

"It's very exciting and an honour having major champion next to your name. It's something I'll have for my whole career and it'll never go away," she said. "Future winners will only get younger."

Pressel doesn't worry much about the even younger competitors who are following her because, "as tough as the competition is getting I'm getting better. I'm definitely more confident," she said.

Pressel said that sometimes she has to pinch herself when she contemplates how far she has come. "I knew I wanted to play golf professionally when I was 12, when I first qualified for the Women's Open. Doing what I love at such a young age and meeting so many people is so great. If I wasn't in golf now, I'd probably still be in school maybe become a doctor."

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Hats off to a woman who's helping the IDF

Channah Koppel

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

Three years ago when her eldest son was 20 and serving a five-month winter term in Hermon in Israel's snowy northwestern tip as an Israel Defence Forces paratrooper, Channah Koppel decided she had to help.

"He said all the boys in his unit were cold. I wanted to do something to say thank you for being out there in the cold and looking out for us," says Koppel, 44, who, in 1986, moved to Israel from Montreal, where her father had served as Rabbi of Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem in Cote St-Luc.

Koppel mobilized her Chicks with Sticks knitting/crocheting group in Gush Etzion, and that winter, she sent the first shipment of 10 tuques to her son's unit. Thus, Hats for IDF Soldiers was born.

"Soon, other soldiers saw the hats and wanted to have them too," Koppel says, explaining that the winter nights in the Negev desert in the south can also be bitingly cold. "All of a sudden, I thought we're going to need a lot more hats."

An IDF soldier wears a 'Koppel' creation

Koppel posted ads on Internet sites to solicit knitters and crocheters. "I can't explain how quickly it exploded," she says. "In no time, people started sending my postings out to synagogue and school lists and to people who knit, and it just mushroomed."

What started with a few knitters and crocheters in Gush Etzion quickly expanded into a global network of hundreds of knitters and crocheters from Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Israel. To date, this network of well over 700 have knitted and crocheted more than 12,000 tuques for IDF soldiers in combat units.

"It has grown into this incredible network of kind and giving people," Koppel says, "and it really started from nothing. It just happened."

Koppel suggests that "a lot of people seem to really connect with [the project] because it's immediate and personal and not complicated. You make a hat with your own hands and it goes on a soldier's head," she says. "It's very different from writing a big check. It's a small, personal gesture and people seem to enjoy doing it. The soldiers are also very touched to receive them. It warms both their body and soul."

Each hat arrives with a label that reads: "Knit for you with warmth and love" (in Hebrew), and a personal note. The labels are produced as a charitable donation by a graphic artist and printer from Efrat.

The hats follow a strict pattern to meet IDF specifications. For instance, they must be made of black machine-washable wool, according to certain measurements.

Although the IDF supplies soldiers with a hat in their kit bag, it is made of synthetic fibres such as fleece, is not adjustable for different head sizes and doesn't fit easily under helmets. "I hear from soldiers all the time that the hats we make are the ones they actually wear," Koppel says.

Two winters ago, Koppel partnered with A Package from Home, a non-profit organization that sends packages to IDF soldiers with no family in Israel, to distribute the hats to lone combat soldiers. "I wanted to reach more soldiers," says Koppel, who now sends some of the hats to A Package from Home for direct distribution.

This winter, Koppel hopes to distribute at least 5,000 hats. "We live [in Israel] and here [the army] is something we all have to do. It's not like in Canada. We don't have the same kind of relations with our neighbours here," she says. "These [combat soldiers] are really putting themselves out there on the line for us. These are the people who really deserve an extra thank you."

For more about Hats for IDF Soldiers, visit http://hatsforisraelisoldiers.blogspot.com

CHEESECAKE BALL

8oz pkg cream cheese, softened
½ c. softened butter (no substitutes)
¼ tsp vanilla extract
¾ c. confectioner's sugar
2 tbsp. brown sugar
⅔ c. mini chocolate chips (must be mini)
⅔ c. finely chopped pecans
Graham crackers

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, butter & vanilla until fluffy. Gradually add sugars, beat until just combined. Stir in chocolate chips*. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours. Place cream cheese mixture on a large piece of plastic wrap and shape into a ball. Refrigerate at least 1 hour. Just before serving, roll cheese ball in pecans. Serve with graham crackers.
*You may add flavors such as toffee chips, peanut butter chips, along with chocolate chips ... chop into smaller pieces.

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REMEMBERING OUR YESTERDAYS

By BILL GLADSTONE

ALBERT EINSTEIN AND MEYER WEISGAL

American journalist Meyer Weisgal, right, came to Toronto to be editor of the *Jewish Standard*, a magazine that first appeared 80 years ago, in 1930, to counter anti-Zionistic editorials that Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath wrote for a rival Jewish publication. Under Weisgal, the *Jewish Standard* reached a high point in Canadian Jewish journalism – "truly an international journal of the highest level," historian Ben Kayfetz once wrote – but it went downhill after his departure around 1932. Weisgal, however, went on to greater things, becoming a trusted adviser and personal assistant to Chaim Weizmann and later president and chancellor of the Weizmann Institute of Science.

URBAN WRITER

Will soon return to his familiar spot on this page.

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This Week

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Obama's Jewish support is dropping, Ed Koch says. *Page 6*

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Arts & Travel

Robert Adams to deliver his swan song review. *Page 40*

On cjnews.com

Judaism's third-holiest day happens this week.

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Canadians boycott Ahmadinejad at UN

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad once again addressed the UN General Assembly last week, and once again, Canadian diplomats didn't turn up for his address.

In what is becoming something of a tradition, Canadian parliamentarians and officials boycotted Ahmadinejad as he spoke to the world body on Sept. 21 as part of a three-day summit that focused on the UN's Millennium Development Goals and culminated in the start of the 65th General Assembly.

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon was among the delegates who refused to attend Ahmadinejad's address, because of the current Iranian regime's record of human rights abuses and illegal pursuit of nuclear weapons.

In a statement last week, Cannon said Canada is "very concerned by the overall human rights situation in Iran, as well as by Iran's regional activities, its failure to comply with

Peres, Harper meet in New York

UN Security Council resolutions and its refusal to co-operate with the [International Atomic Energy Agency]."

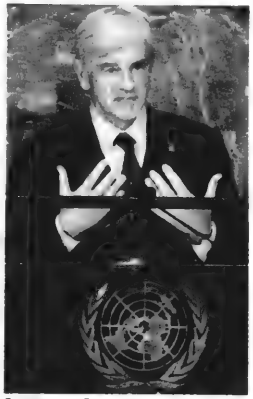
He added that past speeches by Ahmadinejad at the United Nations contained "elements of Holocaust denial, anti-Semitism and condemnation of Israel."

It's because of this continued behaviour, Cannon said, that Canada believes Iran "violates the UN's spirit of international co-operation" and has "chosen not to engage with Ahmadinejad in this forum."

Ahmadinejad validated Cannon's position two days later when he addressed the UN General Assembly a second time and alleged that the United States arranged the 9/11 attacks "to save the Zionist regime."

After suggesting in his Sept. 23 address that U.S. officials at the highest levels were complicit in the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, he called on the UN to establish "an independent fact-finding group" to investigate the attacks, and proceeded to lash out at Israel.

Continued on page 37



Lawrence Cannon speaking at the UN last week
[Photo courtesy UN]

Keeping brother covered

An older boy, under the protective cover of his father's tallit, ensures that his younger brother is also covered during the blessings of the kohanim at the Kotel last week in Jerusalem.
[Flash90 photos]

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Israel, PA peace negotiations on hold for now – please see page 35

The News in Brief

Canada

Krystal Hits The Fan

TORONTO — Toronto-born radio personality Andrew Krystal became the new a.m. drive-time host of Canada's largest all-sports radio station last week. The acerbic Krystal, who joined the Fan 590 in Toronto last month as its mid-morning host, was announced as the new 5:30-9 a.m. host last Monday and made his early morning debut the next day. Prior to the Fan, he hosted a Halifax-based, non-sports morning show that was simulcast on three Rogers-owned stations in the Maritimes. He previously worked in Toronto for Newstalk1010 and AM 640.

World

School Vandalized

SEATTLE — A Jewish high school in the Seattle area was defaced with anti-Semitic graffiti. The epithets in orange, blue and grey paint on the Northwest Yeshiva High School on Mercer Island included swastikas and references to gas chambers, the *Seattle Times* reported. The attack occurred late on Sept. 16 and was discovered the next morning, on Erev Yom Kippur. The graffiti covered most of the building's outer wall, including on the second floor. Area residents helped to clean off the graffiti before Yom Kippur services were held in the school's sanctuary. Police are examining the school's security tapes.

Hero Honoured

LONDON — A statue honoring the "British Schindler" was unveiled at a train station in Britain. Sir Nicholas Winton, 101, attended the dedication ceremony Sept. 18 at the Maidenhead railway station. He smuggled 669 mostly Jewish boys and girls out of Czechoslovakia in 1939. The bronze statue shows Winton sitting on a park bench reading a book containing pictures of the children he saved.

Charges Dropped

PHOENIX — Rape and sexual abuse charges against a Phoenix rabbi were dismissed six months after his very public arrest. The case against Rabbi Bryan Bramly was dismissed Sept. 15 in New York County Supreme Court. Rabbi Bramly, 45, has been spiritual leader of Temple Beth Sholom of the East Valley since 2006. He was arrested March 23 in the parking lot of the shul by the U.S. Marshals Child Predator Apprehension Team and New York City police detectives. The married father of two was alleged to have raped a seven-year-old girl in March 2000 when she was spending the night at his family's home in New York, where he was finishing rabbinical studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary. The girl, now 17, reported her allegations to authorities in August 2009, but the district attorney in the case said there were inconsistencies in evidence and that the complainant was unable to remember details of the alleged incident.

Denier Barred From Leading Camp Tour

David Irving

WARSAW — The Auschwitz museum won't allow a British historian who denies the Holocaust to give a tour at the site of the former concentration camp.

David Irving can't lead a tour group at Auschwitz because he's not a licensed tour guide, officials of Poland's Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum said last week.

Irving, 72, was in Poland to lead a tour of British and U.S. tourists to key Nazi sites, including Hitler's headquarters and the Treblinka death camp, as well as the Warsaw Ghetto and Auschwitz.

In an interview this month with the British *Daily Mail*, Irving criticized Polish authorities for turning Auschwitz into a "money-making machine," and accused them of building fake watchtowers. Irving said other death camps have been neglected because they are not as "marketable."

He was jailed for Shoah denial in Austria in 2006 for a 1989 speech that said Auschwitz had no gas chambers.

Dancers Boycotted

NEW YORK — Two New York-based human rights groups have organized a boycott of shows by Israel's national dance company. Adalah-NY: The New York Campaign for the Boycott of Israel and the New York chapter of Artists Against Apartheid announced the move in an open letter to the Batsheva Dance Company, which was slated to perform in New York from Sept. 21 to Oct. 3. They said they called the boycott because of the company's "collaboration with the Israeli state and its Brand Israel campaign," a government PR initiative designed to reshape preconceived notions about Israel.

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French priest seeks to uncover Jewish graves

Father Desbois looks for extermination sites in eastern Europe

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Patrick Desbois is in a race against time.

The 55-year-old French Roman Catholic priest is president of Yahad In Unum, a Paris-based organization dedicated to finding the mass graves of Jews killed in eastern Europe during the Holocaust.

Desbois relies on local witnesses to identify the sites of heretofore undiscovered mass executions in Ukraine, Russia, Belarus and Poland, where millions of Jews were murdered in a savage and systemized campaign of genocide.

Without their assistance, it would be next to impossible to locate and identify these sites, he said in an interview from his office in Paris last week.

Since many of the remaining witnesses are reaching the end of their lives, Desbois has no time to waste.

"We won't know where the graves are unless we speak to the witnesses," he said.

The grandson of a French deportee to a Nazi prisoner of war camp in Ukraine, Desbois will speak about his experiences when he visits Canada early in October.

His appearances in Toronto on Oct. 4 will be at the University of Toronto's His appearances in Toronto on Oct. 4 will be at the University of Toronto's Sidney Smith Hall at noon and at Beth Tzedec Congregation at 7:30 p.m. at noon and at Beth Tzedec Congregation at 7:30 p.m.

On Oct.5, in Montreal, Desbois is scheduled to address the Azrieli Foundation at the Centre Mont-Royal at 7:30 p.m.

Ordained as a priest in 1986, he co-founded Yahad In Unum in 2004, five years after being appointed secretary of the episcopal committee of the French Bishops for Relations with Judaism.

His co-founders were leaders of the Catholic and Jewish communities in France.

In addition to improving relations between Catholics and Jews, Yahad In Unum's goal is to find the mass graves of Jews murdered by Nazi mobile killing units, known as *Einsatzgruppen*, in Ukraine, Russia, Belarus and Poland.

Yahad In Unum's work is sanctioned by the Vatican.

Patrick Desbois

By all accounts, 1.2 million Jews were killed in what was then the Soviet Union. A further three million Jews were slain in Poland.

Desbois' interest in the Holocaust was piqued by his grandfather, Claudius, a soldier in the French army who was deported to a Nazi prison camp in Ukraine, Rawa-Ruska, in July 1942.

"He always told me it was awful," Desbois said. "But he refused to speak about it."

Propelled by curiosity and a desire to pay his respects to its victims, mainly Soviet soldiers captured in battles with the advancing German army after its invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, Des-bois visited the camp, which is 150 kilometres from the city of Lwow.

During his travels in Ukraine, he was dismayed to learn that the graves of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust were generally not marked.

In the past six years, Desbois and his associates have found about 600 extermination sites, containing a still undetermined number of corpses.

Their work is funded by the German government and a host of private foundations.

Continued on page 18

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Greater Toronto Area

Her gift to us was colour

From the editor's desk...

It was only many years after I first met Karla Goldberg that I understood who she was.

Her first words to me were straightforward and to the point: "Come. Sit here. We have plenty of room for you at the table. Don't be shy."

Unannounced, invited effusively without her knowledge by her oldest son whom I had met less than two weeks earlier at the start of our first year of university, I appeared suddenly in her home, a new face with a hearty appetite.

Of course, I obeyed. And I ate heartily, as I would many times in the home that I soon discovered was the avatar of open-hearted, open-handed kindness to individuals, groups and causes the world over.

Karla always gave more than she took – except when it came to information concerning herself and her past. In this, as in so many other respects, she was the perfect mate and complement to her husband, Dave.

I knew that Karla and Dave had met and married after World War II in Europe. Dave worked for the the American Joint Distribution Committee, helping to find, clothe, house and rescue the meagre remnant of the Jews of Europe. At that point, I could only imagine the circumstances of Karla's life that had brought them together. But even then, I knew that whatever I imagined was but a feeble strand of a mostly unimaginable story.

When she was 19, some four months after Kristallnacht, Karla, her parents, Leo and Else, and her brother, Werner, left their home in Bochum, in northwest Germany. Though her father was a decorated veteran of World War I, the Nazis interned him in a concentration camp during Kristallnacht. Immediately after his release, he took his family to France.

To say that they left their home meant, in hard fact, that they left their business, property, possessions, friends, context, history and self-definition.

Often separated, Karla and her family, spent the war either hiding from German forces or captured by them.

But they survived.

In 1948, Dave and his young bride arrived in Toronto, where they interwove their remarkable lives and created an incomparable, multi-textured fabric of benevolence and love.

Karla was an artist.

In addition to an extra place at her table for a suddenly appearing new face, Karla also maintained an art studio in her home.

Self-taught in the many media in which she worked – mosaic, hooking, weaving, needlepoint, drawing and painting – Karla used colour the way God uses the rainbow: emphatically, generously and according to a purpose and a design that were hers alone.

Her work and her life, she wrote some 25 years ago explaining the driving force behind her labours, "have been truly colourful – from the darkest greys to the most vibrant colours.

"The ups and downs of my life challenged my imagination... These changes [the ups and the downs to which she euphemistically referred] were transformed, *in my way*, into a variety of media and forms." (My emphasis.)

And what was Karla's way? Complex composition, intricate balancing of pattern, shape and image, depth and dimension, angles and arches, and the ubiquitous display of bold, deep colour were her hallmarks.

And courage.

Eight years ago, Karla suffered a stroke that paralyzed the right side of her body. Her ability to do her work came to a devastatingly abrupt and demeaning end.

But only temporarily.

She forced herself to work with her left hand.

Two years later, an exhibit of some 40 of her works was curated at Baycrest in Toronto. Titled *Creative Strokes of the Brush: Karla Goldberg and Her Artistic Journey Post-Stroke*, it was the visible proof of the irrepressibility of the human spirit. More precisely, it was the visible proof of the irrepressibility of Karla Goldberg's spirit.

One of her sons once insightfully described his mother in terms of the work that emanated from her hands and her soul.

"Flashes of colour and creativity/ beautifully juxtaposed/ a kaleidoscope of crazy perspectives/ from the depth of a heart.

"A palette/ warm and alive/ fresh and full/ everday/ magnanimously painting an enviable picture."

Years later he would lovingly add, "If it is true that a picture is worth a thousand words, then a piece of Karla's art speaks a thousand thoughts."

On an end-of-summer day recently that was gold and blue, Karla was laid to her final rest in a secluded, well-groomed cemetery in northern Toronto, a continent, an ocean and a full, daring, momentous, colourful life away from the small industrial town of Bochum in northwest Germany where it began 90 years ago.

An eye-catching, deep crimson rose lay upon her simple, unadorned coffin. It was one last splash of colour, one last gift of creativity she would have been happy knowing that she shared with us. Colour – intense, dazzling and brilliant – was her signature.

It was also, more to the point, the essence of the life she created with her family out of profound darkness – a gift she gave to us all.

Her memory will always be for blessing.

–MBD

SeeJN

SUKKOT ON VIEW

Senior kindergarten students at Robbins Hebrew Academy's Beth Tzedec campus made their own sukkot in preparation for the holiday. From left showing off their sukkot are Ben Macklin, Rebecca Halpern, Shoshana Buchler, Davis Valencia and Caleb Shuster-Hyman.

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A Public Discussion

Rabbi Daniel Gordis and Peter Beinart
Thur. Oct 28, 2010, at 8 p.m.
Moderator: Heather Reisman

Are North American Jews feeling harmed by the State of Israel, rather than seeing her as our second home? And is Zionism antithetical to the next generation or still a possibility?

Rabbi Daniel Gordis is Senior Vice President of the Shalem Center in Jerusalem and the author of several popular books on current events in Israel. Peter Beinart's article, "The Failure of the American Jewish Establishment" in the *New York Review of Books*, set off a major debate among Jews.

For more details on these events and other programming, please visit our website at www.holyblossom.org and download our Gerald Schwartz/Heather Reisman Centre for Jewish Learning at Holy Blossom Temple Fall 2010 Calendar of Events.

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Greater Toronto Area

Former NYC mayor blasts Obama on Mideast

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

U.S. President Barack Obama has sought to weaken Israel's resolve in his quest to achieve peace in the Middle East, former New York City mayor Ed Koch charged in an interview last week.

Obama has emboldened the Arabs to make greater demands of Israel by suggesting that the United States no longer has a special relationship with the Jewish state, claimed Koch, who was here to address a UJA Federation of Greater Toronto dinner.

Ed Koch

"What he has tried to do is to weaken Israel by conveying to the Arab states the message that there is no longer such a special relationship," said Koch, who was mayor of New York City from 1978 to 1989 and has since worked as a political commentator.

"The Democratic party is more supportive of Israel than Obama," he added.

Koch, a U.S. congressman before becoming mayor, said Obama is trying to force Israel to bend on vital security matters, and that Obama treated Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insultingly when he visited the White House last March.

As a result, Obama's support in the U.S. Jewish community has dropped by a substantial margin, said Koch, a Democratic party supporter who has withdrawn his support of Obama.

Koch, who has frequently endorsed Republican party candidates for office, said Obama has softened his position toward Israel in recent months.

"He has drawn in his horns and decided to retreat. But once trust has been broken, it's near impossible to put it back again," he said, adding that Obama has jeopardized the United States' special bond with Israel.

Describing himself as a "liberal with sanity," Koch said that while Obama is not anti-Israel, he wants to forge a new relationship with the Arab world.

Declaring that the United States shouldn't adopt a neutral policy on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Koch said Israel's security needs should be treated with paramount importance and Israel's qualitative military edge over the Arabs must be maintained.

Koch, who says he's in favour of a two-state solution and territorial concessions from Israel to make peace with the Palestinians possible, portrayed himself as a supporter of Israel's Labor party rather than Netanyahu's Likud party.

Turning to current peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Koch said that if Israel extends its partial moratorium on construction in West Bank settlements, the Palestinians should reciprocate by recognizing Israel as a Jewish state.

Jews in the West Bank should be able to stay in their homes, either as citizens or non-citizens of a Palestinian state, he said.

Before Israel and the Palestinians sign a final agreement, he added, one Palestinian government should be in control of both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which has been controlled by Hamas since 2007.

He said that the Hamas regime should be "removed" so that Fatah can take over.

Arguing that diplomatic and economic measures won't deter Iran from pursuing its goal of assembling a nuclear arsenal, Koch said the problem can only be resolved by military means.

He said he'd prefer a joint U.S.-Israeli effort, backed by Sunni Arab states such as Saudi Arabia.

"The only thing worse than a U.S. attack on Iran would be Iran coming into possession of a nuclear bomb," he said, paraphrasing John McCain, a former U.S. presidential candidate.

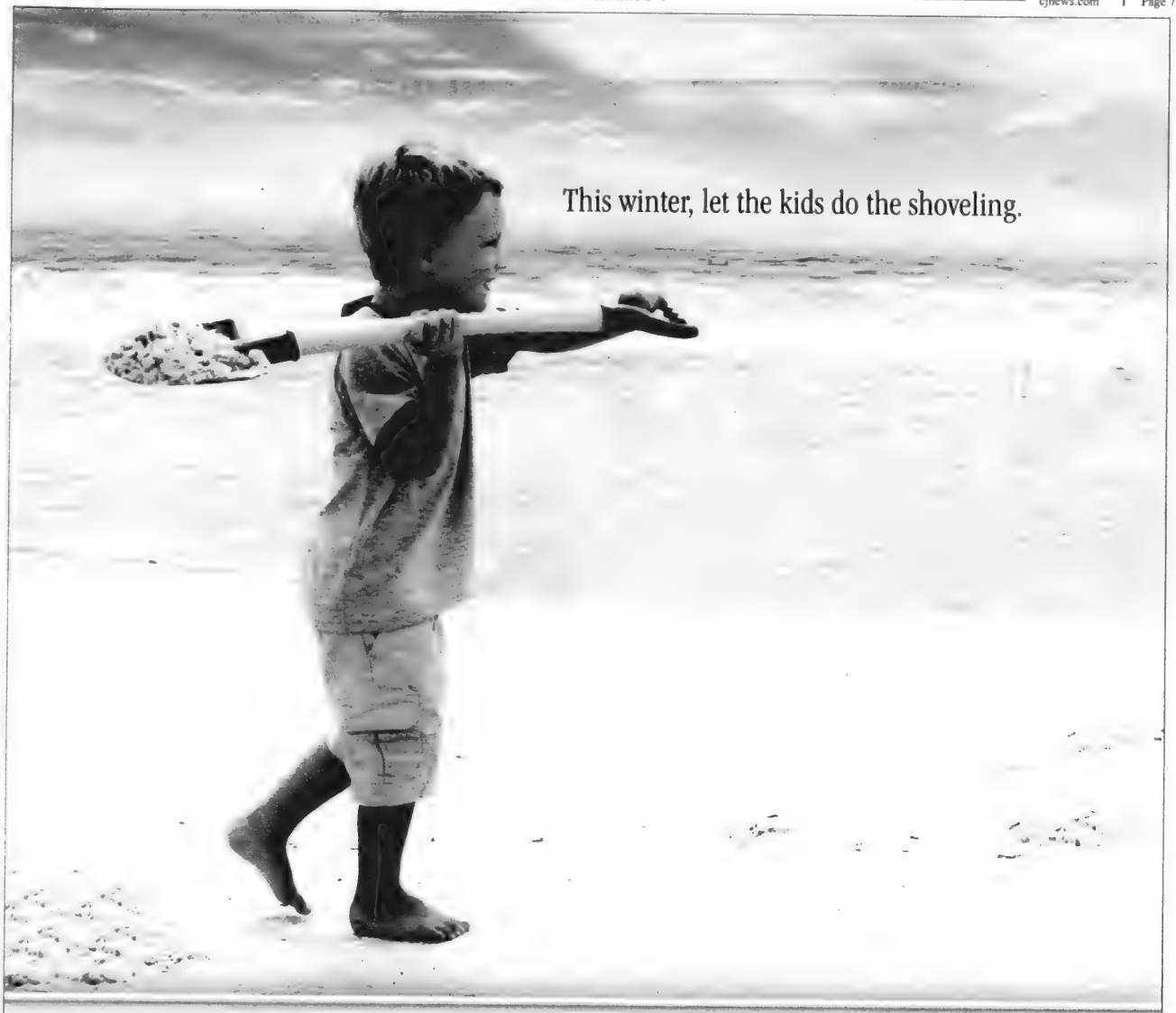
Koch believes Iran will attack Israel once it acquires a nuclear capability.

Weighing in on the controversy over whether an Islamic community centre and mosque should be erected near the site of the twin towers, destroyed by Arab terrorists in September 2001, Koch said that while Muslims have every right to build there, they should be sensitive to criticism and choose a site elsewhere in New York City.

He expects homegrown terrorism in the United States, carried out by American citizens of the Muslim faith, to grow in the future.

"But we are not at war with Islam. The vast majority of Muslims are decent people who mean us no harm. But we should not be afraid to call Islamic terrorists and all other terrorists by their rightful name."

Koch, who backed the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and of Iraq in 2003, called for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from these countries.



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It's not about a construction freeze

As these words were being written, Israel, the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the United States were engaged in detailed nighttime brinksmans' negotiations in an effort to resolve the crisis surrounding the decision by the Netanyahu government to let its 10-month freeze on settlement construction in the West Bank expire without renewal. The negotiations were expected to continue a number of days.

It must be borne in mind that the crisis is wholly of the PA's making. Only with the installation of the Netanyahu government two years ago did the PA demand an *a priori* end to construction in the West Bank as a condition of merely entering into peace discussions. Never once in the 15 years preceding the installation of the Netanyahu government did the PA make this demand of an Israeli government. Never once during those years did construction for Israelis in the West Bank prevent bilateral or multilateral peace talks between and among the interested parties.

Nevertheless, irrespective of the cause of the crisis, one cannot deny that a crisis exists. That it is real. That the entire western world and its media are fixated on it. And that it threatens to overturn, perhaps for a long time if not permanently, the very negotiations table itself.

That must not happen.

The stakes are far too high, the possibilities too palpable and the moment too significant to let it slip away, a victim of ultimatums by the PA and dysfunctional party politics in Israel.

It seems that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and PA President Mahmoud Abbas both understand this.

At a meeting in Paris on the weekend, Abbas reportedly said both sides know that compromise on the construction issue is necessary.

Netanyahu essentially pleaded with Abbas not to overturn the table

"I call on President Abbas to continue the good and honest talks that we have only just started, in order to reach a historic peace agreement between our two peoples," Netanyahu said. "Israel is ready to pursue continuous contacts in the coming days to find a way to continue the peace talks," he added.

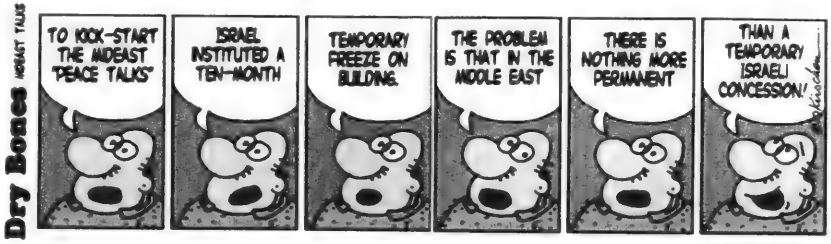
On Monday, Abbas said he would take his time and consult the Arab League before deciding whether to walk out of negotiations.

In truth, the PA's threat to quit the talks is not – nor has it ever really been – about construction in the West Bank. It is rather, about the shape of the permanent borders that will demarcate the two future states of Israel and Palestine. To some extent, it may also be about future face of Israeli electoral politics. To be sure, there are a great many interconnected, complicated issues to be either joined or separated by the parties and resolved. With goodwill on both sides and a keen sense of the urgency of the hour, it can be done.

The leaders of Israel and the PA should set aside distractions and, in their place, embrace the negotiations that a majority of both peoples desire.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz told the United Nations General Assembly that 1985 was the "year of opportunity" in Mideast peacemaking. The same week, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was in Washington urging the Americans to open talks with a PLO-Jordanian delegation to create a Palestinian state confederated with Jordan.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Negotiating territory away

The article "The peace talks – and their obstacles" (Sept. 16) repeats a common misconception, that the Palestinians are "settling for 'only' the West Bank and Gaza, 22 per cent of British Mandate Palestine." The fact is that when Britain was granted the mandate over Palestine after World War 1, the territory intended for a Jewish home was considerably larger. However, in the early 1920s, Britain unilaterally split off some 80 per cent of the mandate to create Transjordan, today's Jordan, which has a majority Palestinian population. Now, the Jews of the Middle East are negotiating away a further 22 per cent of their tiny 20 per cent of the original territory. Which makes one wonder just who has always had to settle.

Stephen Tannenbaum
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Extreme views not shared by all haredim

In his column "The threat of piety" (Sept. 22), Rabbi Dow Marmur gives the impression that haredim in Israel are a quasi-homogeneous block, ignoring that, as in any ideologically motivated community, there are extreme views not shared by all. He cites a book by Rabbi Yitzchak Shapira "giving ostensibly halachic endorsement to the killing of gentiles, even non-Jewish children." This totally disingenuous statement omits the context in which it was expressed. Rabbi Shapira shares the ideology of the late Meir Kahane, the founder of the Jewish Defence League, and the quote refers to a largely misguided and discredited, but also misinterpreted right, both preventive and active, of Israeli self-defence as a reaction to unprecedented attacks.

After adhering to the alarm of those who see a trend to "Talibanize" Israel, Rabbi Marmur concludes his *harediad* by affirming that "piety can be a lethal weapon in the quest for power." He may be right, although much worse is misconstruing the intentions of those who are extremely religious, but are not in any other way extremists.

Jaime Oksemberg
Toronto

* * *

Not up to us to judge others

It is troubling to read what can be described only as homophobia dressed up as Orthodox Judaism in letters to *The CJN*, the most recent of which was "Torah prohibits homosexual behaviour" (Sept. 8). In this letter, it is suggested that it's impossible to be both gay and an Orthodox Jew. Who is the letter writer to determine who is a Jew, Orthodox or otherwise? When did God delegate His judging responsibilities to others, rabbis or otherwise?

The letter goes on to suggest that Congregation Shaar Hashomayim in Montreal committed a "radical break with tradition" in allowing someone to speak at an Orthodox shul about being Orthodox and gay. Imagine that – a break in tradition! It is some of these traditions that have served as the foundation of Judaism and kept our religion alive and well for thousands of years, but it is narrow-minded and hurtful comments and views that will continue to exclude and demonize human beings that are part of our faith. Those who speak ill of others and continue to try to exclude people from our religion are themselves violating the laws of the Torah, the same Torah that they accuse homosexuals of violating. It is time that we allow our thinking to evolve and that we do not lose sight of the fact that God created us all equally and that it is not up to us to judge or to marginalize our fellow human beings.

Leigh A. Lampert
Toronto

* * *

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1558

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

Traditional ways ensure Jewish continuity

In the letter "Right to pray regardless of gender" (Aug. 12), the writer decries the ban for women to pray and read the Torah at the Kotel. His claim is that more than a century ago, the liberal Jewish movement of Europe and North America sought new ways to express their Judaism.

One hundred years is long enough to show results. If you look at Jewish life around the globe, you can clearly see that only the communities that chose the traditional ways lived a Jewish lifestyle every day and brought up Jewish children and grandchildren who are still continuing our beautiful heritage.

The ordination of women as rabbis, the letter writer wants us to believe, "was a shining moment in the history of Judaism." How many Jews did this shining moment return to the fold and how many married Jewish?

I conclude with a plea to your readers. Please give your children a traditional Jewish education, because this is the only guarantee that there will always be Jews today, tomorrow and forever.

Leibl Denburg
Montreal

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Canada's connection to the Schalit family

'It fills me with pride'

Noam Schalit addresses a group of Canadian Birthright visitors.

By STEVEN ARIE GLOWINSKY
Special to The CJN

A national debate is taking place in coffee shops, restaurants and Shabbat dinner tables in Israel.

The question is whether the government should secure the return of Gilad Schalit, kidnapped by Hamas in 2006, at any cost. In answering this question, of course, there are several arguments – for and against.

I could not possibly imagine any event in Canadian society that would be as nationally uplifting in Israel as the return of Schalit to his family, friends and countrymen. To many, he would become a national hero, a symbol of the bravery and perseverance of the Israel Defence Forces.

As brothers, sisters, children and parents, we can all empathize with the Schalit family. Although we can hardly understand their torment and suffering, we can indeed understand how their hearts would heal by his safe return.

The homecoming of one of the IDF's lost sons would also invigorate morale. As one soldier, Nati Shapiro, said to me, "Who would want to enlist in an army that tells its soldiers it will abandon them if they are captured?" Gilad's return would reaffirm a motto familiar to all Jews, one that also guides the IDF: *Kol Yisrael arevim zeh la'zeh* (All of Israel is responsible one for the other).

Is the Schalit family not entitled to a commitment for their son's safe return from a government that conscripted him for compulsory military duty?

Those people opposed to merely submitting to Hamas demands for Schalit's release of freeing more than 1,000 people currently in jail in Israel put forward a three-pronged argument to state their case.

First and foremost they say that the release of hundreds of terrorists with blood on their hands would be perceived as an act of gross injustice against past victims of terror and their families. It would be unjust, they say, to let the criminals and murderers go free.

Secondly, they argue, some, if not most, of the freed prisoners will return to extremism and committing acts of terrorism. As a result, all Israeli citizens would be endangered. The harm that would be inflicted on Israeli society would be far greater than the benefit of retrieving a single, though much beloved, captured soldier.

The third argument is the most compelling. Terrorist organizations will see that the tactic of kidnapping Israelis – and trading them for a disproportionate number of terrorists – is a successful one. They will see that they can empty Israeli prisons of fellow terrorists by exploiting the Jewish state's commitment to securing the return of her children. "*Veshavu banim legvulam*" (Jeremiah 31: 15-17). Israel's enemies perceive of the moral dilemma with which the country struggles as a "weakness" in the Israeli psyche to be exploited.

In my view, there are certain instances in which supporters of Israel living outside of the country, Jews and non-Jews alike, have no right to exert pressure on the Israeli government with the goal of influencing its national and security policies. The debate surrounding Schalit is one of those instances.

My point of view is not intended to belittle anyone's passion for Zionism, Israel advocacy, or connection to Israel and the IDF. It is merely an assertion that there are some political matters best left to Israel's citizenry to debate.

We all want to see Schalit returned as soon as possible. But the conditions facilitating his return should be influenced by the opinions of Israelis.

With that philosophy in mind, my Birthright Israel bus visited the Schalit family tent outside the Israeli prime minister's house in Jerusalem on July 16. The Schalit family has erected a tent outside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's residence in Jerusalem, and they have declared that they will remain there until Gilad is returned.

Gilad's father urged us not to forget his son

As the leader of 33 young touring Canadian Jews, I was filled with pride to witness and be part of the demonstrations of unwavering support for the Schalit family conveyed by my Birthright group. My visit to the Schalit tent was among the most powerful experiences I have ever had in 12 visits to Israel.

For four years, I have known the name Gilad Schalit. I know his story, recognize his face and the faces of his parents. This visit, however, brought the tragic story to life. Connecting with it was emotionally overwhelming.

Gilad Schalit was no longer a name I read in newspapers or in Facebook groups. He is a real man with a real family that longs for his return from years of captivity.

At the tent, we met Gilad's father, Noam. He spoke to us in a soft tone. His hope for Gilad's return and devotion to his son are inspiring.

He urged us not to forget his son and to do everything within our power to advance Gilad's cause. His message lived in our hearts throughout the duration of our experience in Israel.

Before the end of our Birthright trip, our group signed personal messages on a Canadian flag, which the group's tour-guide, Yoav Bruck, a veteran leader of some 75 Birthright trips, and I personally delivered to the Schalit family. Our flag now hangs in the Schalit tent, a symbol of Canadian Jewry's steadfast support for the Schalit family.

They now have friends in Canada who think of Gilad every day, pray for his well-being and dream for his return. I cannot speculate what comfort this may bring them.

I know for certain, however, that this act of solidarity speaks volumes about the strength of the Canadian Jewish community and its connection to Israel and her sons and daughters in the IDF. It fills me with pride. I was honoured to represent my country in this endeavour.

Our Canadian flag has already affected other visitors to the Schalit tent.

One week after its delivery to the tent, Bruck happened to pass by and noticed a group of tourists writing on it. He approached them to find out why they were writing on the flag and he told them how it came to be there.

"They told me that they weren't aware that they were in the area of the Schalit tent and they were not so familiar with Schalit's story," said Bruck.

"They were Canadians who saw a Canadian flag on the other side of the street and walked over to see what it was all about.

"One of the Canadians was very moved by what she saw. She was near tears when she asked me if it was okay for her group of friends to add their names to our flag. I was, of course, happy to let them do it."

It was our pleasure and privilege to represent Canadian Jewry to the Schalit family. Now that we are back in Canada, we continue to pray for a happy ending to the tragic Schalit affair and realize how important it is to support the Schalit family while advocating for their son's release from his captivity in Gaza.

Steven Arie Glowinsky lives in Toronto.

The author, left, and Yoav Bruck hold the Canadian flag that now adorns the Schalit family tent in Jerusalem.

Opinions

Chelsea, Marc and the Jewish problem

It's a new age for the Jewish people. Two hundred years ago, Jews battled bigotry and prejudice. Today, Jews are so well-accepted that it was perfectly conventional for Chelsea Clinton – daughter of former U.S. president Bill Clinton and current Secretary of State Hillary Clinton – to marry Marc Mezvinsky in a ceremony that featured a tallit and sheva brachot, a rabbi and a minister. Jews have thoroughly integrated into North American society, and as a result, bigotry is scarce and intermarriage common.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

For Jewish pundits, the Clinton-Mezvinsky wedding is a religious Rorschach test. For some Jews, it's even a source of pride, a sign Jews have truly arrived. Others fret, issuing jeremiads about how the Jewish community has failed. Orthodox polemicists blame the failure of the liberal movements, outreach professionals blame the community's failure at outreach, and Zionists see this intermarriage as indicative of the failure of Diaspora Judaism. Articles and sermons agonize about this contemporary "Jewish problem," a crisis of assimilation and indifference.

These pundits make compelling cases, but in some ways, they're missing the point. Assimilation isn't occurring just because Judaism has failed. It's occurring because all institutions, including Judaism, are declining. As others have noted, institutional thinking has eroded across the board, in schools, sports and business. Respect for, and devotion to, institutions is disappearing.

Assimilation occurs when the institution of Judaism becomes a secondary concern, superseded by one's individual needs. And since individualism is the order of the day, few can justify passing up true love in order to respect a millennia-old tradition. Some have tried to repackage Judaism into user-friendly parcels that are more appealing in our age of individualism. They've offered Jewish wisdom about leadership and family, and even tips on kosher sex. I use this approach myself, and it certainly makes Judaism more relevant and meaningful. But ultimately, this approach will fail as a weapon against assimilation, because in our zeal to make every Jewish practice useful and beneficial, we've actually undercut the very foundations of Judaism.

Judaism is founded on a sense of duty. We fast on Yom Kippur, even though it's uncomfortable. We circumcise babies, even though it's painful. We do so because Judaism is a transcendent institution that we revere.

Abraham, the founding father of Judaism, proudly announced, "Hineni" – I am ready. He was ready to sacrifice for any and all of God's demands. And throughout history, Jews have been willing to put Jewish destiny before individual interests. Until now.

Given today's deeply individualistic zeitgeist, who knows if there will still be Jews proclaiming "hineni" at the end of the 21st century.

An invitation to join

The systematic attack on Israel has put Israel – and its supporters – on the defensive. Even as adversaries single out the Jewish state for special opprobrium, making Israel "the Jew among nations," as MP Irwin Cotler notes, these critics try to shut down any defence Jews make of Israel by claiming we are refusing to allow any criticism of Israel at all.

Gil Troy in Montreal

Anyone who reads the Israeli papers and the Jewish press, anyone who pays attention to the rollicking, raucous, and sometimes raw debates about Israel throughout the Jewish world, knows that this criticism is absurd. Israeli political culture and Jewish public culture are both highly self-critical. And that is our strength. Democracies have a marvelous self-correcting mechanism that comes from airing dissent. Israel – and Jewish public life – showcase that trait in excess.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to distinguish between those who criticize Israel – even passionately – and those who delegitimize the State of Israel. In that spirit, I met earlier this year with a few colleagues in Jerusalem, who range in political orientation from left to right, are religious and non-religious, but all are firmly within the Zionist camp.

We decided to issue a document articulating just what red lines we as Zionists voluntarily choose not to cross. To keep it positive, we also decided to articulate what we call the blue-and-white lines illustrating just what those of us in the broad pro-Israel community affirm.

It was remarkable how easy it was to reach consensus, even as we weighed every word, thought intensely about every concept. We did not merely have goodwill – we shared a common vision of a vital, democratic Israel. We are attempting to restore some sanity to the debate around Israel by refuting both the argument saying that because some delegitimize, you can never criticize, and the argument claiming that criticizing the delegtimizers is an attempt to silence all critics. Unlike other petitions that seek to lead with names, we want to lead with ideas, but invite people who agree with us to click on our website www.restoringsanity.info and sign their names.

The website has the full statement. To summarize briefly, our four "blue and white lines":

1. affirm the validity of Zionism as the Jewish national movement,
2. recognize Jews as a people for whom Israel is their ancestral homeland,
3. note that Israel is a democratic state promising all its citizens equal rights, and
4. call for compromise based on the fact that affirming Israel's and Zionism's legitimacy does not negate Palestinian claims or rights.

The six "red lines" wherein criticism degenerates into delegitimization are:

1. attempts to deny Israel's right to exist or to negate the Zionist movement, the Jewish State or the Jewish People's status as a nation
2. demonizing Israel and Zionism by equating either with the 20th-century's worst racist ideologies such as Nazism and South African apartheid, or treating Israel as uniquely cruel.
3. using double standards such as calling Zionism – but no other nationalism – racism, or singling out Israel for disproportionate criticism.
4. essentialism: jumping from vigorously denouncing particular policies to repudiating Israel or Zionism.
5. promoting the one-state solution, thus negating the Jewish People's right to self-determination.
6. trying to undo Israel's establishment by emphasizing the "right of return," or displaying maps of Mandatory Palestine without Israel.

It is depressing that we even have to spell this out, given that the criticisms we criticize are invitations to more war, more unreason, more anguish on both sides. We urge honest critics of Israeli policy to distance themselves from the stains of the past and the poisons of the present, keeping the debate focused on the actions and policies of all the participants in the conflict, rather than Israel's essence, or Israel's existential right to exist.

Anyone who wishes to join us or learn more, should click on our website, sign, but, most important of all, start taking your own initiative to fight this insidious, misleading, often (but not always) anti-Semitic attack on Israel, the Jewish People, democracy and decency.

Too busy

I admit it: while writing my Rosh Hashanah sermon, I was also hanging up my laundry, making breakfast, checking my e-mail, helping my kid pack and answering the phone. I was blissfully multi-tasking, until the eggs burned and my kid packed something by mistake, because I didn't really pay attention when he asked, "Should I pack this one?" Then and only then did I close Skype, turn off the "beep" that alerts me every time I get an e-mail and let the laundry basket lie fallow.

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein in Toronto

Last year, I took a year off to live in Israel, where I wanted the unique experience of being, not doing. It took all my internal strength to just relish an afternoon spent at the vegetable market, to just drink in the bus ride, to just look out the windows without figuring out an answer to everyone's queries as to what I was "doing" for the year.

But when I returned home, how hard it was to keep that "just being" concept alive – not to check my new iPhone every few minutes to see what new app I can download or to check my e-mail to see how valued and important I am. It's so hard to really listen when someone else talks, to turn off the calendar in my mind that keeps churning while they're speaking, as I wonder when I'll get to the next thing on my list.

Our kids are usually someplace else, too, even when they're with us, turning their heads to us with one eye still on Facebook, ear buds in their ears. It's the same with co-workers, even when they seem to be listening, when they look up and down from their e-mail and say, "uh huh, uh huh," or do the thumb dance under the table while we're talking to them.

But for some reason, we want to keep up with the frantic pace we've set for ourselves, so we keep on multi-tasking with phones on each ear.

But recent scientific research is challenging the claims of multi-tasking. Heavy multi-tasking fatigues the brain, draining it of the ability to focus. I recently read in the *New York Times* that computer users at work change windows or check e-mail 37 times an hour, or every 1.6 minutes. Can you imagine changing your shoes every 1.6 minutes? Well, some of us can, but in essence, we aren't fully attentive to any one thing for more than a minute and a half.

Yikes.

Prof. Earl Miller, a neuroscientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, suggests that the human brain doesn't multi-task like an expert juggler. Rather, it switches frantically between tasks like a bad amateur plate-spinner. We're all spinning plates madly, convincing ourselves that we simply have to spin them all, at the same time, and that we enjoy it, and that it's good for us and for our families and for our society. But how many plates can we spin before they all come crashing down on us?

Let's be honest: we love our distractions. They help us to avoid pain, and to avoid ambiguity. They make us feel productive, important and busy. They keep us from going home on time, from facing the kids, from facing the spouse, from making our home lives the centre of our attention, one friend at a time, one problem at a time, one thought at a time. If we can't be happy, well, then let's be busy. But we're so busy that we miss our lives half the time while we're living them.

The new year gives us a chance to try once again to encounter people face to face, without Facebook; to listen fully and pay full attention, and to plug in on a real level, with other human beings, with ourselves, and with our world. It's one more chance to stop being busy and start just being.

The Kirshner File

Two films, two realities

The Gaza Strip, a festering political sore on the body politic of the Arab-Israeli conflict and a redoubt of Hamas, was the focus of two radically different documentaries screened at the 35th Toronto International Film Festival.

Precious Life, a poignant film directed by the Israeli television reporter Shlomi Eldar, turns on the frantic quest to save the life of a four-month-old Palestinian boy from Gaza who was born without an immune system and will die unless he receives a bone marrow transplant at an Israeli hospital.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Tears of Gaza, by the Norwegian filmmaker Vibeke Lokkeberg, graphically examines the impact on Palestinian civilians of Israel's war with Hamas in the winter of 2008 and 2009.

The first film is inspirational and positive. The second is gut-wrenching and, from my point of view, totally and gratuitously one-sided.

Let's start with *Precious Life*, which marks Eldar's debut as a director.

In 2007, the year Hamas violently wrested control of Gaza from Fatah, Eldar – a Channel 10 correspondent who had long reported from Gaza – received an urgent phone call from Dr. Raz Somech, the director of the pediatric immunology lab and cancer research institute at the Tel Hashomer Hospital in Tel Aviv.

The physician told Eldar that Mohammed Abu Mustafa, the son of Fauzi and Raida Mustafa, would die unless he received a bone marrow transplant. Two of Raida's previous children had died because they had not had access to such cutting-edge surgery, Somech said.

The procedure would cost $55,000. If the funds could not be raised, the infant would have to be sent back to Gaza. Once there, he would die, since hospitals in Gaza cannot perform such life-saving operations.

Galvanized by the prospect of saving a child and getting his hands on a great story, Eldar sprang into action. Eldar's report touched the heart of an Israeli man whose son, a soldier, had been killed in the line of duty. He donated the required sum anonymously, as Palestinian Qassam rockets continued to rain down on Israeli towns and kibbutzim adjacent Gaza.

Appropriately enough, Eldar dedicates *Precious Life* to this individual.

Raida, a devout Muslim who had been taught that Jews are "dangerous" and "scary," was grateful but puzzled by the donation.

"The Israelis do strange things for us," she said.

Now that money was no longer an issue, it was left to Eldar to find a genetic match in the Mustafa family for the procedure to go forward.

Although he was no longer permitted to visit Gaza, much less report from it, Eldar used his contacts there to arrange for blood samples to be sent to Tel Hashomer. Raida's brother brought them to Israel through the Eretz border crossing.

The samples matched, and Raida wept with joy.

Since Israel was being bombarded by Qassam rocket attacks, the question naturally arose whether a bone marrow donor would even be able to cross the volatile border. During a lull in the fighting, one of Raida's relatives managed to slip through.

At this juncture, Raida made a confession. Her son's treatment in Israel had prompted accusations in Gaza that she and her husband were collaborating with Israel, the enemy.

This led to a troubling conversation between Eldar and Raida.

In short order, she unleashed a number of candid and hurtful comments that almost caused Eldar to drop out of the mission.

Raida said that Jerusalem belongs to the Arabs, that Palestinians are prepared to sacrifice lives to win statehood, that life is worthless compared to death and that Mohammed would be raised as a martyr for the Palestinian cause.

Raida Mustafa and her baby boy

A clip from *Tears of Gaza*

In other words, he would be a suicide bomber one day.

Shocked and full of despair over Raida's incendiary remarks, Eldar contemplated removing himself from the case. Fully cognizant that Mohammed's life lay on the line, Fauzi intervened, asking Eldar for forgiveness and explaining that his distraught wife was in a fragile state of mind.

Chastened by Eldar's reaction, Raida amended her views, saying she would not raise Mohammed as a *shahid*. However, she could not resist noting that a passage in the Qur'an predicts war between Jews and Arabs. As she goes back to Gaza after Mohammed's successful operation, Raida observes that the Arab-Israeli conflict should be resolved. In light of her earlier comments, one wonders how sincere she is.

As the war in Gaza rages, Eldar keeps in touch with the Mustafa family. In an aside, he says that Israel used disproportionate force – "exaggerated fire" – to respond to Palestinian provocations.

***

Lokkeberg, the director of *Tears of Gaza*, would doubtless agree that the Israeli armed forces applied too much force to deal with Palestinian rocket salvos. Her documentary, financed by the Norwegian Film Institute, is filtered through the eyes of three young Palestinians – Amira, Yahya and Rasmia – who lost relatives during Israel's fierce land, air and naval offensive and through footage shot by three Palestinian cinematographers.

"We need to bring the reality of war to the screen," Lokkeberg has been quoted as saying.

Tears of Gaza, which reportedly will be screened in Israel next month, is a tableau of stark images: bombed-out buildings, frightened civilians scurrying for safety amid Israeli air raids, an enraged Palestinian man holding aloft the corpse of a child at a mass funeral, firemen desperately trying to douse flames, ambulance drivers delivering wounded and dead to a hospital, and the wan, lifeless, bullet-hole-ridden bodies of children displayed in a morgue.

Amid menacing images of Israeli helicopters, jets, tanks and navy vessels carrying out patrols or firing missiles at intended targets, Palestinians vent their anger at Israel.

"May God punish them," says an old woman.

"They are inhuman," cries a disconsolate man whose children have been killed.

"They are killing children and have stolen our land," says a young woman.

Not once in the film does Lokkeberg say that the war in Gaza was caused by Hamas' refusal to renew a ceasefire and its continuous bombardments of Israel.

Without bothering to cite a reason, she merely says that Israel launched an attack on Gaza. Period.

She thus wilfully ignores the Palestinian provocations that triggered the war – the aggressive rocket attacks that have caused death and destruction in Israel since 2001 – and Hamas' ideological commitment to destroy the Jewish state.

Lokkeberg has faithfully documented the terrible costs of war on a civilian population in Gaza. But her film is skewed and selective and demonizes Israel.

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Municipal Vote 2010

Effective transit top priority in Ward 21

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF and RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporters

Marius Frederick

Alex Freedman

Joe Mihevc

Peter Nolan

Shimmy Posen

This week's Toronto municipal election coverage focuses on Ward 21, St. Paul's.

According to the 2006 census, the ward is home to nearly 50,000 people, with Jews representing close to 10 per cent of the population, making them the ward's largest ethnocultural community.

The ward is bounded to the north by Briar Hill Road, to the east by parts of Bathurst Street and Spadina Avenue, to the south by Dupont Street, and to the west by sections of Ossington Avenue and Winona Road.

There are six candidates vying to represent the ward on council: Marius Frederick, a TTC worker; Alex Freedman, a computer programmer; Beth McLellan; incumbent Joe Mihevc; Peter Nolan, a TTC worker, and Shimmy Posen, an entrepreneur.

McLellan couldn't be reached for this article.

The CJN asked each candidate the following question: **What are your priorities for the ward if you're elected?**

* * *

Marius Frederick: My priority for the ward is to clean up the crime and graffiti. To me, the place has gone down. There's people sleeping in laneways, there's people begging, there's graffiti everywhere. It's becoming a ghetto.

I want to put police back on the beat. We've got druggies in the neighbourhood, people spraypainting in the nighttime. It's going to cost a little bit more, but what are we paying for now?

Garbage collection has to be cleaned up. Basic services have to be done in a timely fashion. I spoke to some lady in the neighbourhood. She fell down in the last major snowstorm, because the roads weren't cleaned. This is not acceptable.

I don't believe the proposed light rail transit line (LRT) will do it for the vision for the future. I think it'll be the same thing as the St. Clair streetcar, which created a traffic problem in the area. If elected, I will work with council to get people on St. Clair with businesses affected by the St. Clair streetcar a refund for the time they suffered.

Alex Freedman: The most important priority would be having an Eglinton subway. The proposed LRT just isn't adequate for our needs. Subways last much longer than LRTs, but we need to consult the public.

We need to make the TTC a better alternative to other forms of transportation… to make it more competitive by lowering fairs and reducing transit times. We should investigate an automated payment system.

I want to improve city services, including garbage collection, so that people are really seeing value for their money. One of the biggest problems people have with increased taxes is that they're paying more money to the city, but the value they're receiving for that money has decreased greatly over the years.

Joe Mihevc: The biggest issue facing our ward is the construction of the Eglinton LRT. On the plus side, for the next four years, there will be little evidence of construction, because the borers will be tunnelling underground. People won't see evidence of the construction, but between 2014 and 2016 we will have to pop up and build stations above-ground at Eglinton West subway station and Bathurst and Spadina-Chaplin.

My hope during this process is that we really focus on this project to look at the opportunities that present themselves at the Allen Expressway and Eglinton Avenue, not just TTC-wise, but pedestrian-wise and traffic-wise. Because the tunnel for the LRT is so deep, there might be a possibility to get the on-ramps underground. If we can do that, which we're exploring right now, that would be wonderful for the community.

The real fiscal challenge is to work with the province, recognizing that it's also very tight with money these days, and ask how we can put in place the financial uploads that need to happen. You cannot keep asking the property taxpayer to pay for social assistance and TTC costs.

Peter Nolan: Locally, I hear the same concerns that can be attributed on a citywide level: potholes on the street and… customer service from the city. They never tell you when they're going to do things. They wake you up in the morning with construction. There's just this simple format to it. Citizens have no idea what days city work crews are working or cutting services off. That's a local issue, but it's also a city hall issue for customer service. We need more openness and transparency there.

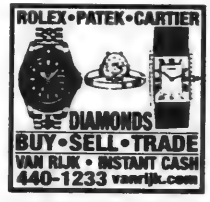
I've worked the route on St. Clair and saw the work on the streetcar lines was a horrible idea. The whole Transit City plan is… from the 1950s. I support subways over streetcars, and I feel the TTC needs to be designated an essential service.

I also want the city to post its budget online, so we can see exactly how much money they get from us and hold them accountable for any wasteful spending.

Shimmy Posen: My main priority is to get city hall back on track. We're paying too much for a city that doesn't work. I want to make sure we don't have a repeat of what happened with the streetcar fiasco on St. Clair. It destroyed the quality of life. It destroyed the businesses there. It scared people, because it was managed horribly, and someone needs to take responsibility for that mistake.

I prefer to see subways built along Eglinton instead of a short-term street car. The subway is the only way to reduce gridlock.

It's a disgrace that our taxes have gone up… and our services have decreased. Garbage collection used to be twice a week, now it's once a week, and we're paying for it.



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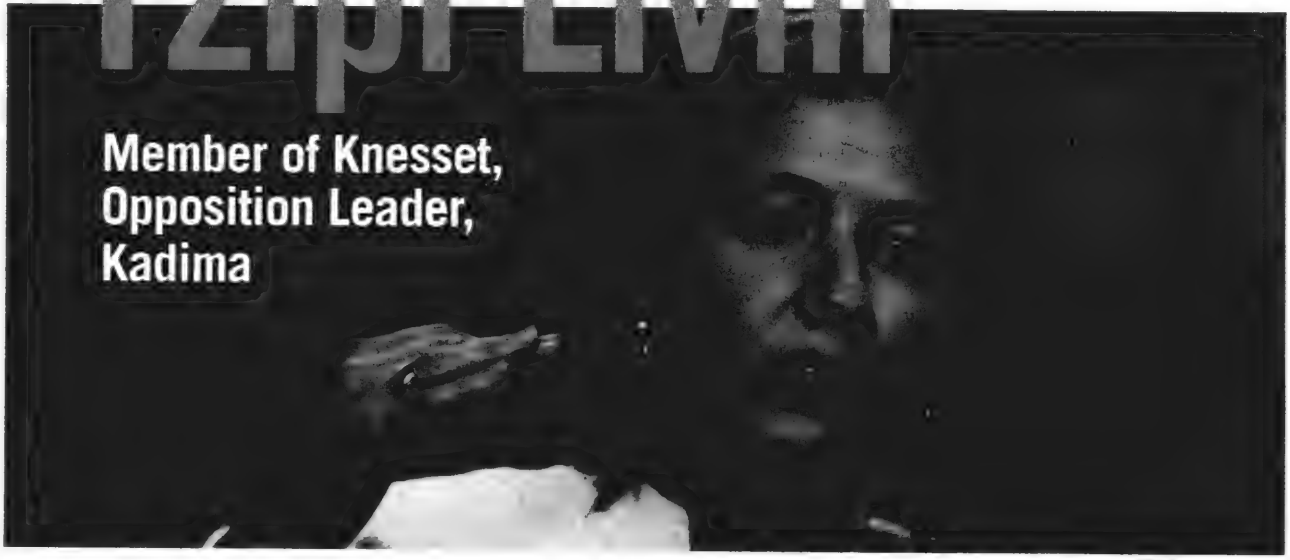

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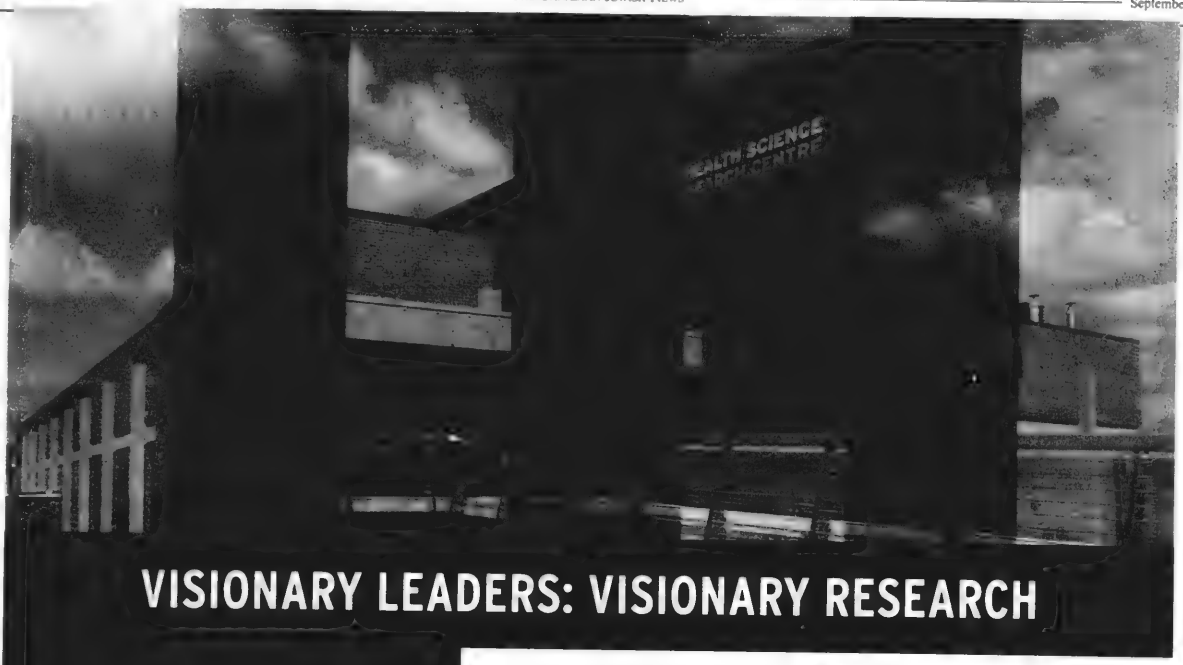

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Israeli educator embarks on new adventure

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Last year, Estelle Halak-Tastasa, her husband, Yossi, and their three children left their home in Israel for a 10-month adventure travelling through Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand and China.

"It was the most amazing thing we did, ever," said Halak-Tastasa, who taught the children – now 12, 9 and 3 – while they were travelling. "We dreamed about it a long, long time [before we went.]"

This summer they embarked on another – less exotic – adventure, leaving Israel again, this time to experience life in Toronto, where they have family.

On Sundays, Halak-Tastasa, 40, can be found at Kachol Lavan, the Centre for Hebrew and Israeli Studies, where she teaches Grade 1.

"It is special to work at Kachol Lavan," said Halak-Tastasa, who also works part-time at a daycare centre. "We're doing the studies with a lot of songs and stories." The teachers plan their classes together and share a common philosophy, she said.

Halak-Tastasa likes to include songs, art, drama and games as part of her lessons. She believes the experiential component helps students feel connected to what they're learning about.

A lesson from the teacher: ***"I think people need to know what their dreams are, and do something to fulfil them."***

"When we need to teach them stories from the Bible," she offered as an example, "I think the best way to really get to know the stories is with songs and drama, because if students are just hearing the stories, they're not really feeling them."

Halak-Tastasa's classes are conducted in Hebrew with exceptions only when necessary, if students don't understand. "I want them to love the language," she said.

An Israeli who was born in Lebanon and lived there until she was a year and a half old, Halak-Tastasa grew up in Herzliyah, the second of four children in her family.

From an early age, she worked with kids, looking after her two younger siblings, babysitting, and working as a youth movement leader. She remembers saying as a small child that she would be a teacher when she grew up.

But it was only after she finished her army service and spent a few months at Neot Hakikar, a moshav near the Dead Sea, that she found the specific direction she wanted to pursue after observing a class that her aunt taught there. "She had a girl in her class who was deaf. It was amazing how she worked with her. It was fascinating to me."

Halak-Tastasa went on to earn a bachelor's degree in education at Tel Aviv University in 1996, specializing in hearing disabilities and learning disabilities, as well as community theatre studies.

Among other teaching positions on her CV, Halak-Tastasa taught and served as special education co-ordinator at the pluralistic (religious and non-religious) Keshet School in Zichron Yaakov from 2005 to 2009.

Estelle Halak-Tastasa *[Frances Kraft photo]*

As well, she has a background in reflexology, aromatherapy and guided imagery, and has worked as a doula, providing support to women during childbirth, and pre- and post-natally.

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UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO
NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TAKE NOTICE that the Annual General Meeting of the Members of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto will be held at **Holy Blossom Temple** (1950 Bathurst Street, Toronto) **November 30, 2010** at **7:00 p.m.** for the following purposes:

To receive the reports of the Chair and President;
To receive the financial statements of the corporation;
To elect the UJA Federation Council;
To approve and transact other business as may come before the Meeting.

Upon its election the UJA Federation Council shall meet for the following purposes:

To appoint PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP as the auditors of the corporation;
To elect the Board of Directors, Chair and Senior Vice-Chair of the corporation;
To approve and transact other business as may come before the Council.

DATED at Toronto the 29th day of September, 2010
BY ORDER OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO

Ex-Shin Bet chief speaks on disabilities

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Canadian Friends of AKIM Israel is gearing up for a series of events next week with former Israeli navy chief, ex-Shin Bet chief and former member of Knesset Ami Ayalon.

But it's Ayalon's current role as chair of AKIM Israel – National Association for the Habilitation of the Mentally Handicapped in Israel, that is of particular interest to the Toronto-based group.

AKIM was founded in 1951 in Israel by the parents of an intellectually challenged son. It's the largest Israeli organization for people with intellectual disabilities, said Diane Richler, event chair for Ayalon's visit.

The organization provides a range of services, including kindergartens and nurseries, after-school activities, group homes, job training, recreational programs and support to families throughout Israel.

Ami Ayalon

Torontonians Olga and Alex Eisen, who have an intellectually challenged son, started Canadian Friends of AKIM in 1962, following their first trip to Israel, where they visited a weaving workshop run by AKIM.

At the time, Alex, now president of the Canadian group, belonged to a bowling league that had raised $1,000 for charity, but hadn't yet allocated the money.

The cause was "very close to my heart," recalls Olga. Within 10 days of the Eisens' return home, she and some friends had organized a tea, which raised $3,000 for AKIM.

Now, she said, the original organizers are aging, and are hoping to breathe new life into the group here – one of 10 such groups worldwide – with Ayalon's upcoming visit.

Richler said that the Canadian friends' group has been "operating under the radar screen in recent years," quietly supporting the Israeli group. She became involved this summer after completing her term as president of Inclusion International, an advocacy organization for people with intellectual disabilities with about 200 member organizations worldwide. Richler met Ayalon at a conference in Berlin in June, the month her presidency ended.

"I think it's really heartening that someone of his stature is standing behind AKIM," she said. "But I think it's also very important that he sees more inclusion in Israel as a way of helping to build and strengthen Israeli society.

"People who learn to include people who have an intellectual disability can learn to include everybody," she added.

Among the factors motivating Richler's involvement, she mentioned the new United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which Israel has signed and expects to ratify by the end of December. "It focuses on recognizing people with disabilities as people who have both rights and responsibilities.

"For a few years now, AKIM has been supporting people with disabilities to volunteer in the IDF or get involved in national civic service.

"Israel is now the first country to recognize people with disabilities as full members of the forces, and to allow them to contribute to Israeli security and its ongoing future."

Ayalon's schedule includes talks in a private home on Oct. 4, in a downtown office on Oct. 5 and, at York University, under the auspices of its Jewish teacher education program, on Oct. 6.

For further information about Ayalon's first two presentations, call 416-955-0300; or, for information about the presentation at York, e-mail Prof. Sarah Horowitz at srh@yorku.ca.

FREEDOM DAY: Grade 7 and 8 students from Thornhill Public School attended Freedom Day on Sept. 20, at Queen's Park. The event, organized by the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center, celebrated tolerance, justice and human rights, and aimed to teach the students how to fight hate and prejudice.

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Remembering the past, Shaping the future

MOROCCAN HOLIDAY

Bialik Hebrew Day School's Grandparents and Special Friends Association proudly brought the sights and sounds of Sukkot in Morocco to students at the school. Pictured, back row from left, are Andrea Sugar, Ruby Kreindler, Sandra Brown, Agnes Schwartzberg, Naomi Fisher, Jill Kaplun, Ziona Hagler and Deanna Peranson, and, front row from left, Bloria Roizman, Shirely Amar and Sue Freedman.

Investigative team sent to E. Europe

Continued from page 3

· On average, Yahad In Unum sends an investigative team to eastern Europe once a month. Before a team is dispatched, Yahad In Unum researchers review war archives in the former Soviet Union and Germany and at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

With this information in hand, Yahad In Unum personnel visit villages and interview residents who witnessed Nazi atrocities.

In his quest to document the Holocaust in these countries, Desbois has repeatedly travelled to the former Soviet Union and Poland.

"A war does not end until all the dead are buried," Desbois has said in explaining the importance of his work.

Desbois, who has studied the Holocaust at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, was a personal aide to the late archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, a Polish-born Jew who converted to Christianity.

A consultant to the Vatican on relations with Jews, Desbois is the author of *The Holocaust by Bullets*. Published by Palgrave MacMillan in 2008, it was the winner of the National Jewish Book Award.

Desbois, who speaks Hebrew fluently, has been showered with an array of awards – the Medal of Valor from the Simon Wiesenthal Center, honorary doctorate degrees from the Hebrew University and Bar-Ilan University and the Humanitarian Award from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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October 14th Issue

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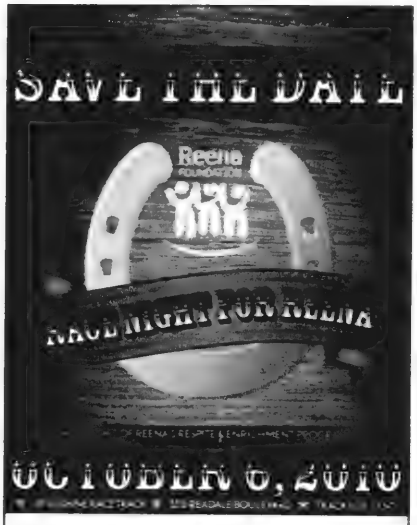
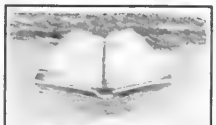


Jewish Life

We, too, must shift our thinking

By RABBI JONATHAN CRANE

Just like last year and the year before that, we begin our new year with many celebrations. Some of these holy days honour the renewal of creation, while others create ways to renew our honour. On some of these days, we sit outside to appreciate all the more what's inside. And, at the end of it all, we reread what we've already read, which takes us to the beginning of it all again.



Rabbinic Reflections

The cyclical nature of the Jewish calendar is famous for its regularity. Liturgically speaking, 5771 will look very much like the thousands of years before it.

We find comfort in the predictability of our calendar: every seven days we will rest; every month we acknowledge the moon, and every season has its celebrations – just like last year. Just as our tfillot are regimented, so, too, is our learning. The calendar divides up the Torah into parshiot, pacing our reading through the Torah, as if to say that we would do well to ration our accumulation of wisdom.

This notion of rationing is nothing new, either. God sent forth just enough manna to the people in the wilderness to feed them each day (with twice as much to cover Shabbat, of course), and the people were warned against hoarding, lest the manna rot. As God rations food, so, too, should we.

In this week's haftorah for Simchat Torah, Joshua orders the officials of the people, "Go through the camp and instruct the people, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for in three days time you will cross the Jordan.'"

Yet this must have been a challenging mandate for the ancient Israelites. Even as the people still mourned for Moses, Joshua required them to abandon their generation-old pattern of minimalism and start to accumulate foodstuffs, though not for immediate gratification, but for delayed satisfaction.

On the one hand, this required rejecting God's freshly baked and quickly spoiling daily bread in favour of storable provisions. The people now had to identify foods that could survive beyond a single day, and indeed, that could last for an indefinite future. On the other hand, the people now had to calculate just how much they would need for this uncertain future. Whereas previously someone else predetermined how much food each should receive and when, they couldn't rely on this system any longer. They had to fend for themselves.

In short, Joshua was asking the people to experience a cognitive and behavioural paradigm shift. He wanted them to think radically differently about food itself, and about calculating future needs – and then act on those careful deliberations.

This double paradigm shift was a singular step for the Israelites' difficult journey ahead. They were about to embark on a radically different way of existing, and they had to think and behave in dramatically new ways. For 40 years, they wandered through a vast wilderness and survived at God's behest. Now they were to enter a particular tract of land, settle it, till it, defend it and survive therein by their own resolve.

To be sure, God would still be involved in their lives after they crossed the Jordan. Still, their future in that land rested less in the hands of the leaders – human or divine. Their future, as Joshua astutely observes, lay in the hands of the masses, for they were the ones who were to identify and gather the appropriate provisions.

By rethinking our food and recalibrating our consumption, we the masses may ensure our future, yet again.

Rabbi Jonathan Crane is a member of the Toronto Board of Rabbis and the scholar of bioethics and Jewish thought at the Center for Ethics at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga.

Sharing the world

Throughout Sukkot, we are focused on remembering God's protection in the wilderness when we were young and vulnerable. After coming out of Egypt, the Jewish people roamed the Sinai wilderness for 40 years following God. It was a time of transformation, a time to build trust and a time of inward organization, infrastructure and identity. It seems amazing to consider that all of that was accomplished in 40 short years.

Midrashic Moments
By Rachael Turkienicz

During that entire time, we dwelled in temporary huts, or sukkot, which we could easily and quickly take apart and rebuild as the travelling necessitated. It was a frail existence within a temporary dwelling that is vulnerable to the elements and vulnerable to any hostile force we might encounter. We survived in the wilderness because God protected us, since clearly the sukkot could offer no protection whatsoever. It's clear why the holiday of Sukkot reminds us of those precious moments.

Yet, when the temples stood, ancient Israel celebrated the holiday of Sukkot by offering sacrifices for the nations of the world. Throughout the seven days of the holiday, Israel offered 70 sacrifices to symbolize the 70 foreign nations of the world. These were offerings for peace as well as prosperity. Only on the last day of the holiday, Shemini Atzeret, the eighth day, was Israel instructed to make sacrifices on its own behalf.

The sages of the Talmud also teach us that Sukkot is the holiday on which the world is judged for rain. The day of Hoshana Rabbah is the day that the decree for rainfall is sealed. We walk in circles around the synagogue praying for the proper rainfall throughout the world. The midrash tells us that when the last sacrifices were offered, the people would silently watch the smoke to see which direction the wind would carry it. Some directions meant rain was forthcoming, while others foretold droughts.

The historic connection to Sukkot speaks of the Jewish people and God bonding in the wilderness, a place of solitude with no rain. There are no other nations crowding Israel in the Sinai Desert, and there are no floods of rain to worry about. The wilderness presents an ideal place for relationship-building, since it's a place of isolation with no distractions or competing philosophies. Yet it's unique in Jewish history and will never repeat.

The ongoing celebration of Sukkot balances the picture by deliberately including the larger world with all its manifestations. Both the natural world and the social-political world around us will inevitably impact us and ultimately force us to question ourselves and God.

With subtle wisdom, Judaism reminds us that we don't live in a wilderness, but in a natural world with other people and other nations. We can't pray only on our own behalf, but we must pray and include all of humanity in our thoughts and hopes for peace and well-being. When we feel so humbled by this that we question what impact we could possibly have, we are reminded that we can even impact how much rain will fall this coming year.

Such is the power of Sukkot.

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

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Jewish Life

You never know...

PAST FORWARD
By Alex Gropper

Most of us are familiar with the stories of our origins as a people and of the Patriarchs who gave rise to our faith. Yet, archeologists and secular biblical scholars have cast doubts on their historical veracity.

In the last few decades, most secular scholars have viewed the stories as myths. However, we should keep in mind how Gregory Nagy, former head of classics at Harvard University, explained the word "myth." He said it is society's way of defining universal truth.

In North America, as recently as 50 years ago, there was still a broad consensus that the patriarchal stories were set in a historical context that could be proven by archeology. Such was the view of American biblical scholar William Foxwell Albright, who, with his students, led and championed this position.

In Europe, the Germans never held to Albright's view. Led by such brilliant scholars as Albrecht Alt and his pupil, Martin Noth, they relied on textual criticism, not archeology, in defining their position, and had always cast doubts on the historicity of the patriarchal narratives.

In North America around the time of Albright's death in 1971, his consensus began to unravel. Scholars including Tommy Thompson and John Van Seters, who taught me in graduate school at University of Toronto, began a serious attack on Albright's view and that of his disciples. The eminent Canadian Egyptologist, Donald B. Redford, even dated the Joseph stories to the Saite period in Egyptian history (c. 600 BCE).

The culmination of this assault was led by a group labelled as Minimalists. In addition to Thompson, it included the Danish scholar Nils Lemche and a number of British historians such as Philip Davies and others, who were primarily associated with the University of Sheffield.

Some of these scholars even questioned the existence of prominent biblical personages such as David. However, they were dealt a serious blow in 1993 when an inscription mentioning the "house of David" was found at the site of Tel Dan in northern Israel.

A more potentially spectacular discovery was made in the mid-1970s when Italian scholar Giovanni Pettinato, of the University of Naples – the epigrapher for the Italian excavations at the site of Tell Mardikh, ancient Ebla, in northern Syria – claimed to have discovered a number of pre-patriarchal names amongst the cuneiform tablets uncovered at Tell Mardikh. Pettinato even claimed to have found the five cities of the plain mentioned in Genesis, starting with Sodom and Gomorrah, in exactly the same order as in the Bible.

Much was made of this discovery by the eminent American scholar David Noel Freedman when Pettinato and the director of the Ebla excavation, Paolo Matthiae, came to North America. However, a few years later, a number of noted scholars showed that Pettinato's assertions could not be proven. As a result, Freedman and other supporters of Pettinato's initial claims were left with scholarly egg on their faces.

Today, few scholars seriously believe that we can verify the historicity of the Patriarchs and Hebrew origins. Albright's consensus of 50 years ago appears to be in the same position as Humpty Dumpty's was after his fall. And yet, one never knows what a new discovery may reveal. If one believes in the existence of the Patriarchs, then they exist for that person. After all, faith, by its very definition, defies proof.

I will always remember the stories of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob recounted to me as a young boy, and of the faith that they represented. It is a faith that I still believe in despite the vagaries of archeological discovery.

Food and drink for Simchat Torah

Jewish & Digital
By Mark Mietkiewicz

Passover has matzah. Purim has hamantashen. Even Shavuot has blintzes. But what about Shmini Atzeret and Simchat Torah? No special foods may spring to mind (except perhaps memories of marching around the synagogue carrying a small flag topped by an apple). As the holiday season draws to a close, you can still enjoy some marvellous traditional foods – or perhaps start a new one.

The seventh and final day of Sukkot is called Hoshanah Rabbah, which comes 10 days after Yom Kippur and shares some traditions with the Day of Atonement. **[http://bit.ly/simchat1]** The cantor wears white and chants prayers using Yom Kippur tunes. And in honour of both holidays, we eat kreplach, triangular pockets of dough with meat or other stuffing.

Actually we eat kreplach in honour of three holidays – on Purim, too. All these days share a common theme: personal or collective survival. On Yom Kippur, we are judged. On Hoshanah Rabbah, the judgment that was rendered on Yom Kippur is "sealed." And on Purim, the entire Jewish people was threatened, and eventually triumphed. **[http://bit.ly/simchat2]**

As to *why* we eat kreplach, the Nishmas site suggests that judgment (symbolized by meat) is clothed in kindness (symbolized by the dough). **[http://bit.ly/simchat3]** Now that you know why, you can take your pick of 13 kreplach recipes in the Jewish Food Archives, including bite-sized meat, chicken liver or cheese. **[http://bit.ly/simchat4]**

When Hoshanah Rabbah ends, we turn to Shmini Atzeret/ Simchat Torah when we complete – and then restart – the annual cycle of reading the Torah. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations' Jewish Parent Page says you can learn a lovely lesson while baking a Simchat Torah Challah – with dough shaped like the Hebrew letters *lamed* and *bet*. "The last word in Deuteronomy is Yisrael and the first word in Genesis is Bereshit. If you take the final letter of Yisrael – the *lamed* – and the first letter of Bereshit, the *bet*, and put them together, they spells *leib* in Yiddish and *lev* in Hebrew, which means heart. The midrash tells us that the Torah is the *lev* – the heart of the Jewish people." **[http://bit.ly/ simchat5]**

Or how about enjoying Penny Eisenberg's Orange Crepe Scrolls? "Place two crepes next to each other on each plate, so that they look like Torah scrolls. Stick the slivers of orange rind into the top and bottom of each roll to look like the Torah poles." Enjoy them with Grilled Spiced Citrus Chicken Kebabs and Biscotchos (Sephardi Crunchy Orange Almond Cookies). **[http://bit.ly/simchat6]**

Still hungry? There's Honey-Orange Chicken, Susie Fishbein's Moussaka, Basic Stuffed Cabbage and Unstuffed Cabbage, which gives you "that great taste without all the work." **[http://bit.ly/simchat7]**

Jews have been known to raise a glass or two on Simchat Torah to celebrate (responsibly, please) our never-ending relationship with the Torah. While some may opt for schnapps, vodka or perhaps a single malt, Tamar Fox suggests some Jewish cocktails to enliven the holiday.

- The Ashkenazi: fill a glass with ice. Float: 1 part vanilla milk, 1 part coffee liqueur, 1 part vodka.
- The Sephardi: an Ashkenazi with a little chocolate mixed in.
- And the "Manischevetini": 2 oz. vodka, 1/2 oz. orange juice and 1/2 oz. Manischewitz wine. Combine ingredients in a cocktail shaker and shake. Garnish with an orange twist if desired. **[http://bit.ly/simchat8]**

L'chaim! And have a happy (and tasty) holiday.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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When it comes to this special UJA event, don't you dare

Your

United Jewish Appeal invites you to a uniquely entertaining evening featuring writer, director, producer, stand-up comic and star of the hit HBO television series,

Jeff Garlin.

Wednesday, October 27
7:30 pm

Fairmont Royal York Hotel
100 Front Street West

Tickets: $25 if purchased on or before October 11th ($30 after that date).

To register, please call Janine at **416.631.5707** or visit **ujaevents.com/registration/JeffGarlin**

To make your Campaign gift, call **416.631.5700** or **visit ujadonations.com**

Open to all community members who commit to making a gift to the current UJA Campaign 2011

Limited space available!

Dessert Reception / Kashruth observed

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UNITED JEWISH APPEAL

TBF 34th Annual Toronto Jewish Book Fair

BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER!
October 23 – 31, 2010
NEW VENUE: Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue
55 Yeomans Road, Toronto

BOOK FAIR OPENING NIGHT

Saturday, October 23

8 PM | $25
David Grossman
To the End of the Land is a major, internationally-bestselling novel of extraordinary power about the costs of war from one of Israel's greatest writers.

Sponsored by the Shalina Foundation and Koffler Arts.

Sunday, October 24

11 AM | FREE
David Brody
Mourning and Celebration – Jewish, Orthodox and Gay Past and Present.

Sponsored by Kulanu Toronto.

1:30 PM | $5
Simcha for Simcha in Yiddish and English
With readings and music by folksinger **Betsheva.**

Sponsored by Committee for Yiddish, UJA Federation, Friends of Yiddish, United Jewish People's Order/Workmen's Circle, Workman's Circle/Arbeter Ring, Mot & Beatrice Wolfe Library, Reuben & Helene Dennis Museum, Beth Tzedec Congregation and Bernstein Cultural Centre.

2 PM | $5
Jewish Parent Alert
With **Judith Finer Freeman,** author of ***Cracking the Code: Unlocking the Potential for Future Leaders***

3 PM | FREE
PJ Library Goes to Book Fair!
Aubrey Davis, author of ***Bagels from Benny*** and ***Bone Button Borscht.***

For more info on PJ Library: www.pjlibrary360.org

3 PM | $5
Foster Care in the Jewish Community, Panel Discussion
Gabriela Israelovich author of ***Where's Home?***

Sponsored by Jewish Family & Child.

3:30 PM | $5
Parchment
Readings from *Parchment,* Canada's Journal of Contemporary Jewish Writings.

4 PM | $10
Martin Fletcher
NBC News Bureau Chief in Tel Aviv on ***Walking Israel – A Personal Search for the Soul of a Nation.***

Sponsored by Canada-Israel Committee

7 PM | $5
David Weiss
Maimonides' Cure of Souls: Medieval Precursor of Psychoanalysis

Sponsored by National Havurah Community of Canada.

8 PM | $10
George Gilder
Gilder speaks on his latest book ***The Israel Test.***

Sponsored by Canadian Friends of Hebrew University

Monday, October 25

11 AM | $10
Power, Growth, Insight and Change through Writing
Merle Nudelman author of ***The He We Knew.***

1:30 PM | $5
Walter Pitman
On ***Victor Feldbrill: Canadian Conductor Extraordinaire.***

8 PM | $10
Harold Troper
The Defining Decade, on Jews in Canada in the 1960's.

Sponsored by League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada.

Tuesday, October 26

11 AM | FREE
Repairing Our Lives
Lynda Fishman on ***Repairing Rainbows: A True Story of Family, Tragedy and Choices.***

1:30 PM | $5
Bill Gladstone
Gladstone speaks on ***The Rise of the Toronto Jewish Community.***

Sponsored by The Canadian Jewish News.

8 PM | $10
Gregory Levey
How to Make Peace in the Middle East in Six Months or Less Without Leaving Your Apartment.

Sponsored by Beer Israel Fund.

Wednesday, October 27

11 AM | FREE
Repairing Our Lives
Gerald Ziedenberg's on ***Inspiration through Adversity.***

Sponsored by Beth Tikvah Congregation.

1:30 PM | $5
Kate Taylor
Taylor speaks on her latest mystery/history book, ***A Man in Uniform,*** a story of Alfred Dreyfus.

Sponsored by Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue.

8 PM | $10
Anna Porter
Anna Porter, one of Canada's most distinguished writers, returns to her European roots with ***The Ghosts of Europe – Journeys Through Central Europe's Troubled Past and Uncertain Future.***

Sponsored by Ukrainian-Jewish Congress.

Thursday, October 28

11 AM | FREE
Frieda Johles Forman
Author of ***Jewish Refugees in Switzerland During the Holocaust.***

1:30 PM | $5
Judie Oron
Oron's new book, ***Cry of the Giraffe*** is based on the true story of Wudilu, her adopted daughter.

Sponsored by National Council of Jewish Women, Toronto Section.

8 PM | $10
Sarah Taieb-Carlen
Author of ***The Jews of North Africa.***

Sponsored by Sephardic Kehila Centre and Magen David Sephardic Congregation.

Saturday, October 30

8 PM | $10
Marek Halter
Marek Halter speaks on his new epic ***The Jewish Odyssey,*** the far-reaching story of a people who, despite facing perpetual struggle, have shaped modern civilization.

Sponsored by his west Canada.

Sunday, October 31

11 AM | FREE
Kitty Wintrob
Kitty Wintrob's dramatist husband Ralph reads excerpts from ***I'm Not Going Back: Wartime Memoir of a Child Evacuee.***

Suitable for young readers and adults.

11:30 AM | FREE
Elan Divon
Elan Divon speaks on his new book, ***Reaching Beyond the Religious.***

Sponsored by Jolie M. Gallery and Holdfgash.

1:30 PM | $5
Larry Rodness
Larry Rodness' new coming-of-age novel ***Today I am a Man*** is a poignant look at the trials and tribulations of adolescence through the eyes of an adult.

2 PM | $5
Second Generation Writers – Wartime and After
Israeli author **Savyon Liebrecht** speaks on her latest book, ***The Women My Father Knew.*** **Joseph Kertes** speaks on his award-winning novel ***Gratitude.***

This program is an introduction to the upcoming Holocaust Education Week, November 1 – 8, 2010. For details, www.holocausteducationweek.com

Sponsored by Holdfgash.

Sunday, October 31

2 PM | $5
And Now For Something Completely Different!
Globe and Mail writer **Michael Posner** discusses the theory that Shakespeare's plays were actually written a Jewish woman who dared not acknowledge her authorship in anti-Semitic Elizabethan England.

4 PM | $5
Jewish Fiction.net
Founding editor **Dr. Nora Gold** reads excerpts from the inaugural issue, including fiction by **Elie Wiesel, Cheva Rosenfarb, Steve Stern, Neve Semel, Thane Rosenbaum, Yoram Kaniuk,** and others.

Sponsored by First Narrower Congregation.

8 PM | $10
Tarek Fatah
Journalist, political advocate, and the founder of the liberal Muslim organization Muslim Canadian Congress, Tarek Fatah speaks on his new book, ***The Jew is Not My Enemy: Unveiling the Myths that Fuel Muslim Anti-Semitism.***

Sponsored by Or'chim Congregation for Humanistic Judaism.

34th Annual Toronto Jewish Book Fair
October 23 – 31, 2010
Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.

Full event details:
www.kofflerarts.org

TICKETS
On sale Monday – Thursday: 10 AM – 4 PM

TO ORDER TICKETS
416.638.1881 x4281 or **hredner@kofflerarts.org**

Tickets at $10 and $25 can be ordered by phone or e-mail and will be held at Beth David Synagogue. Tickets at $5 can only be purchased at Beth David Synagogue one hour before the programs.

PLEASE NOTE: Box office is closed on Fridays and Jewish Holidays: Thursday, September 23 and Thursday, September 30

HOURS
Saturdays, October 23 and 30: 7 – 10 PM
Sundays, October 24 and 31: 10 AM – 10 PM
Monday – Thursday, October 25 – 28:
10 AM – 4 PM & 6:30 – 10 PM
Friday, October 29: 10 AM – 1 PM

Programs are subject to change. No refunds on tickets or books. Entrance to the Toronto Jewish Book Fair is FREE.

BE A FRIEND – MAKE A CONTRIBUTION!
Helen Redner, Director, Toronto Jewish Book Fair
416.638.1881 x4281 | hredner@kofflerarts.org

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U of T club gets Heritage Toronto plaque

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

The University of Toronto's faculty club has always been a part of the city's history. But now it's official.

On Sept. 16, the Faculty Club, formerly called the Primrose Club, received a Heritage Toronto plaque as part of that organization's initiative to commemorate historical areas in the city.

Located at 41 Willcocks St. on U of T's downtown campus, the club was originally formed in 1920 by members of the Jewish community who weren't accepted into other social clubs in the area.

The building itself, which was acquired by the university in 1959, was designed by Benjamin Brown, one of the first successful Jewish architects in Toronto.

The Faculty Club, the university's social club for staff and faculty, intended to use it as a temporary home, but it eventually became their permanent space.

"There is nothing so permanent as a temporary building," said U of T's David Naylor at the club's 50th anniversary celebration, where the Heritage Toronto plaque was presented.

"Over the years, I've seen such an array of events here. This is the living room of the university," he said.

For club president Debbie Stewart, the Faculty Club is a chance for faculty to connect.

"It's a place to gather, to socialize. It's very important because this is a huge university. It has… [about] 12,000 faculty and staff. You can become very isolated in your own department," she said.

Adam Vaughan, the councillor for Toronto's Ward 20, said that having an opportunity to socialize in an educational institution is essential for staff and faculty.

"The university is much more than an institution. It's the faculty, it's the staff, it's the students. This university is more than a place to get a degree," he said at the celebration. "The faculty club is a spot where ideas from different parts of the campus can collide and new ideas can emerge."

In addition to being a place to socialize, the club will now be an official part of Toronto's history.

And, according to Gary Miedema, the heritage plaque coordinator for Heritage Toronto, it's all because of the Jewish community.

A Heritage Toronto plaque is presented to the University of Toronto's Faculty Club. From left are university president David Naylor, Barbara McPhail from Heritage Toronto, club secretary Roger Riendeau, club president Debbie Stewart and Ward 20 Coun. Adam Vaughan.

"In the 1920s, the city had a number of different social clubs. Many were fairly exclusive… and the Jewish community was not always welcome," he said.

This prompted members of the community to start their own club, he added.

"As the Primrose Club, it was a very important institution for the Jewish community and certainly for the elite of the Jewish community."

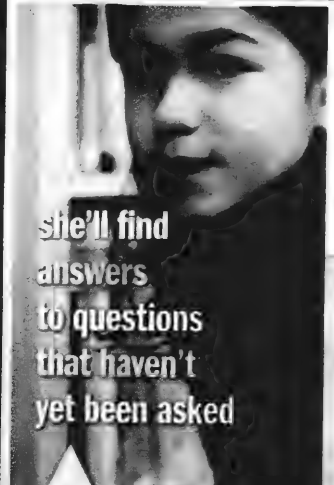
Ellen Scheinberg, the director of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Ontario Jewish Archives, which is run through the Latner Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Learning, agreed, adding that, originally, the Primrose Club was a men's club that eventually let women join.

"They had a separate entrance for women," she said.

Scheinberg said the plaque project is an important one.

"The plaque is important because we want to commemorate Jewish institutions," she said. "A lot of plaques commemorate white, male Protestant [historical sites]. This is an important initiative to commemorate [communities] who are from minority groups."

A New Year's party held at the Primrose Club in 1959.



OPEN HOUSE

NORTH CAMPUS
36 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill
Wednesday, October 13, 2010
at 9:15 AM

SOUTH CAMPUS
1950 Bathurst St., Toronto
Thursday, October 14, 2010
at 9:15 AM

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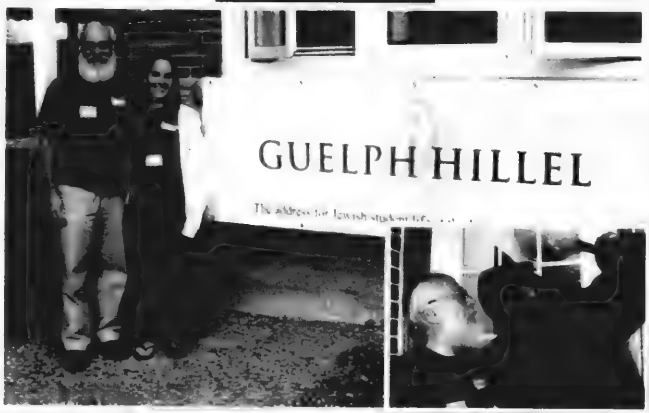
On Campus



Michael Grand, the Guelph Hillel faculty advisor, poses with student leader Erin Temple outside the new Hillel House. Inset: Grand and Guelph alumni Adam Walman affix a mezuzah on Guelph Hillel's new building.

University of Guelph gets new Hillel House

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

Jonathan Katzeff is a Jewish student at the University of Guelph. And now he has a home there.

This school year, Guelph's Hillel, with the help of Hillel Canada through the United Israel Appeal Federations of Canada (UIA), purchased the ninth Hillel House in Canada.

The house, which is an open-concept bungalow, is a five-minute walk from the university and is being rented through funds from UIA.

For Katzeff, a third-year real estate and housing major and the co-president of Guelph's Hillel, the house is more than just a place to socialize.

"We now have a place. A place for us to run programs, to run Shabbat dinners. A place for the Jews at Guelph to come and be together," he said. "We now have an actual home."

Before getting the Hillel House, Guelph's Hillel was run out of a small office at the university that held around five people.

Hava Goldberg, the director of Guelph's Hillel, saw that the Jewish community had outgrown this office.

"It's a tiny little office. It was just a means of us having a place to store our things. We've never really had a place to call our own," she said, adding that events were held in various boardrooms or members' houses.

According to Goldberg, there are about 1,000 Jewish students at the university, 400 of whom are on Hillel's mailing list. Three years ago, Hillel estimated that there were 600 to 700 Jewish students.

"This means the community has continued to grow and replace itself. It's evident on the campus," she said. "The Jewish population at the University of Guelph has really been growing… It's important for Jewish students to have a place where they feel comfortable, where they feel at home."

Which is where the Hillel House comes in. "We're able to offer a lot of opportunities we couldn't in the past," Goldberg said.

One of these opportunities is a Rosh Hashanah dinner, where some 60 students showed up.

The idea for a Hillel House came up around four years ago from a university alumnus and several student leaders.

A proposal was written, an endowment was given through UIA and, after a long search, a house was purchased.

"Right now we're renting this house to ensure that this is the appropriate location. This is the first step of a longer-term plan to buy and own a facility in Guelph," Goldberg said.

Goldberg feels the house is a way to strengthen Guelph's Jewish community.

"We think that the house is helpful in allowing us to reach out to students. First of all, it creates a stronger sense of this being a legitimate organization that has something to offer [students]," she said.

"We have this space that does not just belong to myself – it belongs to every Jewish student on campus. We want Jewish students here to feel like they have something. Like they're part of a community."

Yacov Fruchter, the director of emerging campuses for Hillel Canada, agrees.

"[The house] is a place [students] can use to generate ideas and create this safe space where they can develop programming… and also welcome other communities within the university," he said.

The house is a means of connecting Jews of all backgrounds in Guelph, Fruchter said, as well as creating interfaith opportunities with the Christian and Muslim population on campus.

"[Students] can invite the Christian or Muslim community or any group to participate in what the Jewish community offers," he said.

"I think, ultimately, what the place is going to be is a space where Jews, regardless of their background, can come. Jewish living doesn't have to be an enigma on campus."

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Bert & Marilyn Raphael. Happy 55th anniversary! We love you! Sheree, Mark, Debbie, Alexis and Corey; Lisa, Ed, Daniel, Samantha and Jordyn.

"Did you hear the one about the greatest zaidy in the world, Max Snider, who celebrated his 75th birthday?" We love you past the moon! Your grandchildren.

Mazel tov to Georgina & Andy Koltai on your 40th wedding anniversary, with love from your family and friends.

Marilyn & Alvin Abram. Married on Oct. 2, 1960. 50 years married and counting. And mama said it wouldn't last.

Mazel tov to Jeff, Janice and big sister Haley Maser on the birth of their son Justin Ben, on Aug. 27.

Mike & Laura Gardash welcome their son Nathan Ray, born Sept. 3. Bubbie & Zaide, Zella & Michael Snider. Grandparents, Gigs & Brian Gardash.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **WWW.CJNEWS.COM** and click the **Family Moments** button!

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What's New

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Please note holiday deadlines for What's New. Deadline for Oct. 14 is Oct. 4. Deadline for Oct. 21 is Oct. 7. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Friday, Oct. 1

ONEG SHABBAT

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism invites the public to a Simchat Torah Oneg Shabbat. **Barry Olshen** from Glendon College, York University, discusses "Our Torah Scroll – A Cultural and Historical Introduction." 7:30 p.m. $15. 18 Wynford Dr. To RSVP or for more info, contact **Roby**: 416-385-3910, roby@oraynu.org.

Saturday, Oct. 2

TORAH STUDY

Beth Tikvah Torah class, Saturdays to December. This week, **Morley Goldberg** does parshah Bereshit. 9:45-10:45 a.m.

TOT SHABBAT

Pride of Israel Synagogue's Junior Congregation and Tot Shabbat program. 10 a.m. Service with songs and a parshah play. 59 Lissom Cres. 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

Sunday, Oct. 3

THE NEW TEXT-SPRESSO

"The Ugly Rabbi: A Talmudic Tale of Arrogance and Atonement," with **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein**. Join Temple Sinai for espresso and discussion on inner and outer beauty. Services start at 9:45 a.m. $2 at door. Register with **Marcie**: education@templesinai.net or 416-487-3281.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

The 68th annual remembrance for the 30,000 Radomer Jews who died in the Holocaust. At 11:15 a.m., *Yizkor* at the monument in Dawes Road Cemetery, Radomer section. At 12:30 p.m., at Beth Radom Congregation, survivors share their liberation experiences. 18 Reiner Rd.

SATELLITE AT SINAI

Join Temple Sinai for Satellite at Sinai with Kadima party leader **Tzipi Livni**. Attendees can submit questions to Livni in New York, via e-mail. After lecture, members of Temple Sinai's senior staff and clergy will answer questions and engage in further discussion. Members $10, guests $15. Pay at the door, no registration required. Doors open 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served. **Marcie**, 416-487-3281.

Tuesday, Oct. 5

JEWS OF SHANGHAI

Temple Har Zion's daytime program committee presents artist **Ian Leventhal** speaking about the Jews of Shanghai. He has spent the past several years exploring Jewish-Chinese history and was instrumental in saving the Jewish ghetto area of Shanghai from destruction. 12 p.m. Bring lunch; coffee, tea and cookies provided. 12:30 p.m. 7360 Bayview Ave. Members $3, guests $5. 905-889-2252.

Wednesday, Oct. 6

'LOVING ISRAEL'

New Israel Fund of Canada presents **Daniel Sokatch**, CEO of New Israel Fund, speaking on "Loving Israel in Complicated Times." 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. For more information: 416-781-4322 or www.nifcan.org.

Other News

TALMUD CLASS

Beth Emeth Talmud-Gemarah classes resume Wednesdays starting Oct. 6 at 9:15 a.m. Newcomers welcome. Class conducted in English using the Hebrew text. **Aaron Nussbaum** leads. 416-633-8097 for more information.

BIBLE-TANACH CLASS

Beth David's weekly Bible-Tanach class resumes its sessions starting Oct. 7. All are welcome. Taught in English with Hebrew texts. **Aaron Nussbaum** leads the class. 416-633-8097.

Continued on page 27

The Canadian SHAARE ZEDEK Hospital Foundation
a hospital with a heart

Creative Leadership & Innovation in the Global Age

Please Join The Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation For An Evening Honouring Heenan Blaikie LLP And Its Co-managing Partner Norm Bacal

What: Cocktails + Dinner (Kashruth observed)
Featuring: **General Rick Hillier, CMM, MSC, CD, Former Chief of the Defense Staff of the Canadian Forces**
When: Thursday, November 18, 2010 at 7:00 pm
Where: Park Hyatt Toronto
Queen's Park Ballroom
4 Avenue Road, Toronto
Valet parking provided

For more information or to reserve your tickets call: 416-781-3584
e-mail: foundation@hospitalwithaheart.ca, web: www.hospitalwithaheart.ca

Funds raised from the evening will go to support the Dr. Jack Matloff Family Disaster & Emergency Response Center at the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem

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Continued from page 26

YIDDISH CONVERSATION

Yiddish conversation and good company at Prosserman JCC on Wednesdays, beginning Oct. 6 for 8 sessions. 4600 Bathurst St. $90. **Ester**, 416-635-2883, ext. 5189, or committeeforyiddish@ujafed.org.

ISRAEL PANEL

"Standing Up for Israel: Arm Yourself with the Facts." Temple Sinai holds a panel discussion with professors **Ed Morgan** and **David Dewitt**. Oct. 6, 7 p.m. To register: **Marcie**, 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net.

MEKOROT TORAH STUDY

Mekorot has a variety of opportunities for adults to study Torah; including Bible, Talmud philosophy and more. Choose from year-long and three- to five-week courses starting at the beginning of October. www.mekorot.ca, 416-877-2050.

FILM SCREENING

The Boys of Esplanade come to Toronto on Oct. 10. Set in Montreal, the movie focuses on the two sons of Jewish east European immigrants. Following the screening, some of the actors will take part in a discussion with the audience. 7:30 p.m. City Playhouse Theatre. 1000 New Westminster Dr. $10 each. Limited number of seats available, order them at 905-882-7469. A portion of the proceeds will go to Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation.

HEALING SERVICE

Jewish Healing Program presents a healing service on Oct. 17, 3-4 p.m. Beth Tzedec, 1700 Bathurst St. Facilitated by **Rabbi Adam Cutler** and **Yehudit (Judy) Shier Weisberg**. Sponsored by Jewish Family & Child. 416-638-7800, ext. 6287. Free, wheelchair accessible.

'RELATIONSHIPS SUCK'

"Sometimes Relationships Suck" is a program for teens Grade 7 and up, grouped by age, and their parents to discuss teen dating abuse. Oct. 21, 7:15 p.m. Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St. Unit 211. Register at srstoronto.ca or 416-630-9313.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

UJA Federation – Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto needs volunteers available during the day, four hours a week with some flexibility, for information desk. Computer skills and fluency in spoken and written English essential. Language skills in Hebrew and Russian an asset. **Barbara**, bbarak@ujafed.org, 416-631-5843.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Heartlines bereavement group, eight-week grief support program. Hospice Thornhill, 220 Charlton Ave. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Oct. 8 to Nov. 26. Group size limited. Sign up as soon as possible. **Karen**, 905-764-0656 ext. 227.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

The Baycrest Volunteer Services Department needs volunteers urgently to assist clients with a web visiting project developed at Baycrest using Skype. If you're interested in helping clients connect with loved ones around the world via computer and are available weekdays, contact volunteer services at 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

50+ COMEDY/PUB NIGHT

Beth Emeth's Club Sameach hosts a comedy/pub night on Oct. 14 at 6 p.m. Fischtein Hall. With **Lawrence Morgenstern** and **Mike Nemiroff**. Members $40, guests $45. Catered pub fare served at 6 p.m., followed by an evening of comedy. RSVP by Oct. 11. Visa, MasterCard or cheque at Beth Emeth office or by phone: 416-633-3838. No tickets sold at the door.

SURVIVOR MEMOIRS

The Azrieli Foundation launches their third series of Holocaust survivor memoirs with readings by the authors or their family members. The keynote address is by **Linda Hooper**, who initiated the Paper Clip Project at Whitwell Middle School in Tennessee. Participants will receive a complimentary set of the three memoirs. Oct. 26, 7 p.m. Toronto Centre for the Performing Arts, 5040 Yonge St. Free event. Register at azrielifoundation.org or 416-410-5875. RSVP by Oct. 19.

LITTLE SUPERSTARS

Bring your baby or toddler and join songwriter and educator **Mark Weinstock** for singing, dancing, instruments and storytelling at Temple Sinai. Learn songs and activities to stimulate your child's motor and language development. Thursdays, Oct. 7 to Dec. 16. 11:30 a.m. Members $180, guests $200. 416-487-3281, education@templesinai.net.

HEBREW CLASSES

Beginner and intermediate Hebrew classes available at Temple Sinai. Sessions start October, January and March. 7:30-8:45 p.m. 416-487-3281 for pricing and info.

LEUKEMIA FUNDRAISER

Imagine a Cure for Leukemia presents the first annual Kick-A-Thon – Kick out Leukemia. Oct. 16, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Energy Fitbox, 8700 Bathurst St. Unit 1. $15 minimum donation per person to participate. Family friendly event with prizes and refreshments. imagineacureforleukemia.com, donate@imagineacureforleukemia.com.

MELTON MINI SCHOOL

Melton 10-week graduate courses open to the community. "Bereshit, Adam to Abraham," Wednesday mornings. "Ten Tough Torah Questions," Wednesday afternoons. **Loretta**, 416-789-7400.

CIRCLE OF CARE

"Hope through Healing" spousal bereavement support group Oct. 7 to Nov. 25. 10-11:30 a.m. 530 Wilson Ave., 4th floor. Register with **Rebecca**, 416-635-2900 ext. 462.

JF&CS GROUPS

Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. Registration required for all programs.

Younger Widow/Widower Bereavement group: Six-session discussion series for people 60 and under who have recently lost a spouse. Oct. 5, 7:30-9 p.m. 4600 Bathurst St.

Effective Parenting: Four-session group to help parents learn what they can do to raise a happy, motivated and well-behaved child. For parents of children aged 2-11. Oct. 6, 7-9 p.m. 4600 Bathurst St.

Lifeskills for Today's Woman: Six-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives by enhancing their life skills. Oct. 6, 7-9 p.m. 4600 Bathurst St.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC. Seymour Epstein gives the first talk in a new series: "Jewish Communities of the World – Free Soviet Jewry: The Movement and its Outcome." Oct. 7, 1:30 p.m.

Join the inter-generational program, with catered kosher lunches with students and a complimentary guided visit to the Royal Ontario Museum. 416-924-6211 ext. 155.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama Oct. 13, departs 10 a.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 p.m. Bingo Tuesdays, 12:30 to 3 p.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30 to 3 p.m. Sunday night dance Oct. 17, 6-8:30 p.m. with live music. **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Membership $25. All welcome.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Bowling with Nintendo Wii, Oct. 7. Weekly, 12-1 p.m. Music room. No experience necessary. Free.

Wellness lecture: "Attitude is Everything: Interactive Workshop Part 1," with **Harvey Silver**. Oct. 7, 1:30-3 p.m. Free.

Lecture: "Missionary Impossible: Judaism's Response to Christianity Jews for Judaism." **Rabbi Michael Skobac**. Oct. 5, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prosser-manjcc.com.

Tic Tac Two is a morning program for 2-year-olds, providing a stimulating and nurturing curriculum. Offered 2, 3 or 5 mornings per week from September to June and includes weekly Shabbat program. Limited space. **Kailah**, ext. 4351.

Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 4 from 1 to 5 p.m. Shabbat R and R, a free drop-in program of Shabbat-appropriate songs, stories, Jewish learning, activities and snack. Families of all levels of Jewish observance will feel welcome at this family-friendly event. No pre-registration necessary. Room 205.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Study music this fall: play in a first-rate klezmer ensemble with **Eric Stein** on Tuesdays starting Oct. 5; "Planet Music" with **Barry Livingston**, Thursdays starting Oct. 14; women's chorus every second Monday. music@mnjcc.org.

Jacobs Lounge visual arts space. **Debra Friedman**, *Teenage: Portraits at the Threshold*. To Oct. 8.

The tExtinG Series. Oct. 5, 8-9 p.m. Three-part exploration of Jewish texts in a (nearly) paperless world. With **Dan Mendelsohn Aviv**. Part 1, "Torah to Tanach." **Loretta**, 416-789-7400.

Some spots left in Hebrew beginner and intermediate classes. Ext. 154, sharonis@mnjcc.org.

Nuit Blanche *Havdallah*. Oct. 2, 8 p.m. Kick off Nuit Blanche by celebrating the end of Shabbat. After *Havdallah*, enjoy Nuit Blanche together. Drumming, singing and refreshments. Free, all welcome. sarahbn@mnjcc.org, ext. 277.

Shabbat Club for children 3 to 6 years old. Fridays 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Starts Oct. 15. Art, music and cooking. Special hands-on Shabbat project each week. Ext. 277.

Kolel at the J presents "Israel: Reflections of an Outsider from the Inside," with **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein**. Thursdays, Oct. 7-28. 8-9:30 p.m. http://kolel.org, 416-638-1881.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Mendelsohn, Molly	Sept. 8/10	7460 Bathurst St
Lambert, Joseph	Sept. 9/10	70 Laurelcrest Ave
Rosenwald, Carol	Sept. 10/10	Private
Roth, Sam	Sept. 12/10	1 North Western Ave
Blau, Rebecca Rose	Sept. 13/10	343 Clark Ave W
Pincus, Pamela Ruth	Sept. 13/10	484 Steeles Ave. W
Grunwald, John	Sept. 12/10	18 Regatta Cres
Giller, Bronislav	Sept. 5/10	14 Heron Hollow Ave
Milman, Nema	Sept. 14/10	72 Faywood Blvd
Ponte, Jacob	Sept. 15/10	850 Steeles Ave. W.
Kissin, Maria	Sept. 15/10	
Enoch Gladstone, Bessie	Sept. 16/10	
Levinzon, Cerna	Sept. 16/10	Private
Zilberman, Otto	Sept. 17/10	4200 Bathurst St
Pearson, Richard	Sept. 16/10	25 Evanston Dr
Lenchner, Gerald	Sept. 16/10	Private
Krupnick, Jana	Sept. 17/10	35 Marshall St
Benchetrit, Alice	Sept. 17/10	4415 Bathurst St
Ponte, Isaac	Sept. 19/10	246 Wilmington Ave

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
IDA BRILANT ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, Oct. 3rd at 10:30 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Bathurst South of Steeles
Warshaw Lodger Section #46D
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
J. RICHARD (DICK) SHIFF ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, October 10th at 11:00 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Bathurst South of Steeles
Tzozmerer Society Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
MURRAY PAGE ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, October 3rd at 10:30 a.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Beth David Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of
ELLA RAZMOV ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, Oct. 3rd at 10:30 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Bathurst South of Steeles
Jewish Lithuanian Farband Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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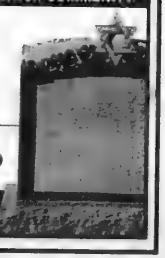


Obituary

N.S. businessman recalled for philanthropic efforts

By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — Irving Schwartz of Sydney, N.S., who passed away Yom Kippur morning, leaves a legacy of superb business acumen combined with a strong capacity for philanthropy and compassion.

Schwartz, who worked a full day Friday before heading home for the holiday, was 81. He had battled cancer and Parkinson's disease for the last two years, but remained totally active in his business and volunteer activities.

Irving Schwartz

Born and raised in New Waterford, N.S., Schwartz developed his business sense at an early age, working in his parents' clothing store with his two sisters and three brothers.

At 13, his mother, Rose, who raised her children and ran the business when her husband died prematurely, sent him on a furniture-buying trip that would shape his business future.

He rose to prominence by building his furniture business, Schwartz Furniture, developing the catchphrase "I guarantee it," which was used in numerous promotional ads through the years.

Schwartz was involved with a number of companies during his life, dabbling in things as diverse as nursing homes, coal-washing and even treasure hunting.

He was the founder and CEO of Schwartz and Co. Ltd. and president of Seaside Communications, a major cable TV distributor in eastern Nova Scotia. He worked to bring high-speed Internet to all parts of Cape Breton, no matter how rural, because he believed it was vital to the business future of the province, comparing the need for high-speed Internet throughout the province to the need for electricity in every home several generations ago.

Giving back to his community was also important to Schwartz. He was involved with the Cape Breton Children's Aid Society, the Lions Club and Junior Achievement. In 1996, he founded the Canadian International Demining Corps, a charitable organization committed to removing land mines from war zones. Its headquarters is in Sydney and Schwartz was chairman of the volunteer board at the time of his passing.

He recently helped lead a campaign to raise $5.4 million for an expansion of the Cape Breton Regional Hospital's cancer centre.

For his many efforts, both in business and shaping a better community, Schwartz was recognized with a number of awards, including induction into the Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame and the Cape Breton Business Hall of Fame. Schwartz was also an officer of the Order of Canada and held an honorary doctor of laws from Dalhousie University.

Condolences from political leaders poured in as news of his death spread.

"Irving Schwartz was not only a remarkable businessman, his legacy as a community leader and philanthropist will be the achievements for which he is most remembered," Premier Darrell Dexter said in a statement. "I was deeply saddened to learn of his death.

"Cape Breton was very fortunate to have a leader like Irving Schwartz," added Deputy Premier Frank Corbett. "His passion for life, family and community will be sorely missed."

Danny Graham, former Nova Scotia Liberal leader, knew Schwartz for 30 years as a family friend and community leader.

"He's been a role model in Cape Breton. He loved the island and always advanced the best interests of Cape Breton first," Graham said. "Nobody straddled the rails of being both a business leader and a community leader with the kind of excellence that Irving did in Cape Breton."

Schwartz is survived by his wife, Diana Usher, and four children. His funeral took place Sept. 20 at Sydney's Membertou Trade and Convention Centre and was attended by more than 1,000 people, including Dexter and other dignitaries.

Spice of Life

Celebrating the versatility of pineapple

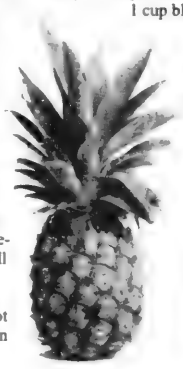
By EILEEN GOLTZ
Special to The CJN

For many of us, there's always a question of what to bring as a hostess gift when you've been invited to share a yom tov or other special meal with friends. A bottle of kosher wine is good in many instances, but I always want to bring something just a little bit different, so I bring wine and fruit.

My favourite fruit of choice is the pineapple. In fact, in tropical climates, pineapples are a symbol of home hospitality and are often given as housewarming gifts, holiday gifts, get well gifts, or for just about any other occasion where a gift would be appropriate.

The pineapple is so versatile that the fruit can be eaten as is or topped with yogurt, or broiled and topped with brown sugar and nuts, used as an ingredient in a salad dressing, a marinade, a main course or even a dessert like the classic pineapple upside-down cake. Whatever your pineapple modus operandi is, the following recipes will make your "gift" one that's never returned.

Note: If fresh pineapple is too expensive or not readily available you can use the canned in its own juice kind for the following recipes.



CUCUMBER PINEAPPLE SALAD

2 seedless cucumbers coarsely chopped
1 red onion, diced fine
1 bunch parsley, chopped
1/4 cup lemon juice
2 tbsp. soy sauce
1 tbsp. sugar
1/4 tsp. chili sauce
2 tbsp. fresh mint, chopped (optional)

Cut cucumber lengthwise in quarters. Slice each quarter into 1/4-in. slices. Peel pineapple and cut into quarters. Remove core. Cut each quarter in half and slice into 1/2-in. slices.

Combine cucumber, pineapple, onion and parsley leaves in a bowl.

In another bowl, combine lemon juice, soy sauce, sugar and chili sauce. Pour over salad and toss together. Serve on a platter. Serves 6 to 8.

Submitted by Randi Percelle St. Louis Mo.

PINEAPPLE SALAD WITH HONEY DRESSING

2 to 3 cups bite size pineapple chunks
2 to 3 cups bite size cantaloupe chunks
1 to 2 cups seedless grapes
2 cups strawberries sliced
1 cup blackberries or blueberries or raspberries

Honey Dressing
1/2 cup sugar
1 tsp. prepared dry mustard
1 tsp. paprika
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 cup honey
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1/4 cup rice wine or apple cider vinegar
1 cup oil
1 tsp. onion, grated
1 tsp. celery seeds
1 tbsp. poppy seeds

In a large bowl, combine the fruit and toss gently. Cover and refrigerate.

In a blender, combine the sugar mustard, paprika, salt, honey, lemon juice and vinegar. Blend until combined and then slowly add the oil while the blender is on. Pour the dressing into a bowl and add the onion, celery seeds and poppy seeds. Mix to combine, cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. To serve, spoon the dressing over the fruit and toss to combine. Serves 6 to 8.

You can also serve this over salad greens.

PINEAPPLE CHICKEN SALAD

2 lb. cooked chicken (or turkey – I use leftovers)
1 to 2 cups diced pineapple
3 or 4 stalks celery, sliced
1 red pepper, diced
1 cup mayonnaise
2 tbsp. non-dairy creamer or soy milk
1/2 tsp. celery salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1 cup toasted pecans

In a large bowl combine the chicken, pineapple and celery and mix to combine.

In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, milk, celery salt and pepper. Add the mayonnaise mixture to the chicken and toss to combine. Chill for at least 30 minutes. Sprinkle the pecans over top just before serving. Serves 6.

Submitted by Charlotte Janovski Chicago, Ill.

UPSIDE DOWN PINEAPPLE CUPCAKES

1 pineapple cut into chunks, drained (save the juice; you won't need to use all the pineapple.)
1/3 cup packed light brown sugar
1/3 cup unsalted butter or margarine, melted
1/4 tsp. cinnamon

Cupcake Batter:
1 cup flour
3/4 cup sugar
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 cup butter, room temperature
1/2 cup reserved pineapple juice or milk or water
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
1 egg

Preheat the oven to 350. Spray a nonstick muffin pan with vegetable spray. Place the pineapple chunks on paper towels to drain completely.

In a small bowl, combine the brown sugar and melted butter. Divide the mixture evenly among the muffin pan cups. Arrange the pineapple chunks decoratively on top of the sugar mixture but only just cover the bottom – don't put too much pineapple in each one. Set the pan aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer blend together the butter, sugar and pineapple juice, beating for 2 minutes until smooth. Beat in the egg until combined and then add the flour and baking powder, Mix to combine. Spoon the batter over the fruit in the muffin pan, filling each cup three-quarters full. Bake for 30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the cupcake comes out clean. Cool the pan for 5 minutes, then place a wire rack on top of the muffin pan and invert. Let the pan stay on top of the cupcakes for about 15 seconds to make sure that they release from the pan. Remove the pan and let cool completely on the rack. Makes 12.

Modified from bigoven.com.

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UJA Federation

Coast to Coast

Hamilton schools to use *Hana's Suitcase* as educational tool

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The story of *Hana's Suitcase* has touched the hearts of thousands of readers around the world and next month, thousands more will be exposed to the moving story of the teenage victim of the Holocaust.

Today's Family and The Hamilton Jewish Federation present

Inside Hana's Suitcase

Special Benefit Film Presentation

Hana's story has captured the hearts and minds of people the world over.

Don't miss this event which will promote meaningful discussions about the effects of prejudice, racism and intolerance, while at the same time serving as a testament to the power of hope and the strength of the human spirit. We know that this will contribute to making 'Hamilton the best place to raise a child.'

Hamilton Place Theatre

On Oct. 4 and Oct. 5, 4,000 students from the Hamilton-Wentworth and Roman Catholic school boards, as well as Halton Region's public and Catholic boards will crowd into Hamilton Place to view *Inside Hana's Suitcase*, a film based on Hana Brady's life story, as well as meet her brother, George Brady.

Another 1,500 to 2,000 will gather in the evening of Oct. 4 to see the movie, meet Brady and raise funds for the United Way's Hana's Suitcase Legacy Fund, which promotes literacy programs in Hamilton, as well as for Holocaust education and human rights programs of the Hamilton Jewish federation.

The collaborative effort doesn't end there, said Gerald Fisher, executive director of UJA Federation of Hamilton. "We've done something remarkable in Hamilton. We've arranged with the Hamilton-Wentworth public and Roman Catholic schools, with the Halton regional schools and with private schools to teach a curriculum in school on Holocaust education and human rights to middle school students based on the book, *Hana's Suitcase*," he said.

Madeleine Levy, co-chair of the federation's Holocaust education committee, said the organization has worked in the past with Hamilton educators to run symposia to inform students about the Holocaust as well as help give teachers the tools they need to teach about the Holocaust.

"This is what we do," she said. "We had so many teachers asking how to approach social justice issues and Holocaust education in the classroom while fitting in the curriculum and promoting literacy."

In the last year, she and other volunteers put together an answer for their questions, she continued. Schools in the region were given copies of the book, by award-winning author Karen Levine, as well as a Holocaust-related curriculum created by Second Story Press, the book's publisher. In addition, reference materials for teachers were collected from the Montreal and Vancouver Holocaust education centres, and the whole package was presented in replica suitcases manufactured by a local contractor.

The materials were funded by a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Today's Family, a local organization involved in child education and care, partnered with the federation.

"The whole community came together for the project," Levy said. "I think it's a wonderful teaching tool for Grades five and six."

Pat Rocco, superintendent of education for Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, said each school in the division has received one replica suitcase with materials to implement the curriculum. Teachers will use the materials to guide students in grades 5 to 8 about the Holocaust and expand on the lesson to promote the school boards' values of "tolerance and respect."

Hana's Suitcase can be a jumping off point to teach about "social justice," said Rocco – "teaching kids to be good global citizens." That includes "self-respect," "doing the right thing" and "treating others like you'd like to be treated," he said.

Rocco said the *Hana's Suitcase* curriculum fits nicely with other educative tools throughout the school year, such as commemorating Martin Luther King Day, a social justice fair and a film fair.

The story of Hana Brady and her suitcase was first told in *The CJN* in 2001. The story inspired Levine to write *Hana's Suitcase*, which garnered numerous intentional awards.

It tells the story of Hana and George Brady, youngsters during World War II who were sent to the Nazi concentration camp at Theresienstadt. The camp was used to fool international observers about the condition of Jews who had been rounded up and deported from their homes.

Hana and George were deported separately to Auschwitz, where Hana was killed immediately on arrival in October 1944. The suitcase in the book's title refers to the luggage she carried with her to the Nazi death camp, but which she never used.

It came to life again when Fumiko Ishioka, director of the Holocaust Education Resource Centre in Tokyo, asked the Auschwitz Museum for an artifact that might bring home to her students the reality of the Holocaust. She was sent Hana's suitcase (it later turned out to be a replica created by the museum after the original was destroyed by vandals in 1984 while being exhibited in Birmingham, England), and she used it to track down Hana's brother, George Brady, who had survived the war and started a new life in Toronto.

Brady had been unaware that his sister's suitcase still existed.

"*Hana's Suitcase* has brought the lessons of history and a message of tolerance to thousands of children, and will continue to do so," Brady said.

Levy believes the Hamilton federation and its partners are continuing that message.

"In the book Hana said she wanted to be a teacher. We're fulfilling that dream for her," she said.

SINGLES EVENTS

DEADLINE: Wednesday 4 p.m. 8 days preceding issue date

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HOW DO YOU SAY IT IN ENGLISH

אַ שפּאציר דורך יידישע שפּריכוועדטלעך דאָס באַלייכטן אונדזער קולטור און זייער שאַרפקייט, און סאַטירע ברענגען אמת אין הנאה צו די ציין דען מיר זענען נישט פערפעקט אין קרומע מאַמעס באַפאַלן אונדז.

די פאַלגענדיקע שפּריכוועדטלעך זענען גענומען פון נתן סטוטשקאָוס דער אנער *פון דער יידישער שפּראַך*. אירסצונן פון זיין אַרבעט קען מען געפּינען יעדע טאָג אין פאָרווערטס. צוליב סטוטשקאָוס אויסצונן אַליין איז דערט אַבאָנירן אין דעם פאָרווערטס. מיר דרוקן איבער די אירסצונן אויף יידיש, יידיש פאָנעטיק מיט ענגלישע אותיות אין גיבן אויך אַן ענגלישע איבערזעצונג.

- מער רויך וי געברָאטנס... *Mer roykh vi gebrotns*
  More smoke than fire.
- ער האָט דעם קדש צו הויך אָנגעהויבן... *Er hot dem kadish tsu hoykh ongehoybn*
  He overreached...
- אַן מזל איז בעסער ניט געבוירן וחערן. *On mazl iz beser nit geboyrn vern* – better not to be born than to be born without luck
- אַ שלימזל וחען ער זאָל האַנדלען מיט ליכט וחאָלט די זון ניט אונטערגעגאַנגען. *A shlimazl— ven er zol handlen mit lilkht volt di zun nit untergegangen*—A shlimazl's luck – when he buys candles to sell against darkness he finds the sun never sets.
- בעסער אַ לאָך אין קעשענע איידער אַ לאָך אין האַרצן... *Beser a lokh in keshene eyder a lokh in hartsn* –better a hole in the pocket than a hole in the heart.
- זונטיק אַ גאַסט. מאָנטיק אַ לאַסט... *Zuntik a gast, montik a last.* On Sunday you're a guest; on Monday a pest.
- אין די אויגן הייסט נערעדט. הינטער די אויגן הייסט באַרעדט.
- *In di oygn heist geredt. Hinter di oygn heist baredt...* Say it to my face and you're talking to me…behind my back and you're insulting me.
- אַ בייזע צונג איז ערגער וי אַ שלעכטע האַנט. *A beyze tsung iz erger vi a shlekhte hant.* Wicked words hurt more than a slap.
- אַלטע ליבע רושאַחערט ניט.. Old love doesn't rust.

פּען רעדאַקציע: אויב איר האָט בעדאַנקען וחענג אויסצוזיך לאָזט וויסן. שרייבט מיר אויף מיין אַדרעס, דורך פאָסט אָדער בליין-פאָסט: info@thecjn.ca

Dershowitz opens Vancouver UJA drive

Urges community to 'dig into your pockets'

By LAUREN KRAMER
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — A record crowd of 1,500 came to hear Harvard University law professor Alan Dershowitz's thoughts on Israel, U.S. politics, anti-Semitism and Jewish continuity at last week's opening of the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver's (JFGV) annual campaign.

Dershowitz said he had just returned from Israel, where he declined an offer from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to be Israel's ambassador to the United Nations.

"I felt it could raise questions of dual loyalty," he told the Sept. 20 crowd at the Centre in Vancouver for the Performing Arts.

On the subject of Iran, he said the Islamic Republic is "the smartest adversary Israel and the U.S. has ever faced. They're not going to build a bomb right now. Rather, they're going to develop civilian nuclear energy. They won't make the ultimate step, because they know it crosses the red line, and Iran will try to create a situation where it crosses Israel's red line, but not the U.S.'s red line."

Iran sees the United States as being tired from its involvement in two wars, both of which are going badly, Dershowitz said. "The feeling among Iranians is that America is not going to get into a third war."

But Dershowitz's big fear, he said, was that U.S. President Barack Obama will be remembered as the Neville Chamberlain of the 21st century if he fails to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

"You cannot allow a government like Iran's to have nuclear weapons," he said. "If Israel does take preventative action and attacks Iran's nuclear reactor, it will be acting within its legal rights according to Article 51 of the UN Charter, and I will defend Israel legally and morally."

Outside the doors of the Centre in Vancouver for the Performing Arts, a handful of protesters brandished signs equating Israel's policies with apartheid in South Africa. Dershowitz dismissed them angrily from the stage.

"Those people outside are not pro-Palestinian – they support the end of the peace process," he said. "As one of Nelson Mandela's lawyers, I fought against apartheid and I know what it was about. Israel is a country struggling with lots of difficult problems, but apartheid is not one of them."

Dershowitz also had plenty to say on other problems facing Israel and the Jewish People. On conversion, for example, he quipped, "I think whoever wants to carry the burden of Judaism should be allowed to carry it!"

Alan Dershowitz

Speaking more seriously, he noted that the policy of matriarchal descent in Judaism grew out of the Middle Ages and was adopted to protect Jewish women and children. "I don't think that matriarchal descent policy is critical today," he said. "Israel is a place of sanctuary, and I'd like to see the issue of conversion and who is Jewish taken out of the realm of religion."

On assimilation, he argued that the Jewish community must treat intermarried couples differently. "We have to make it much easier for intermarried couples to become Jewish by welcoming the non-Jewish spouses to our communities, federations and cultural events. We have to welcome their children and make Judaism so exciting and attractive that they want to be a part of it," he said.

Assimilation is inevitable, he added, and the "guilt business" isn't enough to keep Jews in the fold. "We have to think progressively, adapt, change and stay ahead of the curve when it comes to how we deal with change in our community."

The JFGV's fundraising goal this year is $8 million, $2.4 million of which has been raised so far.

Dershowitz ended with a plea.

"A strong, thriving Jewish community, built around tzedakah and *tzedek*, a community that knows its responsibilities and gives generously, is an essential weapon in Israel's need to defend itself," he said. "Please, dig into your pockets. We owe it to our grandparents and our grandchildren to keep our community strong."

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Engineer helps to rebuild Haiti

Quebec civil engineer helps fulfil tikkun olam

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Earlier this year, David Tordjman's biggest professional concern was making sure a home composting program was running smoothly in Côte St. Luc.

Since March, the city's former director of public works and urban planning has been in Haiti working on the rebuilding of the country after January's devastating earthquake.

A civil engineer by profession, Tordjman, 38, is a project manager for UNOPS (United Nations Office of Project Services), engaged primarily in determining the soundness of buildings.

It's a far cry from the five years he spent working for a well-to-do suburb overseeing the daily operations of garbage collection, road construction and snow removal.

"Haiti puts things in perspective. Here, if a water main broke, people complained their water was off for an hour. People in Haiti are just grateful for basic services," said Tordjman who was back in Montreal for the High Holidays.

When he first arrived in Haiti, running water was a sometimes thing and there is still no refuse pickup.

After the earthquake, Tordjman immediately offered to volunteer in Haiti, realizing he had needed skills. He scheduled two weeks vacation and booked a flight, but with the chaotic situation on the ground his services were not required at that point.

Montrealer David Tordjman, right, a UN project manager in Haiti, confers with a local colleague at a work site.

He then contacted the UN, among other organizations, and the UN said they needed a French-speaking engineer with experience in public works and dealing with government – right away.

It was a difficult decision, but with his wife Stephanie's blessing, Tordjman resigned from his job and said goodbye to her and their three children aged 10, 7 and 5. "I'm a firm believer that things are meant to be, and that I was meant to do this work."

As an observant Jew, living in Haiti has other challenges. Tordjman wears a kippah at all times. "When I first arrived they thought I was a cardinal," he said.

When they found out he was Jewish, the Haitians were intrigued, but not mystified. "They had some basic knowledge and I met a few who thought the Haitians were descended from the Lost Tribes. They are a very religious people, and ask questions."

He returns from his home visits with a couple of suitcases full of kosher meat and other food. Otherwise, he eats a lot of fish and vegetables. "I've lost 20 pounds, but I could stand it." It's also been brutally hot, and the work gruelling.

Tordjman has worked abroad before and had some experience roughing it as a reservist in the Canadian Armed Forces, but he had never been in a disaster zone.

"Even almost two months after the quake, it was a scene of devastation when I arrived, with demolished buildings and the number of people in the camps and on the streets. And the odor and dust was overwhelming. It was depressing initially.

"I looked around and thought 'Where am I going to start?'"

He was soon impressed with the "incredible" resiliency of the Haitians and the eagerness of public officials to move forward.

Tordjman is based in the capital, Port-au-Prince, with occasional forays to Jacmel and Leogne, and co-ordinates with the public works ministry.

The first job he oversaw was clearing canals of debris, an emergency operation to prevent the refugee camps from flooding. His team removed some 100,000 cubic metres of material.

To date, his team has evaluated 250,000 buildings, a number which is expected to climb to 400,000 in the next few months.

Tordjman is the only Canadian on the project, and works alongside people from Europe, Australia, Pakistan and other countries. He has hired 400 local engineers and trained them in United States building code standards.

Of the buildings inspected so far, about half are safe to return to, a quarter need repair and the rest need major work or have to be razed.

Because there is so much to be done, Tordjman said his assignment may stretch to 18 months or even two years. It is a sacrifice with a young family back in Côte St. Luc, but he would not relocate them to Haiti because it is not safe and there is no Jewish community or school, he said.

There are a small number of Jews working in Haiti, mainly with non-governmental organizations from North America and Israel, including the American-Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, as well as 10 Israel police officers, who occasionally get together for a Shabbat dinner or holiday, he said.

His living conditions are quite comfortable. The UN staff live in a walled and guarded compound in a better part of Port-au-Prince, and he shares an apartment with a colleague.

Tordjman brings to his task a sense of fulfilling his obligation as a Jew.

"This is more than a job," he said. "I think I'm teaching my children a lot through this about *tikkun olam* (the Jewish value of repairing the world). In the midst of the High Holidays, a time of introspection, I realize more than ever what is important in life, and that we need to do good."

Tordjman has been involved with Quebec Jewish Congress and other Jewish organizations, but had little experience of helping others outside his community before now.

His long-term goal is to enable the Haitians to take charge of the reconstruction themselves over the long term, by which he means at least 10 years. "I think for the most part they appreciate outside help, but not so much the handouts as a hand up."

"I think this is an opportunity for Haiti to bring itself out of the spiral of desperation, whether political or natural. This is its one chance to get out of that cycle, if things are done right. Good can ultimately come from this disaster, but it will take a good 10 years."

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CJC comes to defence of *Le Droit* cartoonist

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Canadian Jewish Congress has come to the defence of an Ottawa editorial cartoonist who Congress officials say was wrongfully targeted as anti-Semitic by B'nai Brith Canada.

In a Sept. 20 cartoon for *Le Droit*, a Gatineau-area publication owned by Cyberpresse – the parent company of Montreal's *La Presse* newspaper – longtime political cartoonist Guy Badeaux, a.k.a. "Bado," drew an image of Parliament Hill with the Peace Tower in the background and what appeared to be a Star of David in the centre of its clock face.

The French caption on the cartoon reads "Parliament returns," and there's a traffic sign on the lawn whose pictogram signifies a slippery road ahead.

(The tower does indeed have a star-like pattern on its clock face that resembles the Star of David.)

In a Sept. 21 statement, Moïse Moghrabi, chair of B'nai Brith Canada's Quebec region of the League for Human Rights, called the drawing "vicious and baseless," and based on "age-old stereotypes of a Jewish conspiracy of control" of government.

He added: "This cartoon does not comment on any issue of significance. It simply serves to raise public resentment against the Jewish community. We find it regrettable and shameful that a respectable newspaper would promote such harmful canards. This cartoon is an attack on the Jewish community in Canada."

Speaking to CBC News, Badeaux said he never meant to draw a Star of David, but rather was trying to draw a simplified version of the design on the Peace Tower's clock face.

In an interview with *The CJN* last week, Canadian Jewish Congress CEO Bernie Farber said his organization has worked "very closely" with Badeaux over the years and called him "pro-Jewish and a philo-Semite."

Farber was incensed that B'nai Brith did not seemingly "check all the facts" about Badeaux and decided to label him an anti-Semite "when he clearly isn't. We have to set the record straight."

"It's inconceivable to me that one would attack a person [this way]. It's a form of character assassination. The [Jewish] community should not involve ourselves in it. Not everything is anti-Semitic. When things are anti-Semitic, we call it what it is, and when it isn't, we have to stand up and say so."

A Quebec Jewish Congress official also came to the defence of Badeaux, whom he said he has known for a long time and considers a friend of the Jewish community.

Daniel Amar, QJC's regional executive director, said he spoke to Badeaux last week and accepted his explanation that the six-pointed star he drew is a stylized sketch of the actual pattern on the clock face.

"It has nothing to do with Jews or Israel, or whether they are influencing the government," Amar said. "Each time he draws [the tower], he makes the clock like that, and I have examples… This is really a tempest in a teapot."

Amar noted that last year, Badeaux participated in a panel at in an international exhibition in Montreal, called Cartooning for Peace, that was conceived by French cartoonist Jean Plantu and Israeli cartoonist Michel Kichka, and co-organized by QJC and the Action Week Against Racism.

Amar said Badeaux had communicated that he was very upset at being falsely labelled anti-Semitic.

"Who wouldn't be upset? The cartoon description [by B'nai Brith] is pretty harsh. But Badeaux is relieved that we're standing up for him as a friend," Amar said.

Despite both Badeaux's and Congress' claims that the cartoon was innocuous, a Sept. 22 statement by B'nai Brith re-iterated the organization's belief that it was aimed at the Jewish community.

"The artist's claim that he was merely 'attempting to draw the design of the Peace Tower' is not acceptable. It is his responsibility and the responsibility of the Cyberpresse group to pull the cartoon and issue an apology. The cartoon is offensive has no place in a respectable newspaper such as *La Presse*," Moghrabi said.

When asked if B'nai Brith had researched Badeaux's history and association with the Jewish community before making its charge, Heidi Oppen, the organization's Quebec regional director, told *The CJN* that B'nai Brith had not contacted Badeaux, but that it's aware of his background and Congress' stance.

Regardless, she said her organization wants Badeaux to issue an apology for his "unacceptable" drawing.

With files from Janice Arnold

To view cartoon, please go to cjnews.com

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Future of Middle East peace talks undecided

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JERUSALEM — Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said that there will be no quick decision on whether the PA pulls out of Mideast peace talks now that an Israeli moratorium on West Bank settlement construction has ended.

"We will not have swift reactions now, to say 'yes' or 'no – we want, or we don't want,'" Abbas told a press conference in Paris on Monday, where he met with French President Nicholas Sarkozy.

Abbas said in Paris that he will consult with the 22-member Arab League on Oct. 4 on how to proceed.

"After this chain of meetings, we might publish a position that clears up the position of the Palestinian and Arab people after Israel has refused to freeze settlements," he said.

Abbas has repeatedly said Palestinians would quit newly relaunched peace talks if Israel resumes settlement activity. A 10-month slowdown on construction expired on Sept. 26, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says he will not renew the order.

Monday's comments signalled that the Palestinians are giving U.S. mediators more time to reach a compromise.

Sarkozy said on Monday he would ask Abbas, Netanyahu and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to peace talks in Paris before the end of October.

Abbas said the construction of settlements should be frozen for another three to four months, a position Sarkozy backed as crucial.

"The settlements must stop," the French president said.

Last-ditch negotiations continued well into the early hours of Monday morning as Israeli, Palestinian and American leaders attempted to save Middle East peace talks from an early collapse.

Netanyahu spoke twice by telephone with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton as West Bank settlers prepared to restart construction after a 10-month Israeli moratorium expired on Sunday.

Abbas has repeatedly vowed to walk out of talks, which began a month ago in Washington, if building resumes. But Netanyahu remains hopeful of keeping the peace process alive.

"Israel is ready to retain continual contacts [with the Palestinians] over the coming days to find a way to advance peace negotiations," Netanyahu said.

The prime minister, who has faced heavy pressure from Likud party colleagues and right-wing coalition partners to end the freeze, which covered the entire West Bank excluding east Jerusalem, also spoke with Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah II, assuring them that he was striving to maintain the talks.

"I call on President Abbas to continue the frank and fruitful dialogue that has only just begun, with the goal of reaching an historic peace agreement between our nations," Netanyahu said in a statement late Sunday.

"I hope that President Abbas will remain in the talks and continue with me on the path of peace, on which we set out two weeks ago, with many across the world now convinced that my intention to secure peace is serious and honest and that I honour my obligations."

Building work at the West Bank settlement of Ariel restarted Monday morning.

Jewish West Bank residents currently have plans for around 2,000 new homes across the West Bank. Of these, some 600 have up-to-date paperwork and are expected to be completed in the coming months.

After the Sukkot holiday, the Yesha Council of settlements and local West Bank councils are expected to pressure Netanyahu into approving new construction.

The number of housing units put up in the West Bank during the Netanyahu government is the lowest under any prime minister since the first Rabin government.

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Israel calls on UN to end 'obsessively biased' Gaza war probe

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JERUSALEM — Israel's treatment of Palestinians has been a prime target for the UN Human Rights Council, where Islamic countries and their allies have a built-in majority since its launch in 2006.

On Monday, Israel called for an end to the council's investigations into its actions in the 2008-09 Gaza conflict, insisting that the body is "obsessively biased" against it.

But in discussion at the 47-nation council of a report from a UN fact-finding mission on the fighting, Islamic countries and their allies said pressure had to be kept on the Israelis to make them halt "aggression" in the region.

The military action in late December 2008 and early January 2009 against the enclave controlled by Hamas Islamists came "in response to years of attacks by Hamas terrorists," said Israel's ambassador to the United Nations Aharon Leshno Yaar.

The stance of the council, he declared, "has continually been one-sided and obsessively biased... It did not matter that steps were taken by Israel to protect its citizens while limiting damage whenever possible to Palestinian civilians."

During the Gaza fighting, more than 1,400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis died after Israel sent troops into the enclave between Israel and Egypt in what it said was an attempt to halt Hamas rocket fire on its towns near the border.

The UN report, released last week, said investigations by both Israel and the Palestinians into violations of human rights in the conflict were inadequate. It also criticized Israel for refusing to co-operate with the mission.

Leshno Yaar told the council Israel had launched its own independent investigation into how far it had looked into the behaviour of its forces in Gaza and whether its legal system would be able to deal with any complaints of excessive violence.

"Given these processes and Israel's significant efforts, it is time to bring activities from this hall to a conclusion," the ambassador said. This would allow the council to focus on seeking out true human rights failures in the world, he added.

In Monday's debate, member countries of the 57-nation Organization of the Islamic Conference insisted that the council and the UN General Assembly in New York must continue to focus on the Gaza operation and its aftermath.

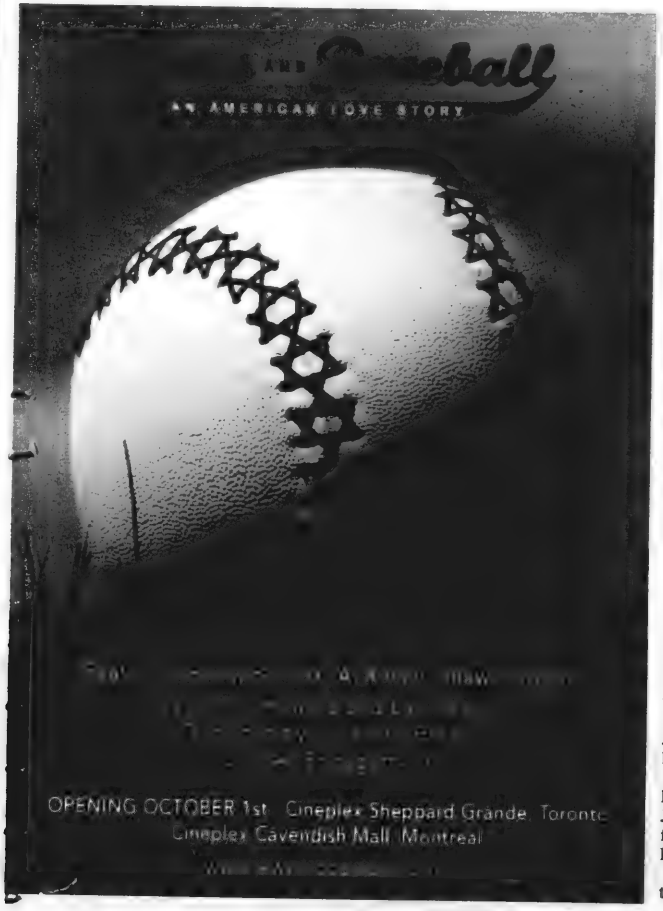
"Israel must put an end to its culture of violence... and show a new face to the world," Turkey told the human rights body.

The UN mission's report centred on how the two sides of the Gaza conflict had responded to a UN call to investigate allegations of war crimes and rights violations.

That call had come in the report of a fact-finding mission last year led by South African jurist Richard Goldstone.

The Goldstone report found that both the Israeli army and Hamas were guilty of war crimes in the conflict, but focused mainly on violations by Israel, which rejected its findings.

In a separate matter being discussed alongside the Gaza conflict question, UN experts said last week that a May attack by Israeli commandos on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla was unlawful and resulted in violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.



New U.K. Labour leader says he won't 'lurch left'

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

LONDON — Britain's newly appointed opposition leader, Ed Miliband, insisted Sunday that he won't move his Labour Party toward the political left after he harnessed the support of leftist unions to beat his better-known brother in a dramatic party vote.

Miliband, 40, narrowly defeated his brother David, the 45-year-old ex-foreign secretary, in their party's leadership contest on Saturday, winning a slender majority of 1.3 per cent of votes.

Critics have already dubbed Miliband "Red Ed," claiming he's likely to shift his party away from the centrist, business-friendly platform of former prime ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown.

"I am nobody's man. I am my own man. I am very clear about that," Miliband told BBC television Sunday, in his first interview as party leader, insisting he would not be beholden to his labour union backers.

He said his leadership won't see a turn to the left, but insisted his party must break decisively from the dogma of Blair and Brown and lay to rest divisive arguments over the decision to back the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

Ed Miliband

"It is not about some lurch to the left – absolutely not. I am for the centre ground of politics," said Miliband, who was confirmed as leader at a rally in Manchester in northern England.

MPs, party activists and about 3.5 million unionists voted in the contest.

The Miliband brothers are the sons of Jewish immigrants to Britain whose family lost about 80 members in the Holocaust.

Their mother is Polish-born Marion Kozek, a leading member of the Jews for Justice for Palestinians group. Their late father was Belgian-born Marxist intellectual Ralph Miliband.

In his campaign, Ed Miliband advocated the retention of a temporary 50 per cent tax rate for high earners, a more punishing levy on banks and a steep rise in the country's minimum wage.

He said he favours tax hikes in place of some proposed public spending cuts, but he told the BBC on Sunday that he won't oppose all austerity measures being put forward by Prime Minister David Cameron's minority government.

"I'm not going to oppose every cut that the coalition government comes up with. I will judge them on their merits," Miliband said.

But he questioned the speed of Cameron's plans to restore Britain's finances, saying the aim of saving 30 billion pounds ($44 billion) per year from government departments is reckless.

Miliband – whose partner, Justine Thornton, is pregnant with the couple's second child – has pledged action to reduce the gap between the country's highest and lowest earners, and to offer better protection to British workers who face competition for jobs from migrants.

However, he insisted his policies would have broad appeal. "All these characterizations about 'Red Ed' are both tiresome and also rubbish," he said.

Writing an op-ed article in the *Sunday Telegraph* newspaper, Miliband vowed to recapture the support of middle class Britons, who deserted the party in the May national election, when Labour trailed in second place and was ousted after 13 years in office by the Conservative-led coalition government.

"My aim is to show that our party is on the side of the squeezed middle in our country and everyone who has worked hard and wants to get on," he wrote.

Miliband said his brother is considering whether he would take a portfolio in Labour's new top team. "He needs time to think about the contribution he can make. I think he can make a very big contribution to British politics," the new leader said.

Peres, Harper meet in New York

Continued from page 1

"This regime," he said of Israel, "which enjoys the absolute support of some western countries, regularly threatens the countries in the region and continues publicly announced assassinations of Palestinian figures and others, while Palestinian defenders are labelled as terrorists and anti-Semites.

"All values, even the freedom of expression in Europe and the United States, are being sacrificed at the altar of Zionism."

The Canadian delegation walked out of Ahmadinejad's speech, as did the U.S., all 27 European Union delegations, along with New Zealand, Australia and Costa Rica, according to reports.

In related news, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who also attended the Millennium Development summit, met with Israeli President Shimon Peres last Thursday morning prior to Harper's address to the UN General Assembly.

According to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office, in their meeting, Harper and Peres "recognized the close relationship and deep friendship between Canada and Israel," with Peres emphasizing "Israel's deepest thanks and appreciation for Canada's continued support and encouragement of Israel, noting, 'We know we are not alone.'"

Later, Harper told the assembly that Canada is "encouraged by the resumption of direct talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Canada sincerely hopes the talks will succeed and will continue to help the Palestinian Authority build its institutions."

He also reminded the UN that Canada is now eligible to serve on its Security Council and made a pitch for the country's inclusion on the council.

"If we are elected, we will be ready to serve. And, if called upon to serve on the Security Council, Canada will be informed by… [the UN's] foundational beliefs in the sovereign equality of countries… of the obligation to settle disputes peacefully… and [upholding] the human rights of all people."

He added that if elected to the Security Council, Canada would "strive to further" those ideals "just as we have striven to implement Security Council resolutions."

Most recently, the council passed sanctions against Iran to try to limit its ability to acquire nuclear weapons.

The UN Security Council has five permanent members – China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States – and 10 non-permanent members, each with two-year terms.

These 10 spots are currently held by Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Turkey and Uganda.

At last week's summit, Harper also pledged $540 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria over the next three years.

With files from JTA

Iran's nuclear agency battles computer virus

© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — Iranian media reports said Friday that the country's nuclear agency is trying to combat a complex computer worm that has affected industrial sites in Iran and is capable of taking over power plants.

The computer virus, which attacks a widely used industrial system, appears aimed mostly at Iran and its sophistication suggests a state may have been involved in creating it, western cyber security companies said earlier in the day.

Kevin Hogan, senior director of Security Response at Symantec, told Reuters 60 per cent of the computers worldwide infected by the so-called Stuxnet worm were in Iran, indicating industrial plants in that country were the target.

Israel Briefs

Ariel Sharon going home

Ariel Sharon, who has been in a coma for nearly five years, is expected to be moved from an Israeli hospital to his Negev ranch. The former Israeli prime minister, 82, who suffered a stroke on Jan. 6, 2006, that left him comatose, will be moved within the next few weeks from the Sheba Medical Center at Tel Hashomer in Tel Aviv to his home for a trial period, *Yediot Achronot* reported last Wednesday. If the trial is successful, Sharon reportedly will be taken back permanently to the ranch, which has been equipped with the necessary medical equipment and access to his second-floor bedroom, the newspaper reported. Sharon's sons, Gilad and Omri, reportedly requested the move.

Israel ready to talk with Syria

Israel is ready to enter peace negotiations with Syria "right away," Shimon Peres told the United Nations General Assembly. Peres also said he believed that a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the only "peaceful alternative." He added: "And I believe that we shall succeed." Peres offered to share Israeli technological advances with other nations, including countries without diplomatic ties to Israel.

Crystal a Hebrew U benefactor

Actor Billy Crystal has made a substantial gift to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem to foster activities in a performing arts project named for him. The gift, announced in a news release by the American Friends of the Hebrew University, will be used to create and present workshops, programs and theatrical performances at the university that bring Jews and Arabs together as a means to promote tolerance and improved cultural and social understanding. The organization said the gift would endow the Billy Crystal Peace through the Performing Arts project so that it could run in perpetuity.

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Web comic about two roommates includes fantasy and reality

By Rita Poliakov
Staff Reporter

Dan Simon has never actually fought a moving vehicle before.

But his alter ego has.

He's also helped tame a giant breast that terrorized his city, watched two girls have a light-sabre fight over him and farted. A lot.

Simon, 30, along with his friend Jeff Moss, 30, is the co-creator of *No Reason Comics*, a web comic series about two roommates living their daily lives. And a little bit of their fantasy lives, too.

The roommates, Jamie Goldbergsteinowitz – the most Jewish name the friends could think of, and his slightly more quirky friend, Murph O'Murphy, are loosely based on Simon and Moss. While most plotlines revolve around everyday stories, such as strange conversations at grocery stores and online dating, some tend to verge on the extraodinary.

"[Jamie and Murph] are both sort of your atypical, late 20-something guys with zero boundaries. They can do anything. They try and build giant doomsday devices, you know. Jamie fights cars from time to time," said Simon, who draws the characters.

Murph O'Murphy, left, and Jamie Goldbergsteinowitz from *No Reason Comics* are loosely based on their creators, Jeff Moss and Dan Simon.

"Jamie is probably more of the straight man, whereas Murph is far more oblivious to reality. He tends to live in his own little world."

Simon and Moss, who writes the comics, have known each other since they were about 14. The friends grew up on a diet of comics and more comics, and, a few years ago, decided to go from appreciating to creating the art.

"From the time I could read, I've been reading Archie comics and Superman comics that my mother would thrust upon me to shut me up in the grocery store," said Moss, who left Toronto last year to open up the 4th Wall, a comic book store in Montreal.

While Moss was reading superhero comics, Simon delved into comics like Calvin and Hobbes.

"That's what I grew up on. [Moss] was reading X-Men, and I was reading [Calvin and Hobbes]. It would be from reading the comics on Saturday, and just the *Toronto Star*," said Simon, who along with reading comic books, always enjoyed drawing.

"I started out with superheros, trying to draw family members. I started out by tracing comic covers, trying to draw faces and stuff."

Simon ended up getting a bachelor's in fine arts from York University. He's currently a freelance graphic designer and art director.

Some four years ago, while at the cottage, Simon proposed an idea that Moss couldn't pass up.

"[Simon] had started getting into web comics. He said, 'Why don't we give this a shot.' I'm lazy and cheap and said, 'Sure, let's do it.' We were sitting on the docks, shooting the shit, and from that evolved Jamie and Murph... They're sort of like us, with the volume turned way up."

No Reason Comics started with a strip about Murph making fun of Jamie's teddy bear. And then it began to evolve.

"If you look at the first strip, versus where the strips are at now... it's an evolutionary process," Simon said. "It took a year and a half to two years to get to the point where I was comfortable to draw them quickly and cleanly."

Moss and Simon's readership has evolved as well, from 100 viewers in the first few months to 50,000 to 100,000 a month.

"The cartoons were just fun and easy. By web comic standards, we're probably the high-end of the middle of the road. We're not one of the big ones," Simon said.

For both friends, creating each strip is a balance.

"Communicating effectively visually, that's the key. You can have good writing, but if you have artwork that can't convey it, the joke falls flat," Simon said.

Moss agrees.

"He and I know each other well enough that we're fairly inside of each other's heads. I can write a passage like Jamie and Murph are on the couch, Murph's drinking a soda, playing a video game, and Dan will know how to translate that," he said.

"When I'm writing, I have an idea of what it will look like. It's a cool little synergy we've developed over the years."

While some plotlines are fictional, others are taken from bizarre events or strange conversations in Moss and Simon's daily lives.

"One [comic] in the first year had Murph and Jamie driving and stuck in traffic. Jamie says, 'Take a look at these clowns.' And it shows two clowns arguing with each other. They had hit each other. That really happened," Moss said.

The friends are currently working on a print version of the comic, called *Why Are You Naked?*, which should be released in the next few months.

"We don't know when to quit," Simon said.

"There's been a couple of times when both of us have thought that we have better things to do, but neither of us would be the first one to step away from it."

Moss agrees.

"This strip will go on as long as Dan will keep drawing it. Even if I go on and do a zillion other things, I'll still be writing No Reason. It's truly a labour of love," he said.

For more information on *No Reason Comics* or to read the strips, visit www.noreasoncomics.com.

I Musici to play Mooredale Concerts season opener

By HEATHER SOLOMON
Special to The CJN

Why has it taken Montreal maestro Yuli Turovsky four years to get back to Toronto, where his chamber orchestra I Musici will play the Mooredale Concerts' 22nd season opener on Oct. 3.

It's because he and I Musici have been all over the world in the meantime, including a tour of China last October that covered seven cities with seven new concert halls. He was amazed.

Yuli Turovsky

"I myself am from a Communist country and I came to Canada [in 1977] because I was not a big fan of the Communist system, and I still am not. But one can't deny the efficiency of the Chinese in being able to develop the economy in this way. If they decide to do something, they don't discuss it for 25 years," says the Moscow-born musician, referring to the bureaucracy that held up a new hall for the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, with which he has soloed on cello.

Turovsky didn't let discussion get in his way when, in 1983, he wanted to establish I Musici de Montreal, the 15-member string orchestra that shot to world renown under his baton. "I played in the Moscow Chamber Orchestra for many years and when I came here and wanted to start my own chamber orchestra, all my new friends who knew local life told me it was absolutely impossible. They said I couldn't do it without a solid financial foundation and mine was close to zero! However, I thought that maybe I, without having this [preconception] about money, could do something," he says.

Radio-Canada, which knew him as a member of the Borodin Trio that he co-founded after he left the Soviet Union, agreed to a series of recordings by the newborn I Musici. The albums served as a promotional tool when Turovsky approached the Chandos label, his recording company in England and soon I Musici was in demand. Today, the eight violinists, three violas, two cellos and one double bass conducted by Turovsky boast over 50 CDs and play more than 100 concerts annually.

Anton Kuerti, a pianist who directs the Mooredale series, has been guest soloist with I Musici on many occasions. When Turovsky was artistic director of the Orford International Music Festival, Kuerti was often featured.

The soloist with I Musici for their Toronto appearance will be Katherine Chi (pronounced "chee"), one of Canada's best pianists, who will join the orchestra in Turina's Mediterranean-flavoured *Rapsodia Sinfonica, op. 66*.

I Musici starts the program with Elgar's nostalgic *Serenade, op. 20*, and devotes the second half of the concert to Tchaikovsky's initially tragic, then uplifting *Serenade for Strings*.

Before the main concert, I Musici and Chi are to play for youngsters aged five to 15 as part of the children's Music & Truffles series. "It's interactive, and we will ask kids what they think of a particular piece," says Turovsky, "I remember we once asked a young audience what they thought of when they listened to some sad music that we played. One boy said, 'I think of my dog that died.' When I asked him about his dog, he said, 'I don't have a dog but if I had, and if the dog died, I'd feel like this!'"

The beauty of music is that it can conjure mind pictures as real as that. On tour, a popular I Musici offering is Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a piano suite transcribed for strings by Turovsky. Mussorgsky wrote it after seeing the memorial exhibition of his artist friend Viktor Hartmann, who died tragically in 1873 at 39, but though the music came down to us, the paintings were swallowed up by political upheavals. Turovsky had his artist-violinist daughter, Natasha, paint 15 huge canvases inspired by the music, in an effort to reconstruct the emotion of the original paintings.

Since the orchestra can't tour with them, Turovsky had a filmmaker create a digital montage of segments from the artworks, moving on a backdrop screen to the rhythm of the melody. "We call it choreographed paintings, and we have plans to continue this with Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev," he says.

I Musici's Montreal subscription series further demonstrates Turovsky's willingness to reach out to other forms of the arts, even within the realm of music. His classical orchestra teams up with Kleztory on Dec. 9 for a combination klezmer-classical evening. On Oct. 25, I Musici comes under the baton of the celebrated Maxim Vengerov for a concert gala.

It is Turovsky's belief that the future of I Musici and classical music in general can be fostered through the involvement of youth. In fact, I Musici's final concert of the Montreal season is titled Next Generation, featuring mostly students of Turovsky and his violinist wife, Eleonora, who is concertmaster of I Musici and his partner in the Turovsky Duo. For Montreal concert tickets, visit www.imusici.com or 514-982-6038.

"Toronto and Montreal are Canada's two main cultural centres, and they have a lot to offer each other," says Turovsky, "The more we exchange, the better."

Tickets for the Mooredale Concert, which takes place at Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park Cres., are available by visiting www.mooredaleconcerts.com or calling 416-587-9411.

Yuli Turovsky surrounds himself with terrific players.

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Arts & Travel

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

JEWISH BOOK FAIR

More than 25 Canadian and international authors are featured at the 34th annual Toronto Jewish Book Fair, presented by the Koffler Centre of the Arts in a new location at Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.

Israeli author and peace activist **David Grossman** opens the fair with a reading from his new novel, *To the End of the Land*, Saturday, Oct. 23.

Closing the fair on Sunday, Oct. 31, is writer-broadcaster **Tarek Fatah**, author of the provocative new title, *The Jew is Not My Enemy: Unveiling the Myths that Fuel Muslim Anti-Semitism*. Fatah, a founder of the Muslim Canadian Congress, argues that anti-Semitism contradicts the essence of the Islamic spirit and suggests a way to eliminate the agonizing friction between Jewish and Muslim communities.

In her new book *The Ghosts of Europe*, Hungarian-born **Anna Porter** returns to her European roots where she found disquieting signs of old hatreds and racial tensions. Her talk is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 27. American writer **George Gilder** presents his new book *The Israel Test*, where he makes the case for Israel as the crucial battlefield for capitalism and freedom, Sunday, Oct. 24.

Other presenters include **Harold Troper**, author of *The Defining Decade*; **David Brody**, author of *Mourning and Celebration – Jewish, Orthodox and Gay Past and Present*; **Lynda Fishman**, author of *Repairing Rainbows: A True Story of Family*; **Bill Gladstone**, speaking on *The Rise of the Toronto Jewish Community*; **Gregory Levey**, author of *How to Make Peace in the Middle East in Six Months or Less Without Leaving Your Apartment*; **Kate Taylor**, author of *A Man in Uniform*; **Judie Oron**, author of *Cry of the Giraffe*; **Savyon Liebrecht**, author of *The Women My Father Knew*; **Joseph Kertes**, author of *Gratitude*; **Kitty Wintrob**, author of *I'm Not Going Back*, and many more.

For details, please visit the website www.koffleratts.org

* * *

Toronto Book Awards: In other book-related news, debut novelist **Lauren Kirshner** has been nominated for a Toronto Book Award for her novel *Where We Have to Go*, a coming-of-age story set in Jewish Toronto. Award-winning novelist **Cary Fagan** was also nominated for his book *Valentine's Fall*, about a bluegrass musician revisiting the streets of his youth.

Lauren Kirshner

Other nominees are **Sean Cullen**, **Dragon Todorovic** and **Mark Sinnett**. The awards honour books set in Toronto and winners will be announced on Oct. 14.

* * *

Montreal Cellist to Play Here: "He could make me happy just by playing scales," the *San Antonio Star* once commented about **Yuli Turovsky**, cellist and conductor of the **I Musici de Montreal Chamber Orchestra**.

A Moscow-born Jew who came to Canada 25 years ago, Turovsky was a serious cellist by the age of seven and has participated in many world tours with the **Moscow Chamber Orchestra**. After moving to Montreal, Turovsky formed the **Turovsky Duo** with his wife **Eleonora** and co-founded the **Borodine Trio**. He also teaches at the Faculté de musique of the Université de Montréal.

An ensemble of 15 strings, I Musici de Montréal Chamber Orchestra plays a repertoire that extends from the baroque to the contemporary at more than 100 concerts each year. Turovsky and orchestra open the new season of Mooredale Concerts. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park Cres. Sunday, Oct. 3, 3:15 p.m. www.mooredaleconcerts.com

* * *

For Children: *Shalom Sesame*, a new series from the creators of *Sesame Street*, features a variety of American and Israeli celebrities including **Debra Messing**, **Achinoam Nini**, **Mira Awad**, **Jake Gyllenhaal**, **Christina Applegate**, **Greg Kinnear** and **Debi Mazar**. The top-name talent appears with *Sesame Street* regular Grover and host **Anneliese van der Pol** in this series of twelve 30-minute DVDs set largely in Israel.

The series "is designed to help bring the vitality of Jewish culture and tradition as well as the diversity of Israeli life to American children and their families," explains a press release from the co-producers, Sesame Workshop and Israel's Channel HOP!

Titles in the series include *Welcome to Israel* and *Chanukah: The Missing Menorah*. The series is available as of Oct. 3 from SISU Home Entertainment.

"This all-new *Shalom Sesame* is designed to further enrich and engage Jewish children and foster their Jewish identity," says company spokesperson **Haim Scheininger**.

* * *

At the Galleries: Massimiliano Schiavon, a fourth generation Murano glassmaker, creates spectacular contemporary objects of art. Each one-of-a-kind, sculptural artwork is completely handmade according to the ancient Murano traditions. *Young Eyes and 1000 Years*, an exhibition of his work, is on view at Amarynth Gallery, 161 Cumberland St., until Nov. 3. 416-515-9191.

Last chance to catch book reviewer perform

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Robert Adams is closing the chapter on his critically acclaimed series of live book reviews he's been delivering to sold-out halls in Toronto and Montreal.

Adams will review *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* by Muriel Barbery at University of Toronto's Hart House next week and then return for one final performance, a free review of Elie Wiesel's *The Forgotten*, Nov. 2 at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue during Holocaust Education Week.

"This will be my swan song," Adams, 73, a retired English teacher and book critic, says. "It's taken up more time than I wanted to give to it."

"It" can best be described as a concert performance. He appears on stage to applause, then proceeds to deliver an informative and entertaining lecture on a book of his choosing for 90 minutes. He even comes out for an encore, a question and answer period.

Last spring after I saw him lecture on Moshin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, I immediately went out and bought the book.

"I've taken a straw poll and found that half the people who attend have read the book beforehand and the other half come before they've read the book," he says.

Adams reviews each book in great detail, discussing its origins and geography. He is entertaining to watch and not above making a few jokes. Last spring, he started off by saying that his lectures were now available for download on iTunes, "in case any of you actually know what that means."

Some people in the audience took out notebooks and started taking notes. It felt a little like being back in school. For a minute, I was worried he might actually start asking us questions.

So why do so many people pay money to see a grey-haired man in his 70s talking to them about a book they may or may not have read?

"I often think about that," he says. "Reading is by definition a solitary occupation that people do alone. I think they enjoy the social dimension of getting together and meeting people who share the same interests."

Adams does a lot of preparation in advance of his lectures. "I make sure I've read everything the writer [I'm lecturing on] has written."

He will often interview the author beforehand as well. "I do a question and answer period at the end and I don't want anybody to catch me out," he says.

"Luckily, this time it's only her second novel," he says of Barbery, the author of *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*, a book about a Parisian philosophy professor who works as a concierge.

Robert Adams

"It's been a bestseller in Europe and sold over two million copies in France," he says of the book, which is a critique of the French class system. "[The main character] has to disguise the fact that she's brilliant, or she will lose her job. She has to play her part in fulfilling the stereotype of a Parisian concierge."

He said he read the book because he was interested in its philosophy. "Also I wanted to find out why a novel that attacks the French class structure is so popular there."

This series (which he'll repeat in Montreal) will be his last ticketed event. He'll finish up with his free review of Wiesel's *The Forgotten*, which he says moved him profoundly when he first read it. "All his works are great, but I like *The Forgotten* the best. Plus I think it's most appropriate for Holocaust Education Week."

As much as he has loved doing this for over 25 years, Adams feels the time is right to call it a day. "It's become a heavy burden for me and for my wife [Pearl, who is his manager]. We've decided this will be positively my last appearance."

He will still continue to deliver his reviews on cruise trips, something he started doing a few years ago.

"'Positively my last appearance,' does not apply to cruises," he says. "I will be cruising on Crystal Cruise Lines as long as they want me."

Adams will review The Elegance of the Hedgehog *at Hart House Theatre, University of Toronto on Oct. 5 at 8 p.m. and Oct. 6 at 2 p.m. Tickets ($35) are available at the University of Toronto Box Office, 416-978-8849 or www.uofttix.ca.*

He will review The Forgotten *at a free event on Nov.2 at 7:30 p.m. at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, 100 Elder St. Toronto. 416-633-3838.*

In the Big-Inning: Jews and Baseball

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

For Jewish Americans, baseball has not only been an all-American game and national pastime, but a path toward integration and acceptance.

This is the theme of *Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story*, which opens in Toronto at the Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Grande theatre on Oct. 1.

An absorbing film directed by Peter Miller, produced by William Hechter, written by Ira Berkow and narrated by Dustin Hoffman, *Jews and Baseball* is billed as the first major documentary on this theme.

The stereotypical view is that Jews don't excel in sports, but nothing can be further from the truth, especially in baseball. There have been an unbroken string of professional Jewish baseball players, from Lipman Pike (1845-1893) in the 19th century to Kevin Youkilis today.

And as sportswriter Maury Allen jokes, baseball has its origins in the Bible, "In the big inning…"

Humour aside, Jewish players, some of whom rose to stardom, have been an integral part of the game since the start.

Abraham Cahan, the legendary editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, wrote that baseball was a good way for Jewish boys to assimilate into American society.

Baseball was indeed a great leveller, but there was a dark side, too.

Some Jewish players, fearing anti-Semitism from fans, anglicized their names. Still others, such as Henry (Hank) Greenberg, perhaps the greatest Jewish player in the history of the sport, proudly retained their surnames.

Greenberg, who famously declined to play on Yom Kippur during a pennant race, paid a price for his refusal to obscure his Jewishness.

Racists mercilessly taunted him, but he remained unbowed. "It was a spur to make me do better," he says.

Greenberg led the Detroit Tigers to the World Series in 1934 and 1935, when anti-Semitism was on the rise in the United States and Europe.

Named the American League's most valuable player in 1935 and 1940, he chased Babe Ruth's home run record in 1938, coming within two homers of equalling it. Seven decades on, some observers believe that Greenberg could have surpassed Ruth's record of 60 home runs had he not been Jewish. They base their theory on the assumption that Greenberg could have done so had opposing pitchers been more co-operative. Greenberg's son, however, questions that hypothesis.

Apart from showcasing Greenberg's fabulous career, the film focuses on a number of other Jewish players.

Andy Cohen, the first Jew recruited by the manager of the New York Giants, John McGraw, fizzled soon after his debut, breaking his leg in 1929 and never returning to the major leagues.

Moe Berg, a lawyer by training and a so-so player, established a reputation as a spy for the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency during World War II.

Al Rosen, the third baseman of the Cleveland Indians, led the league in home runs in 1953 and made the all-star team four years in a row. But the Indians' general manager, Hank Greenberg, inexplicably let Rosen go, ending his stellar career on a low note.

Sandford (Sandy) Koufax compiled a disappointing record as a pitcher in his first six years for the Brooklyn Dodgers. But the lefthander hit his stride in the 1960s, compiling no-hit games in 1962, 1963 and 1964 and a perfect game in 1965, striking out no less than 27 players.

Like Greenberg, he wouldn't play on Yom Kippur, which coincided with the first game of the World Series in 1965, when Koufax was scheduled to pitch.

Jews and Baseball also highlights the careers of Ron Blomberg, the game's first designated hitter; Ken Holtzman, who won more games than any other Jewish pitcher (175); Shawn Green, who was probably the best Jewish player of the 1990s, and Kevin Youkilis, who is touted as the finest Jewish player in the game today.

The film also mentions off-field figures such as Allan (Bud) Selig, baseball's first (and current) Jewish commissioner, and Marvin Miller, the lawyer and former executive director of the Major League Baseball Players Association who struck down the reserve clause and thereby raised the salaries of players across the board by a significant margin.

Israeli artists boycott Ariel cultural centre

By AMI EDEN
JTA

NEW YORK — Big-time Hollywood Jews sent a strong message last year to artists protesting Israel: don't mess with Tel Aviv.

The fight was over the decision of the 2009 Toronto International Film Festival to spotlight Tel Aviv. More than 1,000 prominent filmmakers, actors and academics – including Jane Fonda, Danny Glover, Harry Belafonte, Julie Christie and Alice Walker – signed a petition stating that by showcasing movies from Tel Aviv, the festival, "whether intentionally or not, has become complicit in the Israeli propaganda machine."

In response, the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles put together a counter statement criticizing the protest and defending the film festival's focus on Tel Aviv. The pro-Israel statement was signed by a smaller but more prominent list of celebrities, including Jerry Seinfeld, Natalie Portman, Sacha Baron Cohen, Lisa Kudrow, Jason Alexander and Lenny Kravitz.

Another brouhaha is developing, one that centres on the opening of a new cultural centre in Ariel, built with more than $10 million of public funds. More than 50 Israeli theatre professionals signed a petition in late August saying that they will not perform in the new cultural centre when it opens in November. The boycott also has attracted the support of at least 150 Israeli academics and authors.

But several major Israeli theatres are scheduled to stage productions there this year, and top Israeli government leaders have slammed the boycott.

Jewish celebrities again are jumping into the fight – but on the side of the artists – taking aim at Israeli policy.

More than 150 American television and film artists have signed a letter in support of the Israeli artists' boycott. Signatories include actor Ed Asner and Cynthia Nixon, who played Miranda on *Sex and the City*, as well as playwright Tony Kushner and actors Mandy Patinkin and Theodore Bikel.

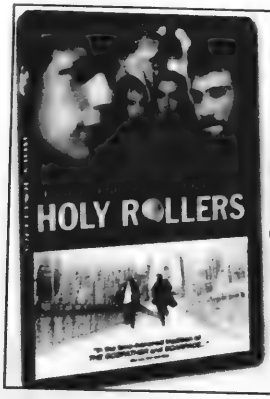
They praised the "brave decision" by Israeli theatre professionals who "have refused to allow their work to be used to normalize a cruel occupation that they know to be wrong."

To be sure, when it comes to attracting Hollywood A-listers, the recent letter does not match last year's statement in support of the Toronto film festival. But many of the big names who weighed in last year on Israel's side are absent from the debate this time.

Observers on both sides of the issue said the different reactions to the two fights do not represent a weakening of support for the Jewish state, but simply reflect the deep divide among American Jews over the issue of Israeli settlements.

Patinkin supports Israel in a variety of ways, but says the settlements "ignite the situation" between Israelis and Palestinians.

"The settlements are in direct violation of the Green Line [Israel's pre-1967 borders] and of international law," Patinkin told JTA. "It is now the artists who are standing up and saying, we refuse to play in a new theatre that you have built in an illegal settlement, and we are asking the world to pay attention. American artists who signed this two-paragraph piece are saying, we are with you."



In 1998, one million tabs of ecstasy were smuggled into the USA by a group of Hasidic Jews.

Starring Jesse Eisenberg (*The Social Network, Zombieland*) and Justin Bartha (*The Hangover*), ***Holy Rollers*** is inspired by actual events in an Orthodox Brooklyn community where a young man is forced to choose between a life of pills or piety. Dealing or davening?

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– The Talmud

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Book reflects author's need to keep searching

By NANCY WIGSTON
Special to The CJN

Alison Pick's suspenseful, multilayered novel, *Far to Go* (House of Anansi Press), tells the story of a family of secular Jews in Czechoslovakia on the brink of the Nazi invasion. Decades later, a Holocaust studies professor delivers family letters to their intended recipient, with shocking results.

CJN: *Could you tell us how your grandparents' escape inspired your book?*

Alison Pick: My grandfather was out of the country on business when the Nazis invaded. An ardent Czech nationalist, he never returned to his homeland. He was able to bribe for the papers to get my grandmother out: like Anneliese Bauer in *Far to Go*, my Granny boarded the last train leaving Prague and, like Anneliese, she was turned back at the border.

Unlike the Bauers, my grandparents eventually made it to safety. Their shared passport reveals gymnastic-like logistics – they travelled to Italy, Greece, Palestine, London and Trinidad before arriving in Canada. Once here, they embarked on a journey that I can only assume was equally harrowing: learning the fate of their relatives, afraid for their children as Jews in Canada, they decided to renounce the faith.

Alison Pick

CJN: *In the Czech chapters, Marta, the family nanny, makes a perfect narrator – no one could describe the textured intimacies of daily life better – yet she also plays an important role in what happens. How did you come up with Marta?*

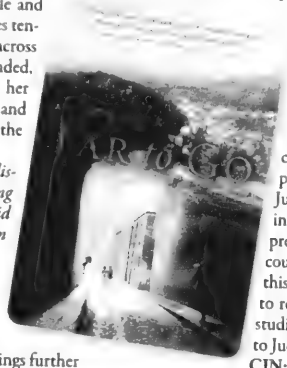
Pick: I had to wrestle with Marta more than any other character. Anneliese is based vaguely on my father's mother, whom I knew into my adulthood, and while I found [the Bauers' son] Pepik's perspective difficult, I understood this small boy from the get-go. The challenge with Marta was to make her at once likeable and unreliable – her unreliability or naiveté creates tension. In early drafts, she came across as more sinister than I'd intended, so I focused on bringing out her humanity, her love for Pepik, and her uncertainty in the face of the tumultuous times.

CJN: *Betrayal and the rediscovery of one's roots are strong themes in your book. How did writing about this period in your family history affect you?*

Pick: I already knew about my dad's family – they were Jewish, they'd denied their Judaism, their relatives died in the camps. The writing process allowed me to explore these things further and wrestle with the question of motivation.

As a child in the '70s in southern Ontario, I was aware of tolerance and diversity; I was unaware of the systemic discrimination that pervades western culture. The message I received was that I could and should be exactly who I was, and so should everyone around me. Thus, the discovery that my grandparents had concealed their 'true' identities not only from their community but from their own children was confusing and upsetting.

As I grew, I was better able to understand their decision in context: the anti-Semitism that pervaded Canada at that time, the fact that my grandmother's family had been entirely non-practising, and most significantly, the terror they must have felt about what happened in Europe. The writing process deepened my understanding and my compassion for their decision [to deny Judaism].



Conversely, through the character of Pavel, I could explore another option: that one's Judaism could be strengthened in adversity, could be newly appreciated, better lived. It was encouraging to me to fully inhabit this potentiality as I took the steps to reclaim what had been lost and studied for official conversion back to Judaism.

CJN: *What interested you in following Pepik aboard a Kindertransport organized by English stockbroker Nicholas Winton?*

Pick: That was purely a literary decision, a way for the reader to see what happened to Pepik's family in the wake of his departure – how things turned out in the end. So much of writing a novel is pacing. I wanted to resolve all the threads at a speed that was satisfying for the reader.

I considered continuing further into the first months of the war and, concurrently, with Pepik at his adoptive home in Scotland, but the book seemed to want to wind up sooner. For me, writing involves listening closely to the material and following where it leads. Sounds hokey maybe, but when I trust my instinct over my intellect, nine times out of 10, the book is stronger for it.

CJN: *"I had never in my life felt so close to someone and at the same time so far away," Prof. Lisa thinks as the book's mysteries unfold. Is that a fair description of your own journey of discovery?*

Pick: Yes, now that you mention it, that about sums it up! As does her statement about longing to keep searching for new information and insight, even though everyone involved is dead and gone.

In my case, my father is left, but both my grandparents, and of course their parents, aren't around anymore for me to ask what happened and why, and how they felt about it. Happily, though, the process of writing the book did make me feel like I was spending time with them somehow. I felt closer to my grandfather in particular.

Despite family lore that Judaism wasn't important to them, my research revealed a more complex story. I learned that my great-grandmother, who also escaped to Canada, fasted secretly on Yom Kippur every year of her life. And my grandfather once said, in response to his cousin converting to Christianity [hoping it would help her escape], that he wouldn't convert if he were the last Jew on earth.

I have now converted to Judaism, as has my husband, and we are raising our baby daughter in the faith. So I wish my grandfather was still around to share this with. I think he would have been proud.

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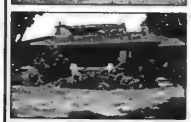

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Guest Voice

CUPW wrong on Israel

By FRED TOULCH
Special to The CJN

About two years ago, a CUPW (Canadian Union of Postal Workers) rep came into my postal station in Downsview. She was wearing a T-shirt that, in essence, said Israel's treatment of Palestinians is the same as apartheid in South Africa.

I immediately went to the office of the superintendent. I asked that this person be removed from our station and not be allowed back. The superintendent complied with my request.

I then went to the office of CUPW's Toronto local. I soon learned that the anti-Israel pro-Palestinian stand is that of CUPW.

Since then, I have been a regular attendee at CUPW monthly meetings to try and get this policy reversed or dropped. I have asserted that this is a racist policy and in violation of the CUPW charter. In fact, every CUPW meeting begins with the reading of a policy condemning racism.

I have pushed for a vote of the attendees at the meetings to see how many agreed with the "union's position." The chair would not allow a vote. This is because policies passed at the national convention cannot be challenged at the local level.

Overwhelming majority of Jews do not support union's positions

I have written and phoned past CUPW president Deborah Burke and current president Denis Lemelin. Neither would return my calls nor answer my letters.

In mid-September, CUPW held three meetings in Toronto. The union executive deemed the meeting on Sunday, Sept. 12, to be vitally important. We were there to elect regional delegates. I was on the ballot and do not know yet if I was successful.

The Saturday meetings were not promoted. They were called to give postal workers an opportunity to hear, read and vote on the union demands for the upcoming contract.

I attended the Saturday afternoon meeting. I would estimate that the auditorium where it was held could seat 400 to 500 people. There were fewer than 50 people in attendance.

I sat in the front row. I was amazed to see Lemelin among the three people on the podium.

When Lemelin began his remarks, he promised to gladly answer questions from the audience when he finished.

Lemelin went over some of the union's 90 demands, spending most of his time on those issues raised by the Toronto local. Throughout his remarks, he kept returning to his main theme – unity. It was essential that all brothers and sisters of the union be united and that each person in attendance urge our colleagues to be fully committed to all the demands.

When he finally finished speaking, I was the second person at the microphone. I began by stating that the demands were well thought out, but that there was virtually no one there to appreciate them. I then asked Lemelin how he could speak so eloquently on unity but then go back to Quebec and advocate racist, anti-Israel/anti-Semitic policies – specifically boycott, divestment and sanctions. Did he think any Jewish union brothers and sisters could support that platform? Why was he pushing policies that the general membership does not endorse?

Lemelin replied: "Brother, I will be happy to answer all your questions after the vote."

A few minutes later, he went on at length to answer my questions – supposedly. He skirted the main issues with double-speak. I was only able to respond when he finished, and I could not remember all of the inaccuracies and half-truths in his arguments.

He made the following points: 178 groups supported CUPW anti-Israel position; many Jews agree with the policy; the United Nations sides against Israel , and CUPW's policy has remained consistent for many years.

I answered him as follows: there are about one billion Muslims in the world. Many do not like Israel. To find 178 anti-Israel groups among this lot is like finding 178 grains of sand in a desert.

Jews are not a monolithic group, but certainly the overwhelming majority do not support the CUPW position.

With respect to CUPW's past anti-Israel position, I said that something that was once endorsed in no way legitimizes it.

I asked him why he didn't answer my e-mail nor return my phone call.

I concluded by saying that Jews are indigenous to the Middle East and that Jews have a far greater right to Israel than French-Canadians have to Quebec.

Lemelin responded by saying he is not anti-Semitic and believes Israel has a right to exist. He claimed never to have seen my e-mail nor received my phone message.

My letter, co-written with retired teacher Max Beer of Montreal, refers to an article by Lemelin in which he quotes "human rights experts and analysts" who assert Israel is guilty of a "slow genocide." An Internet search revealed that the term was used by Omar Barghouti, a founding member of the BDS movement, who, despite calling for a boycott of Israel, is currently engaged in postgraduate studies in philosophy at Tel Aviv University.

It would seem that CUPW uses the same kind of rationale as Barghouti. Would it not be more useful to boycott governments, such as Sudan, that are supporting events that come closer to human rights violations and mass murder than anything Israel has done which has inflicted hundreds of thousands of deaths in its Darfur region since 2003, far more than then entire death toll in the Palestinian/Israeli conflict since 1947?

And who is supporting the Sudanese government? One of its most ardent backers is China, which purchases oil from the East African nation, supplies it with weapons and provides it with diplomatic cover. China also continues to suppress the aspirations of the Tibetan people, and it leads the world in executions.

I suggested that if CUPW were really interested in human rights, it would lead a boycott against products from China.

I guess principles only matter when they don't really affect you.

Fred Toulch is a letter carrier in Toronto.

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Sports & Leisure

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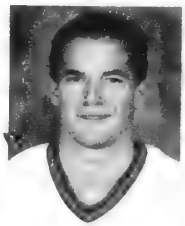
Habs' roster now has two Jewish players

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

As one wag recently put it in a recent *Montreal Gazette* letter to the editor: "Go Heebs go!"



Jeff Halpern

That was his reaction after news came out Sept. 7 that the Montreal Canadiens had signed forward Jeff Halpern to a one-year, $600,000 contract.

That made Maryland native Halpern, 34, and 28-year-old star forward Mike Cammalleri, who signed with the Habs a year ago, two Jewish players on one National Hockey League team – arguably for the first time in the league's history.

Halpern's start in the NHL was in 1999, playing five seasons for the Washington Capitals. He then played for the Dallas Stars, Tampa Bay Lightning and spent the 2009-10 season split between the Lightning and Los Angeles Kings. Halpern's best season was with the Capitals in 2003-04, with 19 goals and 27 assists. His career stats are 131 goals and 316 points over 720 regular season games.

He also captained the U.S. national team for the 2008 World Championships held in Canada and is considered a versatile player, reported to be most comfortable at centre although he played right wing last season.

Halpern also sat out one game with the Capitals in 2006 to observe Yom Kippur and is a member of the Greater Washington Jewish Sports Hall of Fame.

Cammalleri, who has a Jewish mother (the daughter of Holocaust survivors) and an Italian father, last year signed with the Habs for a record $30 million over five years – that's 10 times Halpern's salary averaged out over one year.

Cammalleri was leading the Habs in scoring last season with 26 goals when he was sidelined with a knee injury in January. The

Mike Cammalleri

Richmond Hill native showed his true stuff, though, during the playoffs, when he led the league in scoring with 13 goals, including seven goals in as many games against the Pittsburgh Penguins. Those numbers tied a team record held by Habs legends such as Jean Beliveau, Bernie (Boom-Boom) Geoffrion, Maurice Richard and Frank Mahovlich.

Cammalleri's lifetime stats are 158 goals and 337 points over 429 regular season games.

There are other Jewish players competing in the NHL: Toronto Maple Leafs forward Mike Brown; Minnesota Wilds left-winger Eric Nystrom; and former Hab and current Phoenix Coyote defenceman Mathieu Schneider.

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Rafic cruises to Youth Olympics gold

By RAMI HIPSH
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

SINGAPORE — Israel's Maayan Rafic, who led the boys Techno 293 windsurf race competition wire to wire, placed high enough in the final race to win the gold medal at the Youth Olympics in Singapore.

He finished nine points ahead of Hong Kong's Michael Chun Leung Cheng, who took the silver. Britain's Kieran Martin won the medal race on the final day to pick up the bronze.

The popular Israeli made many friends during the Youth Olympics and was barely able to contain his joy after reaching the shore.

"It's unbelievable. I don't have any words to describe it, it's great, great, great," Rafic said after the final. "When I went over the finish line, everyone was clapping. It was an amazing feeling."

Rafic's gold was the fourth for Israel at the Youth Olympics.

Naomi Cohen missed her chance to win a medal when she finished eighth in the final sailing race of the girls Techno 293 event. She was edged out by Singapore's Audrey Pei Lin Yong, who came in third in the final race to secure the bronze medal.

Israel won a bronze, however, thanks to Rotem Shor, part of the European team in judo. Israel placed 16th among all countries in the medal rankings.

Israel loses to Austria in Davis Cup tennis tournament

Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Israel's Davis Cup team lost to Austria in the World Group playoffs on the third and final day of the tennis tournament, played at Nokia Stadium in Tel Aviv.

Despite many Israel fans' hopes and expectations following the 2-1 advantage Israel had gained in the matches of the previous two days, Dudi Sela and Harel Levy lost to Austrians Jurgen Melzer and Martin Fischer, respectively, in separate matches.

Levy entered the second match knowing that the fate of his team rested on his shoulders, following Sela's defeat by Melzer, who is ranked 13th in the world.

Levy opened the match strongly against the inexperienced Fischer, but he slowly surrendered to Fischer's talents in four sets and ultimately lost Israel's chances to advance further in the Davis Cup, losing 3-2 to the Austrians in the entire competition.

'Don't be yourself!'

NEW TO CANADA
By NINA SHENHAV

"Go mingle!" Meir sets me free. "But remember, don't be yourself. Instead, be nice, smiley, charming, and talk about your career."

I ignore the affront and head to the posh party.

Important-looking people from the industry gather in small groups. Tonight, I'm a serious woman who wants to promote herself and network. I approach a solemn-looking group.

"So!" I shout, "what are we talking about, huh? Huh?"

People look at me puzzled.

Man: We were just talking about Suzy.

Me: Dear old Suzy! I just had lunch with her yesterday, such a doll!

Woman: You met Suzy yesterday? Suzy passed away last month.

Me: Oh, *that* Suzy. Bless her soul. But let's stick with the living. I am an actress and a writer!

The group ignores me, so I head to another group. These people are laughing.

Me: That was so funny! I swear!

Man (still smiling): What exactly did you like about it?

Me (I grab a wineglass from the walking waiter.): Pardon?

Man: In my movie, what amused you the most?

Me: Well, I can honestly say that I had a long chat with your leading lady, and she resembles her character exactly!

Woman (examines me): My character is a cold-blooded serial killer. Where exactly did you find the resemblance?

Me (I sip wine quickly): All I have to say is: Thank goodness for alcohol! (Wink at the man).

Woman: What's wrong with you? Tom's doing very well in AA!

I stroll away in a very good mood, meeting people, mingling. Then a dignified woman approaches me.

Woman: Tell me, dear, who told you to come here?

Me (sigh): God… (it's too complicated to explain).

Woman (gently): Did God tell you to come here, darling?

I run away from the nut lady and stand eating a big piece of pastry, next to a man who looks familiar.

Me: You look famous. Aren't you that great producer, Mike something?

Mike something smiles humbly.

Me: Last I've heard, you refused to purchase the rights for that awful movie about sea urchins. What a poor mistake that would have been, eh?

Mike something: I've just bought the rights.

Me: Yay! Congratulations! Bye!

Mike something: Hold on, just wanted to warn you. Rumour is that some lunatic woman snuck into our private party. Apparently, God told her to come. Plus, she has lunches with dead people. Beware!

Me: I will. By the way, I'm an actress and a writer. I hope you didn't cast Miranda something in your new movie, *This Hairy Billy Goat*.

Mike something: I did. She's my daughter-in-law.

Well, I should have figured it out – same last name.

I decide to take off, and I turn to the door, when a tall man stops me.

Man: Are you that madcap actress/writer they're all talking about?

Me: Who me? God forbid, I'm no actress, nor a writer.

Man (laughs): Too bad. I'm looking for her. I really need a free-spirit meshuge actress for my next project. Well, so long.

I leave the party and wait for my cab.

All in all, I think it went well, don't you?

Nina.Shenhav@gmail.com

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Pilates strengthens core muscles

FITNESS CORNER
By FELYCE ZOMPARELLI

Pilates is a great way for almost anyone to get lean, strong and more flexible, whether she or he is an athlete or a couch potato.

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Pilates is a form of exercise developed by a man named Joseph Pilates in the 1920s. He developed this exercise method to be used in rehabilitation, and it has been growing in popularity since the 1990s.

Pilates is considered therapeutic exercise because it releases contracted muscles, tendons and fascia. It mobilizes joints, increasing flexibility while improving coordination and balance and building muscle strength. It can improve circulation and promote relaxation at the same time.

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Pilates exercises are controlled movements done on a mat, floor, or a machine called the Reformer. The Reformer helps connect your mind and body by teaching you how to find and use the right muscles for safe and injury-free movement.

There are many different kinds of Pilates today, including Pilates on the ball, yoga Pilates, Pilates with bands and, of course, contemporary Pilates, which is widely used by physiotherapists to help their clients strengthen muscle groups during rehabilitation after injury or surgery.

There are many places you can find Pilates today besides the physiotherapy office, including community centres or gyms that offer group classes and specialized studios that offer individual sessions as well as small group classes.

If you prefer to exercise at home, you can hire a certified Pilates instructor to come to your residence or you can pick up some great Pilates DVDs at your local large department store and other retailers.

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Pakistan: beyond Jewish humanitarianism?

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

The world was once again witness to a devastating natural disaster of epic proportions, this time in Pakistan. Millions of men, women and children are homeless. There are the dead and injured. The earth's waters are stirring and angry.

"Pakistan," however, created a challenge for the Jewish world. Knowing Pakistan is home to many Muslim fundamentalists intent upon the destruction of the State of Israel, should we show compassion to our "enemies"?

The immediate response is: men, women and children are in distress and it is our responsibility as Jews, involved in tikkun olam, to assist where we can. Obviously, the vast majority of the water-soaked Pakistanis couldn't care less about Israel. Should we take a poll before we assist to determine the victim's political ideologies?

The question still remains, however. The Jewish world has a limited amount of resources, so why not distribute them to a nation not antagonistic toward Israel and the Jewish people?

Here is one answer. Diaspora Jewry has an unbreakable partnership with the State of Israel. We work together in "fields of crisis" when possible and separately when required. So when Israel stayed out of Pakistan, in essence below the radar, it was time for us to go above it. Those Jewish humanitarian organizations and community members who responded to Pakistan knew it was our time to help the suffering and similarly show the goodness of the Jewish people.

This approach is very much in sync with former Israeli prime minister Golda Meir's creation of Mashav, an arm of the Israel Foreign Ministry that offers humanitarian assistance around the world. One of her prime motivations was to make friends "on the ground" through the sharing of Israeli expertise.

Meir understood that while political allies would be hard to come by in places such as Pakistan, a mother whose child was helped by a Jew would always remember. Decades later, with Israeli-trained eye clinicians in Ethiopia, her dream is a reality.

While we must not misplace our compassion, and allow for the growth of our enemies, in the case of Pakistan that is not the case. Pakistan is a country threatened by the Taliban and Al Qaeda, and works with other nations to weed out terrorism.

Israel has held high-level talks with Pakistan to establish official relations. Israel has offered, and Pakistan has accepted (albeit through a third party) humanitarian aid in the past, specifically during the 2005 Kashmir earthquake. There is reason to believe Israel and Pakistan could create stronger alliances, and perhaps a Jewish humanitarian response might help push that along.

I believe the Jewish people are a team. A segment of that team should express their frustration at the proliferation of terrorists in Pakistan and donate their money elsewhere. The team, however, must include members – such as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee – who have worked in the field and are well positioned to establish "friendships" in a non-political way.

The flooding in Pakistan has created enormous suffering. While it would be incongruous to launch a crisis response for the Taliban, card-carrying enemies of Israel, I do feel it's important to do something in Pakistan.

Of course, I am angry when Israeli aid workers are denied visas to assist those in need, but I say, regardless, forge ahead. I pray I am right and that our assistance helps alleviate some of the stress of the Pakistani people and, secondly, creates a more positive atmosphere for Jews, the State of Israel and all humankind.

God bless the Jews and Israel. God bless the Pakistani people. Let us pray for peace in 5771.

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Israel extends construction freeze

By BARAK RAVID
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd*

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has agreed to extend Israel's freeze on settlement construction for 60 days, the London-based newspaper *Asharq al-Awsat* quoted Israeli officials as saying on Monday.

The *Asharq al-Awsat* article came amid recent reports that U.S. President Barack Obama had offered Netanyahu an incentive package in exchange for keeping settlement construction at bay, a move that could ease Palestinians' concerns over settlement building and bring them back to the negotiating table.

According to Israeli sources quoted in the report, Netanyahu expressed his preliminary approval for an extension of Israel's moratorium on settlement building, which ended last week, on the condition that such a move would be accompanied by a list of U.S. assurances, including a continued Israel Defence Forces presence in the Jordan Valley and continued U.S. political and military support.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu *[Flash90 photo]*

Sources quoted in *Asharq al-Awsat* also said Netanyahu claimed that the assurances listed would aid him in the face of the widespread internal opposition expected to follow such a move.

Speaking at a meeting of Likud ministers shortly before the weekly cabinet meeting in Jerusalem on Monday, Netanyahu made a possible reference to the *Asharq al-Awsat* report, saying that there were "a lot of reports on the subject, most of which are wrong, and we can't deny or correct everything.

"There's no need to start a debate on the subject," he said, adding, however that Israel is in the "midst of sensitive talks with the U.S. administration to find a solution that would allow talks to continue.

"There's no need to cause a stir, but there is a need to conduct ourselves in a wise and responsible manner in order to advance the diplomatic process," Netanyahu said, adding that he believed he had to "weigh the situation quietly and far from the spotlight, and act quietly.

"Efforts, mainly discreet ones, are made, and we are expected to conduct ourselves in a restrained, discreet manner," he said. "If a decision will be made, it would be brought before appropriate governmental bodies."

Israel is "interested in achieving peace," he said, adding that this is a "vital interest of the State of Israel."

Last week, the White House denied that Obama sent Netanyahu a letter proposing a set of U.S. guarantees in exchange for Israel's extending a freeze on settlement construction in the West Bank for another two months.

Continued on page 40

Lost tribe found?

In the southeastern India province of Andhra Pradesh, a small group of people who call themselves the Bene Ephraim are living a Jewish lifestyle and seeking to connect with the Jewish people. Please see story on page 6.

[Rabbi Bonita Sussman photos]

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Ahmadinejad set to visit Lebanon – please see page 39

The News in Brief

Canada

Sentence Condemned

TORONTO — Canadian Jewish Congress condemned last week's sentencing by Iran of blogger Hossein Derakshan to 19 years in prison for "insulting Islamic thought." Congress CEO Bernie Farber called the jailing of Derakshan, a 35-year-old Iranian-Canadian dual citizen, "an utter outrage." Farber commended Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon "for his strong denunciation of this barbarous punishment" and urged "continued pressure on the Iranian regime" to secure his release. Derakshan made a high-profile visit to Israel in 2006 using his Canadian passport, with the aim of humanizing Israelis for Iranians.

CUPW Blasted

TORONTO — Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) last week condemned Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) president Denis Lemelin for agreeing to speak at an anti-Israel boycott, sanctions and divestment conference to be held Oct. 22 to 24 in Montreal. CUPW is one of the organizers, along with groups such as Independent Jewish Voices, and Palestinian and Jewish Unity. FSWC said the meeting disproportionately demonizes Israel and questions its right to exist by calling it an apartheid state. "It is shameful for a president of a major Canadian union to participate in a conference with strident anti-Semitic overtones, especially while the peace process is actively being pursued by both sides," president and CEO Avi Benlolo said.

Fire Fund Established

TORONTO — UJA Federation of Greater Toronto launched a fund last week to aid the 1,200 people forced from their highrise apartment building at 200 Wellesley St E. by a Sept. 24 fire. Many needed supplies such as underwear, shoes, socks, underwear and blankets. Donations can be made at ujadonations.com or at 416-631-5705.

World

Art Returned

JERUSALEM — The Israel Museum has restituted a Paul Klee drawing to the estate of the Jewish art collector who owned the work before it was looted by the Nazis. Klee's 1920 drawing was owned by Harry Fuld Jr. from 1932 to 1941. Fuld left *Veil Dance* and several other works with a transport firm when he fled to England in 1937. In 1941, after a new law by which Jews who left Germany lost their German nationality and property, his citizenship and assets were revoked, and his art was confiscated by the Third Reich. The drawing was received in 1950 by the Israel Museum's precursor, the Bezalel National Museum, through the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization, set up after World War II to distribute looted works of art whose owners or heirs were unknown. Fuld died in 1963, and left his estate to his housekeeper. At her death in 1992, she left her estate to the United Kingdom's branch of Magen David Adom (MDA). After new research brought the drawing's provenance to light, the museum transferred the drawing to MDA.

Malware Arrests

TEHRAN — Iran announced the arrests of suspected hackers linked to the Stuxnet malware, which has affected its nuclear facilities. Heydar Moslehi, the Iranian intelligence minister, didn't say how many people had been arrested. Iranian media quoted Moslehi as saying Oct. 2 the attack was under control. The program, which can seize control of industrial plants, has infected at least 30,000 computers in Iran, including some affecting the country's Bushehr nuclear plant, according to Iranian reports. Officials have said the attack is the work of Israel and other western powers. Some reports have said the worm affected Natanz, a nuclear plant that unlike Bushehr is believed to be part of Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program. Analysts also uncovered hints within the worm of associations with Esther, the Jewish queen of Persia who helped prevent a Jewish genocide in the Book of Esther, and with Iranian Jews persecuted by the current regime.

Israeli Chassid Killed

KIEV — Two attackers are being held in the stabbing death in Ukraine of an Israeli Chassid. Shmuel Tobol, 19, a Breslover, was stabbed Sept. 26 in Uman while visiting the grave of Rabbi Nachman of Breslov on the 200th anniversary of his death. Tobol's brother was also injured in the attack. The brothers were chasing local residents who had damaged their car with rocks when a brawl ensued.

ADL Criticizes Rock Show's Imagery

Roger Waters

NEW YORK — The Anti-Defamation League has lashed out at rock star Roger Waters, claiming imagery used in his latest tour is anti-Semitic.

Waters, formerly of Pink Floyd, is a vocal critic of Israel's policies, and his 2010-11 "The Wall Live" Tour that takes aim at Israel's West Bank security fence.

During his performances of *Goodbye Blue Sky*, an animated scene projects images of planes dropping bombs in the shape of Jewish Stars of David followed by dollar signs, the ADL said.

At the tour's kickoff last month in Toronto, other images dropping from the planes included crosses, crescents and the logos of firms such as Shell and Mercedes-Benz.

The images crossed a line into anti-Semitism, and "[play] into and [recall] the worst age-old anti-Semitic stereotype about Jews and their supposed obsession with making money," ADL director Abraham Foxman said.

Waters denied the show is anti-Semitic, adding that "there are no hidden meanings in the order or juxtaposition of these symbols. The point I am trying to make… is that the bombardment we are all subject to by conflicting religious, political and economic ideologies only encourages us to turn against one another, and I mourn the concomitant loss of life."

Waters, 67, used a 2009 tour of Israel to highlight his criticism of Israel's barrier surrounding the West Bank, calling it an "awful thing" amounting to a land grab.

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Inert land mines set off scare at Pearson

El Al security personnel flag container at airport

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Police are investigating an incident at Toronto's Pearson International Airport in which El Al security personnel flagged a container of inert land mines that was to be shipped to UN forces in the Sinai Peninsula.

Peel Regional Police were called to the airport Sept. 26 after El Al agents detected trace amounts of explosives in the shipment.

Peel Police evacuated a cargo building where the cargo skid was located and called in the Canadian Forces for assistance before it was determined the materials posed no danger, said Const. Wayne Patterson.

"We seized it and turned it over to the military, because it was inert military training device," he said.

"It's now an RCMP investigation."

Dina Kutner, El Al's Canadian general manager, declined to comment on the incident, saying only, "Our security department does what it has to do and it's very effective."

News reports from Israel suggest the cargo was destined for the Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai Peninsula, but UN officials failed to inform El Al about the shipment.

John Thompson, executive director of the Mackenzie Institute, a Toronto think-tank, said "you'd be surprised what's being shipped" on commercial flights.

"When police departments order new pistols, they are shipped by courier," he said, though live ammunition is treated differently.

Monitoring devices are so sensitive they can detect even minute particles of an explosive in inert mines. "If I travel to Israel and packed dirty clothes from the gun range, it would probably trip the alarm," he said.

"Inert land mines are common training devices, especially in the Sinai. No one has managed to clear all mines."

Land mines for training could have been scrubbed clean and rendered inert but residual explosives will still set off detection devices, he added.

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Iran's conspiratorial delusions

Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's address to the UN General Assembly on Sept. 23, in which he alleged that the United States was behind the 9/11 attacks in order to reverse its faltering economy and to save the "Zionist regime," received a lot of media attention

"The majority of the American people as well as other nations and politicians agree with this view," he said. In another part of his speech, Ahmadinejad claimed that the "horrible crimes" of Israel (only referred to as the "Zionist regime") are largely responsible for the world's problems

Mark Kornblau, a U.S. State Department spokesperson, replied bluntly: "Rather than representing the aspirations and goodwill of the Iranian people, Mr. Ahmadinejad has yet again chosen to spout vile conspiracy theories and anti-Semitic slurs that are as abhorrent and delusional as they are predictable."

The State Department's use of the word "delusional" is significant, because the official U.S. position remains one of being open to dialogue with Iran. On Sept. 23, the BBC's Jonathan Marcus reported that according to a very senior White House official, "over the past year a number of senior Iranian figures have made approaches to the U.S. administration eager to establish some kind of back-channel diplomacy. However, the U.S. view is that while it wants dialogue, it does not want to become entangled in factional battles in Tehran, preferring to wait until somebody with the approval of Iran's Supreme Leader takes the first step."

According to Reports

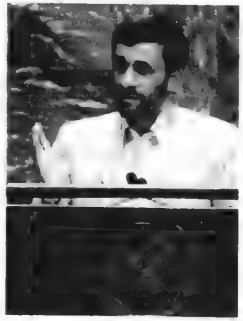
By PAUL MICHAELS

For his part, U.S. President Barack Obama, while calling Ahmadinejad's comments at the UN "hateful," told the BBC's Persian service interviewer that a diplomatic solution remained possible on the nuclear issue. "But it is going to require a change in mindset inside the... Iranian government," Obama added.

Although it has yet to be properly addressed by the U.S. administration, the problem is that there appears to be no way to reconcile these apparently irreconcilable positions. Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, has indeed given his approval to Ahmadinejad, whose "delusional" views arguably express Khamenei's and those of the ruling mullah class. In other words, Ahmadinejad's rabid conspiratorial mindset, far from being an individual quirk, is broadly representative of the Iranian government as a whole.

If the mindset of its government would first have to change as a precondition for rationally engaging Iran, that would mean Tehran giving up its pervasive conspiracy theories, foremost those concerning "Zionists," i.e. Jews. Since the chance of this happening is virtually nil, Iran will remain in the grips of its dangerous delusion. And the West must plan accordingly.

The *National Post*'s Sept. 25 editorial reflected precisely this point when it said: "The danger with Ahmadinejad lies in the ease with which the man can be written off as a buffoon. His regular clown act makes it seem as if we could dismiss the very real threat his country represents, and thus reduces pressure to take decisive action against it."



Ahmadinejad speaking at the UN. *[File photo]*

In a column on the same day devoted to examining the conspiratorial mindset – something that many highly educated people in the West are not immune to – Jonathan Kay emphasized that "conspiracy theories are especially prominent in Islamic societies such as Iran."

Ahmadinejad's latest outrageous expression of these theories is, as Rex Murphy put it, "bile at its most rancid," but it must be taken as a serious interpretation of the world. And no matter how perverse, it's one that Iran could well act upon, if the country is allowed to become armed with nuclear weapons.

Speaking of which, on TVO's Sept. 27 *The Agenda*, which was devoted to the question of Iran, Rashad Khalidi, who holds Edward Said's old chair of Arab Studies at Columbia University, insisted with complete certainty that Iran would never launch nuclear weapons on Israel.

Does Iran pose an existential threat to Israel? "Absolutely not," said Khalidi, arguing that the Iranian leadership is rational, and as such would be deterred by the prospect of Israel's massive second-strike capacity. Furthermore, Khalidi charged, Israel's political leadership well understands this and is just "cynically manipulating" public fears over Iran's bluster to its own advantage.

To say the least, Khalidi's dead certainty about Iran's intentions is, in its own way, as shocking as Ahmadinejad's delusional interpretation about the U.S., Israel, and 9/11.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

From the editor's desk...

will return

SeeJN

BAR MITZVAH CELEBRATION

One youngster chooses a creative way to celebrate his bar mitzvah in the Old City of Jerusalem.

[Flash 90 photo]

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Greater Toronto Area

Women prepare a meal in synagogue kitchen.
[Rabbi Bonita Sussman photos]

'Lost tribe of Israel' found in southern India

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

As tribes go, the Bene Ephraim are hardly noticeable in the vastness of India – perhaps 150 souls if everyone from nearby villages was counted together. But, if their traditions are accurate, they lay claim to an ancient lineage as one of the legendary 10 lost tribes of Israel.

A dirt-poor collection of mostly farm labourers who reside in the southeastern Indian village of Kotha Reddy Palem in the province of Andhra Pradesh, the Bene Ephraim believe they were exiled by the Assyrian Empire after the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel in 722 BCE.

They have been so obscure that the established Jewish community in Mumbai only learned of them in recent years, when Indian security forces uncovered an plot by Lashkar-e-Taiba Islamic terrorists to murder them as part of a wider attack that included an assault on a Hindu temple and the bombing of an airport.

The Bene Ephraim's remarkable story will be told on Oct. 24 at Congregation Darchei Noam by Rabbi Gerald Sussman, spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-El in Staten Island, N.Y., and his wife, Rabbi Bonita Sussman. The two spent three weeks with the Bene Ephraim in the summer of 2007, instructing them on Jewish practices. Their visit was co-ordinated by Kulanu, an organization that helps "emerging or returning Jewish populations," Rabbi Bonita said.

The Bene Ephraim circumcise their children; celebrate all Jewish holidays, including Purim and Chanukah, which postdate their exile from Israel; keep mezuzot in their homes; teach their children Hebrew and give them Hebrew names, she said.

They're landless farmers who work for others but who keep Shabbat as a day of rest. "That cuts into their incomes," which average only $1.40 per day, she said. They live in clay-walled houses with thatched roofs and no running water, though there is intermittent electrical service.

Despite their adherence to Jewish lifecycle events, they are willing to undergo conversion to assure their link to the wider Jewish world, although that is problematic in India, which has laws against missionaries, she said.

Rabbi Gerald acknowledges reconstructing the Bene Ephraim's history is fraught with uncertainty, but according to their traditions, they were exiled from ancient Israel and made their way to India through Assyria, Persia and the area that is now Afghanistan. Skeptics point out that as recently as the 19th century, they were practising Christians.

Continued on page 22

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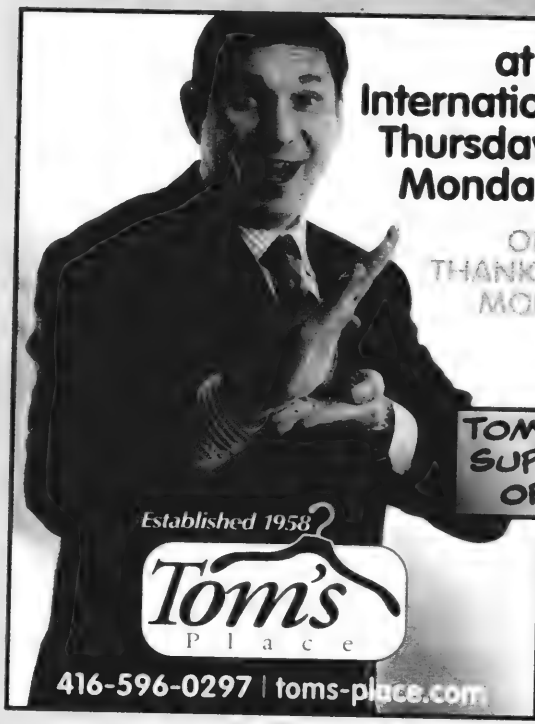

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Return CUPW's message to sender

Attempts at demonization and delegitimization of Israel on the world stage are, sadly, nothing new as far as the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement goes. But reports that Denis Lemelin, president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), has decided not only to attend but to speak at a major three-day anti-Israel conference in Montreal later this month is a disturbing revelation.

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies brought the information to light late last week, with Avi Benlolo, the centre's president and CEO, decrying Lemelin's participation as "shameful... especially while the peace process is actively being pursued by both sides on the ground."

From Oct. 22 to 24, the Global BDS Movement, the key organizer of the event, will present speakers and "experts" on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the majority of whom will likely spew their usual vitriol and condemnations against all forms of perceived Israeli atrocities committed in the name of the "occupation." False linkages to the South African system of apartheid will no doubt be spoken about as well.

Why the head of one of Canada's most essential, hard-working, multicultural workforces feels that this is the time to openly push an anti-Israel agenda on behalf of his membership is anyone's guess. It should be noted, however, that CUPW began supporting the BDS campaign when it passed a resolution on the matter in 2008, and Lemelin has since stated that his union – which represents more than 54,000 postal workers – views all Gazans as "prisoners."

A recent Canada Post decision to temporarily suspend delivery of Canadian outbound mail to Gaza, due to the arrest of the head of the Palestinian Postal Authority over Israeli security concerns, may have served to further raise the ire of Lemelin and his colleagues. In a Sept. 2 interview with *The CJN*, Lemelin showed a disquieting amount of ignorance, willful or not, about the nuances of the conflict, and he made it clear which side he has chosen to support.

When asked whether he believed Israel had legitimate security concerns based on the wording of Hamas' charter, a document that calls for the destruction of Israel and the murder of Jews, Lemelin uttered a succinct reply: "That's what you say." He then went on to defend Hamas, a recognized terrorist entity by most western governments, as a democratically elected body.

What he seemingly did not take into account or acknowledge are the reasons why Israel has implemented stringent security measures with respect to Gaza in the first place – namely, to protect Israeli citizens from coming under continual attack from an organization that refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist and actively seeks its elimination.

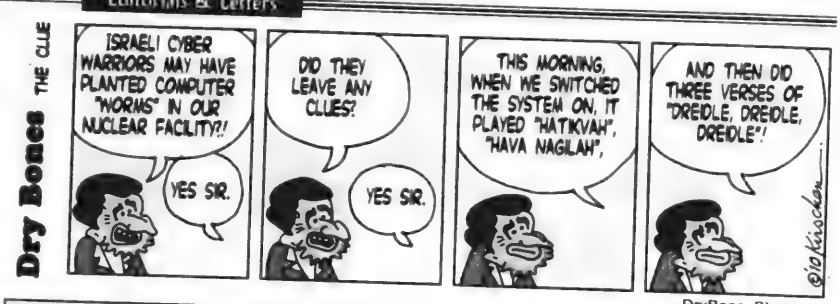
Perhaps it's time for the Jewish community to undertake more dialogue with CUPW and its leaders in order to clarify Israel's position for our valued mail carriers.

For now, it appears that neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet, nor hail shall keep the head of Canada's postal union from espousing his particular views on Israel.

It's a message that should be returned to sender. –*A.L-A.*

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israel launched a lightning-strike air raid on PLO headquarters in Tunisia. The attack near Tunis, 1,500 miles away, reportedly killed 67 people and wounded 100, and left PLO leader Yasser Arafat shaken. The United Nations Security Council voted 14-0 to condemn the raid, with the United States abstaining.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Sukkot art exhibit in T.O. next year?

One of the most exciting and creative celebrations of Sukkot took place recently in Union Square in New York City. For a short period of time, the low-tech sukkah became high design. *Sukkah City* was an exhibit of 12 architecturally avant-garde sukkot, selected in a juried competition from more than 600 entries, one of which – a "taxi cab" sukkah – was submitted by a Torontonian, Nicolas Koff. *Sukkah City* represents a new way to conceptualize an ancient tradition. The winning design was selected by readers of *New York* magazine.

The Sukkah City website explains that "the sukkah's religious function is to commemorate the temporary structures that the Israelites dwelled in during their Exodus from Egypt, but it is also about universal ideas of transience and permanence as expressed in architecture. The sukkah is a means of ceremonially practising homelessness, while at the same time remaining deeply rooted."

Next year, *Sukkah City* will expand to locations all around the world. I propose that the Koffler Centre, the Ontario College of Art and Design, the faculty of architecture, landscape and design at the University of Toronto, the Toronto Board of Rabbis and our many creative Canadian architects establish a partnership, so that we will become part of *Sukkah City* 2011. We could erect the sukkot in Nathan Phillips Square, named for the first Jewish mayor of Toronto.

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl
Toronto

* * *

Jewish Canadian airmen buried in Britain

I am a member of the Association of Jewish Ex-service Men and Women (AJEX) in England. On Sept. 19, on the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, there was a large parade at a Royal Air Force cemetery in a town called Harrogate. This was to honour the airmen lost during the last war.

At this cemetery lie the graves of seven Jewish Canadian airmen. After the main parade, AJEX members visited – as they do every year – each of these graves, as these soldiers have no known relatives who can visit them to say *Kaddish*. We remember them because they gave their lives for us.

They are: (1) **Jack Tass** of Prince Albert, Sask., air gunner, Royal Canadian Air Force, died May 15, 1944, aged 29; (2) **Harry Ratner** of Winnipeg, air bomber, RCAF, died May 25, 1944, aged 26; (3) **Ernest Israel Glass**, pilot, RCAF, died Jan. 2 1944, aged 27; (4) **Robert Sirluck** of Winnipeg, air bomber, RCAF, died March 1, 1944, aged 22; (5) **Morley Bernard Stock** of Regina, flying officer, RCAF, died Feb. 18, 1944, aged 21; (6) **R.P. Marks**, flight engineer, died Dec. 16, 1943, aged 22; (7) **Joseph Zareikin**, air gunner, RCAF, died Oct. 5, 1944, aged 36. Please contact me if you are a relative of any of these men.

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* * *

Dora Wasserman spread the Jewish word

The common theme in the stories in your Rosh Hashanah supplement is perseverance and self-sacrifice ("Women you should know," Sept. 8). The late Dora Wasserman embodies such attributes. She came to Canada in 1950 with two passions: her love for the theatre and the Yiddish language. She taught theatre and Yiddish at the Montreal Jewish Public Library and the Jewish Peoples and Peretz School. This laid the groundwork for the Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre. The theatre became internationally acclaimed, as her determination to spread the Jewish word knew no bounds.

Wasserman was sensitive to the role that theatre could play in bridging cultural divides. The French-Canadian playwright Gratien Gélinas gave her guidance and encouragement, and she collaborated with Quebec playwright Michel Tremblay.

In 1992, Wasserman was named to the Order of Canada and the Order of Quebec. The ceremony in Quebec was attended by Cardinal Marc Ouellet and Quebec Premier Jean Charest, who was then an MP. How poignant it was to see them sitting at the side of this daughter of an impoverished tailor of the shtetl, paying their respects to her. The Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre continues her work at Montreal's Segal Centre for Performing Arts.

Sam Mitnick
Cote St. Luc, Que.

* * *

Survivors of Wolta Gabersdorf

I am searching for survivors or relatives of women who were prisoners in Wolta Gabersdorf, a labour camp that was in the Czech Sudetanland. The work camp, a textile factory, later became part of Gross Rosen, a German concentration camp. I'm a second-generation survivor of Gabersdorf who is writing a book about my mother, Hela Hocherman, and I'm also working on a documentary film on the courageous girls of Gabersdorf. If you have any information, please contact me at marisafox@me.com or 917-626-5669, or in Canada, contact Stanley Diamond at 514-484-0100, or e-mail him at SMSDiamond@aol.com.

Marisa Fox
New York

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1566

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

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Perspectives

Nazi crimes have been downgraded in Lithuania

By ESTHER GOLDBERG

Sept. 14, 2001, found me on an Air Canada flight bound for the United Kingdom. I had bought my ticket weeks beforehand; the irony was that Sept. 14 was the first day that planes again took to the sky after 9-11.

I was on my way to Warsaw to celebrate Rosh Hashanah, and to Vilna for Yom Kippur. In between these two holy days was Sept. 23, which in 2001 was the first "National Day of Shame" in Lithuania in memory of the Shoah. Sept. 23, 1943, was the beginning of the end of the Vilna Ghetto, and 2001 was the 60th anniversary of the June 1941 German invasion that brought the Holocaust to Lithuania.

In 2000, Lithuania signed the Stockholm Declaration at the International Forum on the Holocaust, and Great Britain was assigned to oversee Lithuanian remembrance and education of the Shoah. Among the events honouring Sept. 23, 2001, was the launch of the Lithuanian edition of Martin Gilbert's Holocaust history for schools, *Never Again*, and its presentation to Lithuanian schools by the British government.

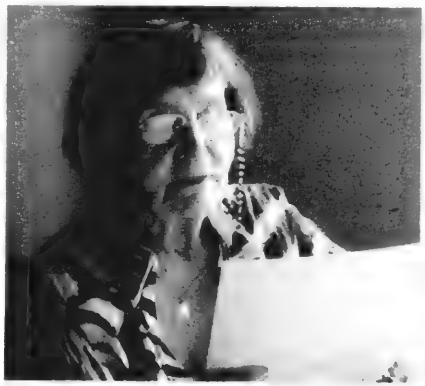
Black ribbons hung from flagpoles on former Jewish buildings throughout Lithuania; markers on the highways pointed to the mass-murder sites of Lithuania's Jews; official programs were held at the killing centres of Ponar, near Vilnius, and the Ninth Fort, near Kaunas; and the rebuilt Jewish Theatre in Vilna was opened as a Museum of Tolerance. It was a day of hope – that this blood-soaked former Soviet Socialist Republic that had struggled to break free of an oppressive and stifling history would change, and look to the West. Even the clocks were reset to European – not Russian – time.

The next day, Sept. 24, taking advantage of those who had come for the commemoration, among them Yitzhak Arad, the former chairman of Yad Vashem, and Gilbert, a meeting of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania was held. In the title lies the problem: to Lithuanians today, the crimes of the Soviet regime and the crimes of the Nazi regime are equal. How can this be? The crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Germans and their Lithuanian collaborators, in the form of the hunting down, terrorizing and murder of 90 per cent of Lithuania's Jewish community along with the thousands of Jews who were deported to Lithuania to their deaths, were atrocities of devastating proportion. The crimes against humanity, perpetrated by the Soviet authorities, in the form of the deportation of thousands of Lithuanian citizens – Jews among them – to the gulags of Siberia, along with the 50-year occupation and ruthless rule of Soviet Russia was a tragedy. To its credit, Lithuania was at the forefront of bringing down that Soviet regime.

Where do the Jews fit into the "Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes"? Jews were the main victims of Nazi genocide, organized by the 1,000 *Einsatzgruppe* members assigned to the three Baltic countries, and carried out with the help of local collaborators: 20 battalions of local volunteers in the case of Lithuania. The countries assigned to the Soviet Union with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of Aug. 23, 1939, were each desperate to regain their own independence. They viewed their Jews as collaborators with the Soviets – from the "Jews and Bolsheviks" propaganda of Hitler's regime – and because individual Jews had been at the forefront of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, hoping to get better treatment than they had under the Czars. The fury unleashed by the Lithuanians on the Jews in 1941 was bred-in-the-bone anti-Semitism from the Catholic Church and from the political establishment who saw the Jews as their oppressors.

By combining the examination of the crimes of the Nazi and the Soviet regimes, and by calling the Soviet occupation "genocide," Lithuania has not denied the Holocaust or that one Jew died. Instead it is playing a game of victimhood that is implicit in the Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism of June 3 , 2008. It states that "millions of victims of communism and their families are entitled to enjoy justice, sympathy, understanding and recognition for their sufferings, in the same way as the victims of Nazism have been morally and politically recognized." In theory, this sounds fair. In practice, in Lithuania, and in Latvia and Estonia, it has led to frightening developments because the two totalitarian regimes are equated. In effect, the Soviet regime's crimes are upgraded and the Nazi regime's crimes downgraded. The devastation incurred becomes a "double" genocide."

Currently, throughout Lithuania, the plaques on former Jewish buildings and black ribbons are displayed for the "tourist season." Then they come down. But displaying the swastika, a "valuable symbol of the Baltic culture," has been legally allowed in Lithuania's third-largest city, Klaipeda. The state "Genocide Museum" in Vilnius has no reference to the Holocaust – a search on its website has only one mention of Jews, that during the Nazi occupation "about 200,000 Jews were killed in Lithuania, and about 45,000 people of other nationalities were killed," but the "Holocaust Exhibit" part of the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, located at the "Green House," is now closed for renovation – some fear evisceration. Its curator Rachel Kostanian is harassed and continually in fear of losing her job. Even the "National Day of Shame" of 2001 is now called the "National Memorial Day for the Genocide Victims of the Lithuanian Jews." No Lithuanians have been brought to justice for their collaboration efforts in killing Jews, but four elderly Jewish former partisans live in fear of arrest. Reminiscent of George Orwell, some are more equal than others.



Rachel Kostanian is being investigated by Lithuanian authorities. The subject of an essay by Esther Goldberg, which appeared in *The CJN*'s Rosh Hashanah supplement this year, Kostanian has devoted her life to the Green House Holocaust Exhibit in Lithuania and to Holocaust education in Lithuania.

What changed since those hopeful days of September 2001? Was the respect and sensitivity to Jewish suffering, then – as it is now – merely for show, for western visitors, for leaders of important Jewish organizations who are given kavod and when they are gone, the Jew symbols are put away? The Lithuanian elections in 2008 brought Andrius Kubilius back to power, heading a right-wing party composed of a merger of the Union of Political Prisoners and the Exiled and Christianical Democrats, with the Lithuanian National Union. The mood of the country has shifted to the right with the interest in Lithuanian history focused on the trauma of Soviet occupation. Jews do not have an explicit place in that history; instead the implication of Jewish duplicity pervades every aspect of it.

Jews were always a small minority among the leaders, functionaries and secret police of the Lithuanian Communist regime; it was the Lithuanians who imposed communism at every level of society in the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. With the current condemnation of communism – but not of their fellow Lithuanians – Jews have become a convenient target. The language of the Prague Declaration reflects this by condemning communism, implying "Jewish communism." The declaration's subtext is that Soviet crimes were essentially Jewish crimes. Yet on the other hand, the Prague Declaration appeals for an equivalency to the way the Holocaust has been "morally and politically recognized." Jews are acknowledged when dead and when honoured by other Jews.

The greatest irony in this situation is the way Jewish partisans are viewed in Lithuania today. Arad fought with Soviet partisans against the German occupiers and has written extensively on his experiences, and on Lithuanian collaboration with the Germans. In 2007, the Lithuanian government asked Israel to extradite Arad for questioning concerning crimes against Lithuanian citizens during his time as a partisan, based on material in his memoir. Israel refused the extradition. The website of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania, of whom Arad was a member, now lists him as "suspended," along with Gilbert, who resigned in protest to the "grotesque indignity" of seeking to bring Arad to trial.

Joseph Melamed, a survivor from Kovno and a decorated partisan who has been active with the Israel-based Association of Lithuanian Jews, protested in 1998, at the time the commission was established, against combining the two tragedies. In a letter to then-president Valdas Akamkus, he wrote: "This false symmetry has been a major obstacle to any serious soul-searching by Lithuanian society in regard to the extensive collaboration of Lithuanians with the Nazis in the murder of Lithuanian Jews. Even worse, false accusations and patent exaggerations regarding Jewish participation in Communist crimes against Lithuanians have been adduced time and again to explain, and in some cases even justify, the participation of Lithuanians in the murder of Jews during the Holocaust." Although Melamed lives in Tel Aviv, on Holocaust Remembrance Day this year, Jan. 27, Lithuanian prosecutors visited the Jewish community offices in Vilna to question the leaders of the Jewish community about him.

Rachel Margolis was a former partisan from Vilna, and one of the founders of the Green House Holocaust Exhibit. Her memoir, has, like Arad's, been combed for references – taken out of context – to the killing of Lithuanians. Living in Israel since 2009, she is afraid to return to Lithuania where she may also face arrest.

The fourth aging survivor is Fania Yocheles Brantsovsky, the librarian of the Vilnius Yiddish Institute of Vilnius University and a former partisan. In 2009, she was honoured by the German embassy in Vilnius with the Cross of Merit for strengthening the unity between Germans and Jews of central and eastern Europe. Yet she is under suspicion by the Lithuanians of committing crimes against humanity during her time as a partisan. She travels in Lithuania with a protective "firewall" of ambassadors, from, among other countries, Ireland, Britain, Norway and the United States.

The four survivors under investigation, along with Kostanian, who has devoted her life to the Green House Holocaust Exhibit and to Holocaust education in Lithuania, should be honoured by their fellow Lithuanians as heroes. Instead they are demonized and harassed, castigated and terrorized. This is the "National Shame" that Lithuania should be addressing.

Given the type of Orwellian doublethink that consumes Lithuania today, visiting Jewish dignitaries who come as guests are treated to the treasures of Lithuania that they want to find. When the guests leave, the moral cupboard is bare. For a country and a region emerging into western European civilization, exalting in the freedoms it fought through much of the last century to enjoy, those who care about its people and its history hope it can reconcile the traumas of its past, and build a future that rises above victimhood to embrace tolerance of and appreciation for its Jewish minority.

Esther Goldberg is the creator and editor of three volumes of Holocaust Memoir Digest, *published by Vallentine Mitchell, which include Samuel Bak's memoir of Vilna,* Painted in Words *(www.holocaustmemoirdigest.org).*

* * *

A related but somewhat different story about the Jews of Lithuania is on page 18.

Peace partner?

The latest round of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians seems to have evoked neither excitement nor hope. The game plan, mired as it is in the baggage of past failures, leaves little room for movement toward the sort of accommodation that's needed to bring a lasting peace to the region. In the past, through the raft of discussions and consultations that have framed one process after another, rejectionism on the part of the Palestinian interlocutors has been a dominant factor in causing such initiatives to flounder. From the time of the 1991 Madrid Conference to the Camp David Summit in 2000, and up until his death in 2004, it was the histrionic and often devious Palestinian Authority president, Yasser Arafat, who was the quintessential spoiler.

Lawrence Herr in Hamilton

Mahmoud Abbas, Arafat's successor, has been touted as a "moderate" (whatever that means in the convoluted vernacular of Middle East politics), but his background and recent utterances point to a somewhat different persona. Here we have someone who was educated in Syria and Russia and whose doctoral thesis focused on what he described as the relationship between Nazism and Zionism and questioned the enormity of the Holocaust.

In his book, *Palestine Betrayed* (Yale University Press, 2010), historian Efraim Karsh sees unmistakable, and rather ominous, similarities between Arafat and Abbas. Both, he writes, are "warp and woof of the same fabric: dogmatic PLO veterans who have never eschewed their commitment to Israel's destruction and who have viewed the 'peace process' as the continuation by other means of their lifelong war."

And even as the format for the current talks were taking shape, we have seen in Abbas the behavioural traits that fail to engender confidence and that, by putting up deliberate roadblocks, will likely make any progress towards peace no more than an illusion. His rigid adherence to a Palestinian "right of return" to Israel, his failure to disavow Fatah's ongoing commitment to an "armed struggle" and his glorification, recently, of the deceased Mohammed Oudeh, mastermind of the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre, are cases in point, among many others.

But still more troubling are his repeated pronouncements that he would never recognize Israel as a Jewish state. In a conference call with Jewish leaders in late September, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in addressing Abbas' position, drew metaphorical reference to the Nike commercial "Just Do It."

"For the Palestinian leadership," he declared, "it's even simpler: 'Just Say it.'Say that you recognize Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people."

Abbas' credibility as a peace "partner" may ultimately depend on how he reacts to Netanyahu's challenge on this fundamental precept.

Israel's Jewish character is indelible

In the current round of negotiations, Israel is demanding that the Palestinians recognize it as a Jewish state. This is unnecessary and imprudent. Israel's Jewish nature is irrefutable, and broaching the topic only induces uncertainty about it.

Yair Lowistein in Jerusalem

I'm putting the final touches on this column the day after Yom Kippur. The unique way this most holy of Jewish days is observed in Israel is an apt articulation of how and why this is, in fact, a Jewish country.

To start with, our time is set by the Jewish calendar. On the Saturday night between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the clock moves back an hour, officially ushering in winter time. The change is designed to "shorten" the fast on Yom Kippur, ending it around 6 p.m., rather than 7.

Starting winter time when we're still in the throes of summer, with daily highs around 30 Celsius, is more than anomalous. Experts say it costs us tens of millions of shekels annually. This year, with the High Holidays being particularly early, a public debate preceded the time change. Tens of thousands signed an online petition demanding, to no avail, that it be delayed.

Now there's talk of possible future solutions. One idea is to change the clocks twice each autumn – once, for a week, around Yom Kippur, and then again, in October, together with the rest of the world. It's right out of the Wise Men of Chelm. What could be more Jewish?

With that issue behind us, it was time to prepare for the holy day. It began with a collective winding down. I live in one of the few areas in Jerusalem that's still predominately secular, but at 2 p.m., three hours before the holiday, a quiet descended as traffic dwindled and families returned home to rest and eat a meal together before the fast.

Statistics released before Rosh Hashanah by the Central Bureau of Statistics shed light on Israelis' level of Jewishness. Nearly two-thirds of Jewish Israelis fast on Yom Kippur, including a quarter of the 40-plus per cent who define themselves as secular.

Even more striking is the level of respect usually unruly Israelis have for this solemn day. As the sun sets on Erev Yom Kippur, traffic comes to a complete standstill. All TV and radio stations shut down, as do the airports. The only vehicles on the roads are police and ambulances. Coming out of synagogue after Kol Nidre, tens of thousands of pedestrians take over the streets, along with another of Israel's distinctive Yom Kippur phenomena – bicycles and skateboards. It's said that pre-Yom Kippur sales at bike stores are the highest of the year. Thousands of kids of all ages enjoy the car-less thoroughfares. Some argue the preponderance of peddlers lessens the sanctity of the day. I find they add to the extraordinary, varied ways in which Israelis observe it.

Yom Kippur is one of my favourite days of the year. I love the quiet and the opportunity for self-examination. I thoroughly enjoy the prayers, discussions, sermons and overflow crowds at my synagogue, Kol Haneshama, Jerusalem's largest Reform shul, which strives to maintain a liberal, pluralistic Jewish voice in this city. But on a more personal level, Yom Kippur is also the day I most miss Beth Tikvah Synagogue in Toronto. Sitting in shul in Jerusalem, I find myself humming the tunes sung so beautifully by Rabbi Avraham Feder and Srul Glick's choir.

After returning home, we have a family meal to break the fast and life floats back to normal. But not so fast. I turn on the TV to catch up on the day's events. After that, Channel 1 – Israel's PBS – broadcasts several documentaries – each telling exceptional stories of bravery, sacrifice and sadness of another Yom Kippur, only 37 years ago, when air-raid sirens disrupted midday prayers and Israel was on the verge of destruction.

That Yom Kippur is etched into Israel's common memory, another reason for continued, collective introspection. It's a different nexus with our Jewish roots.

Our leaders need not insist upon acknowledgement of Israel's Jewish fibre. Our adversaries around the world need no reminder.

Canadian journalists aid demonization campaign

On July 1, the *Globe and Mail* published a major story (1,100 words) by correspondent Patrick Martin on the Arab-Israeli political advocacy NGO group, Mada al-Carmel. After the Canadian government's International Development Research Centre ended its funding of the group, Mada al-Carmel initiated a lawsuit alleging that this decision was taken "under pressure from the Israeli government" and blamed NGO Monitor for triggering the de-funding. Before the review, Canada gave it more than $800,000, which was 40 per cent of Mada's budget, with the rest from European governments and the New Israel Fund.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

It wasn't a research article and had no detailed analysis or quotes from the numerous documents showing how governmental officials help political NGOs get large grants used to wage political warfare against Israel. These documents illustrate the major defects in the IRDC's approval process and selection of reviewers for political advocacy NGOs.

In contrast, Martin's article relied on quotes from selected individuals. It accepted Mada al-Carmel's self-presentation as a "social research centre" and repeated claims that the IRDC grants were for a study of "the marginalization of women in Arab-Israeli society."

The reality, however, is that Mada's main activity is to promote anti-Israeli propaganda. Martin could have quoted from Mada's "Haifa Declaration," which calls for a "change in the definition of the State of Israel from a Jewish state," and the implementation of a Palestinian "right of return," a euphemism for the end of Israel.

The declaration's authors also accuse Israel of "exploiting [the Holocaust] and its consequences in order to legitimize the right of the Jews to establish a state." They take pride in "the resistance to the military regime put up by our people" and refer to "massacres" committed by the "Zionist movement" and Israel's "policies… in excess of those of the apartheid regime in South Africa."

Instead, Martin's lengthy article centres on Mada's role in an inflammatory NGO campaign called "My Land, Space, Body and Sexuality: Palestinians in the Shadow of the Wall." This activity and accompanying posters had no connection to the "social research" that was the basis for IRDC funding.

Martin admits "that the poster depicts an Israeli soldier with his hand in front of a Palestinian woman's chest and the provocative caption: 'The occupation penetrates her life every day.'" Instead of publishing the image and allowing readers to judge for themselves, the *Globe and Mail* misleadingly told readers that the insinuation of Israeli sexual harassment was incorrect.

In addition to justifying IRDC funding and Mada's activities, Martin's article also includes a highly distorted presentation of the role and activities of NGO Monitor, which I head. Our standard letter of inquiry to the IRDC requesting clarification of the published information regarding Mada funding reportedly triggered the Canadian government's belated review and the subsequent funding cut-off. But in Mada's version, the process is far more sinister.

Regarding the activities of NGO Monitor, the use of documents would have presented a far more accurate picture, in comparison to the problematic quotes from individuals seeking to protect the NGO network. In addition to misrepresenting the Mada al-Carmel/IRDC case, the *Globe* article repeated the false claims regarding NGO Monitor's role in changes in the Rights and Democracy organization in Canada, as well as Ottawa's funding for KAIROS. (Under the cover of development assistance, this church group has a radical political agenda, including backing divestment campaigns targeting Israel.) In the conspiracy fantasy, these decisions are part of "all-out assault on legitimate human rights groups" being promoted by the Netanyahu government.

These distorted reports aren't limited to the *Globe and Mail*. On April 9, Radio-Canada's television magazine *Une heure sur terre* presented an outrageously distorted story, also without any documentation or research. The pattern is also reflected in articles in the *Toronto Star* and *Maclean's*.

The story of the IRDC's highly problematic funding process for radical NGOs such as Mada al-Carmel is still emerging, and, in addition to the court case, NGO Monitor will soon publish detailed documentation. The *Globe and Mail* and the rest will then have another opportunity to get the details right.

Mideast peace remains a fond dream

"We've been here before, and we know how difficult the road ahead will be."

These wise and prescient words were uttered by Hillary Clinton, the U.S. secretary of state, about a month ago, just as Israel and the Palestinian Authority resumed peace negotiations under American auspices after a 20-month hiatus.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Like her husband, Bill, the former president of the United States who tried but failed to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, Clinton was acutely aware that the path toward peace is a long and winding one, full of potholes that can upend even the most serious of peacemaking efforts.

Clinton and her boss, President Barack Obama, harboured hopes that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would either renew Israel's politically-charged 10-month partial moratorium on construction in West Bank settlements or, at a minimum, extend it by two to three months.

But on Sept 26, to the relief and jubilation of Jewish settlers and their vocal supporters in Netanyahu's coalition government, it expired, touching off a spate of building throughout the West Bank and calling into question whether talks can proceed, much less succeed.

Netanyahu's interlocutor, President Mahmoud Abbas, had insistently declared that negotiations would not continue, even for "a single day," if Israel refused to renew the partial settlement freeze, which was thrust upon Netanyahu by intense U.S. lobbying.

Fearing that the the Palestinians might pull out of the talks and thus render them still-born, Obama and Clinton urged Netanyahu to prolong the partial moratorium, which excluded eastern Jerusalem and public buildings in existing settlements. Their calls were echoed by the president of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, and the king of Jordan, Abdullah II, who participated in the ceremonial opening of the peace talks in Washington, D.C.

Beholden to coalition partners who opposed the moratorium in the first place and expressed deep reservations about a two-state solution as a basis for negotiations, Netanyahu decided that his political survival took precedence over the continuation of talks with the Palestinians.

Not even his confidant, Defence Minister Ehud Barak, the leader of the Labor party faction who had advocated an extension, could dissuade Netanyahu.

The logic of Barak's position, shared by Obama and Clinton, was clear. If the partial moratorium was extended by several months, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators might be able to define the borders of a Palestinian state and thereby defuse a major irritant that has defied resolution for decades – the maze of settlements erected by Israel beyond the old Green Line since the Six Day War. Once a border was drawn, the thinking went, Israel could build as it pleased without damaging repercussions.

This consideration, important as it is to Israel's future as a Jewish state and its bilateral relations with the Palestinians, the United States and the Arab world, was shunted aside as Netanyahu – a self-styled moderate who claimed he sought a "historic compromise" and intended to "confound the critics and the skeptics" – let the partial moratorium expire.

So now, at least for the present, the onus is on Abbas, who repeatedly warned that settlements and peace are incompatible, who strenuously argued that settlements are illegal under international law and prejudge the outcome of talks, and who continually threatened to walk out if the partial building ban ended.

In the immediate aftermath of Netanyahu's decision, Abbas came under unremitting pressure from the United States to stick with the talks. In a nod to Washington, he said that a renewal of settlement construction would not necessarily scuttle negotiations and that the breakdown of talks would not lead to a resurgence of violence. But last week, the Palestinian leadership, backed by Egypt and Jordan, suspended talks. The issue is to be further debated when the Arab League – which has pressed Abbas to adopt a hard line toward Israeli settlements – confers in Libya on Oct. 8.

Amid this crisis, the United States is desperately trying to salvage the talks, which are subject to a one-year deadline. The Obama administration has reportedly offered Israel an incentive package of security guarantees and assurances in exchange for a continuation of the moratorium, which Netanyahu had offered as a one-time gesture. Washington is pushing for a solution, eager to improve relations with the Muslim world, rally Arab public opinion against Iran's militarized nuclear program and anxious to stabilize Iraq and Afghanistan.

With U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton looking on, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu greets Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas at a meeting in Sharm al Sheikh, Egypt.
[Israel Sun photo]

The latest round of talks, which also took place in Sharm el Sheik and Jerusalem, got off to a promising start in rhetorical terms as Netanyahu described Abbas as his "partner in peace," as both sides proclaimed an interest in achieving a breakthrough through concessions and as chief U.S. intermediary, George Mitchell, claimed that Israel and the Palestinians were addressing "the tough issues."

Behind the rosy and uplifting spin, however, yawning and probably unbridgeable gaps loomed large, obstacles that may well scupper the chances for a pragmatic accommodation.

Netanyahu, who in 2009 finally accepted the notion of a two-state solution without spelling out its crucial geographic dimensions, entered the talks with three fundamental demands: Israel must control the Jordan Valley – the gateway to a Palestinian state on its eastern frontier – as well as settlement blocs near Jerusalem and Jewish neighbourhoods in eastern Jerusalem. The Palestinians must recognize Israel as a Jewish state and shelve all territorial claims and declare a definitive end to the century-old dispute with Israel.

The Palestinians' demands, which were equally rigorous, called for an Israeli withdrawal to the pre-1967 armistice lines – which represent only 22 percent of pre-1948 Palestine – and for equitable land swaps to compensate for Israel's intended annexation of certain parts of the West Bank. Drawing a line in the sand, the Palestinian prime minister, Salam Fayyad, said that he would not accept a truncated "Mickey Mouse" Palestinian state.

The Palestinian leadership also called for negotiations to start from the point they left off in December 2008, when the then Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, agreed to an Israeli withdrawal from about 93 percent of the West Bank and compensatory land swaps.

The Gaza Strip, which has been in Hamas' hands since a violent coup in the summer of 2007, was left out of the proposed deal.

In addition, the Palestinians insisted on a mutually agreeable resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem, which has festered through innumerable skirmishes, seven Arab-Israeli wars and two Palestinian uprisings.

As the talks got under way in September, the media reported that few of Israel's and the Palestinians' respective demands were acceptable, leaving little or no room for compromise.

Israel's foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman, a settler himself, muddied the waters. He ruled out the prospect of peace in this generation and proposed an interim agreement instead. Iran, as usual, vilified a rapprochement as a sellout to vital Palestinian interests.

Hamas' refusal to recognize Israel and renounce terrorism, combined with Israel's rejection of a long-term truce with Hamas and the absence of a united Palestinian front, deepens the impasse and makes the possibility of a viable peace agreement virtually impossible.

Hamas, having bitterly denounced the very concept of peace talks, attempted to sabotage them by launching three attacks in the West Bank that claimed the lives of four Jewish settlers. In another unmistakable signal of defiance, Hamas permitted like-minded radical groups to fire Qassam rockets at Israel from bases in Gaza. In response, Israel beefed up its forces in the West Bank, killed a Hamas commander there and bombed smuggling tunnels in Gaza.

Given the confluence of these events, peace, remains little more than a fond dream.

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Municipal Vote 2010

Vaughan Ward 5 candidates target taxes, transit

Bernard Green

Vernon Hendrickson

Gila Martow

Stellios Missirlis

Yehuda Shahaf

Alan Shefman

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF and RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporters

This week's municipal election coverage focuses on Ward 5 in the City of Vaughan.

According to the City of Vaughan website, the "City Above Toronto" has a population of nearly 280,000 and is home to some 24,000 Jews, many of whom live in Ward 5. Unofficial estimates peg the Jewish population of the ward somewhere between 50 and 70 per cent.

The ward is bounded to the north by Hwy. 7, to the east by Yonge Street, to the south by Steeles Avenue and to the west by sections of the Canadian National Railway and Dufferin Street.

There are six candidates vying to represent the ward on council: Bernard Green, an accountant; Vernon Hendrickson, an insurance broker; Gila Martow, an optometrist; Stellios Missirlis, a consultant; Yehuda Shahaf, a businessman; and Alan Shefman, the incumbent.

The CJN asked each candidate the following question: **What are your priorities for the ward if you are elected?**

* * *

Bernard Green: Vaughan voters are very concerned about waste at City Hall and tax increases. Taxes have gone up 30 per cent in the last seven years. I don't think that's reasonable. There are ways to start reducing these increases. We can do better.

We also need to stop the infighting on council and raise the image of Vaughan.

I also want to hold a conference on traffic congestion and bring in consultants to share their knowledge. A great solution would be to extend the Yonge subway line north of Steeles. But this is costly and something that's not being pushed hard right now, but it should be.

I want to see recycling programs continue and expand in the ward, as I'm fully in support of environmental initiatives. As for Jewish community concerns, I want to find compromises and solutions to the community's problems, but in a low-key way. We can often deal with these issues behind the scenes instead of having them blown up in public.

Vernon Hendrickson: My platform is about fixing traffic congestion... commercial and residential development improvement, congestion issues affecting the environment and waste management issues.

We're talking about getting a subway up. It's not going to happen tomorrow. Meanwhile, you have to do something about traffic congestion. Some people say open up an extra lane, widen the street.

You want to tell me you can't locate a nice area in the ward where quite a few cars could park? Then you have one bus lane, straight down to the Finch subway. You have four or five buses running regularly from the parking lot. You don't have to build an extra lane, one could be designated to the buses.

Gila Martow: I would say that the top concern of the residents right now is the traffic and how the traffic is going to be affected by high-density development. Thornhill has been... under discussion to have the subway expand north on Yonge Street. Finally, a year ago, we were told it's approved. Now they're not moving forward. Instead, they've decided to bring the subway to Vaughan off Jane Street. In the meantime, there's highrise development focused on Steeles Avenue and Bathurst Street near Promenade Mall. I'm questioning why there's highrise development in the east while the subway expansion is to the west.

There's very little openness on city council and money is spent on projects that make little sense to the residents.

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THE YORK SCHOOL

Municipal Vote 2010

City of Vaughan home to some 24,000 Jews

Continued from page 12

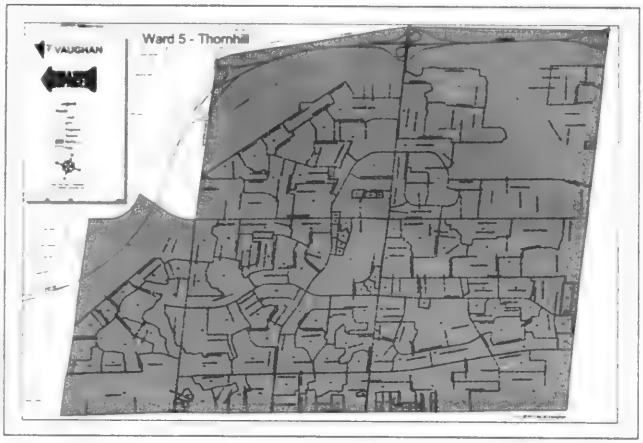
We have a lot of potential in our ward with the Thornhill Historic Village near Yonge and Centre streets. We have some beautiful heritage buildings there.

It would be very nice if we made a bit of an effort to put up street lamps to reflect the area better. It can be done with benches, outdoor coffee or gourmet ice cream places. People would love to walk there.

Stellios Missirlis: My priorities are to lower taxes or make sure the taxes do not get really high and transparency in the city politics. Every time there's a tax increase. You have to make sure you get some sort of different ways of funding the expenses and make sure the head count in city hall remains properly adjusted, meaning no more hires, when you can justify that. It's on a case-by-case basis. You have to control the expenditures and ensure there's transparency in the contracts.

The best way to encourage business growth is to give incentives. Lower the taxes and provide a climate that they can get things done quickly without too many bureaucratic hassles

Constituents have to make sure they contact me in any possible way and raise their concerns. Also, we should have some sort of communication on an ongoing basis. It could be a mailing list and a website.



Yehuda Shahaf: My main idea is to label a stretch of Bathurst Street as Little Israel, to turn the ward into something resembling areas such as Little Italy, Little Portugal or Chinatown. This is an idea to target Jews and Israelis in the ward to help them build the area and be involved.

Our ward is going to change. It's becoming more urban. We have to develop it with many small businesses and offices for professionals, to bring money to our area instead of it leaving the area.

We need to improve quality of life in the area. For example, there are a lot of condos being built, and we have to make a bylaw to enforce builders to dedicate half the main floors for public and commercial usage. Also, I want to force builders to make pick-up and drop-off areas in the back of buildings instead of the front of buildings.

There are almost 500,000 people waiting in Thornhill and Richmond Hill for the Yonge subway extension. But the planned subway extension from York University to Vaughan Mills won't help our traffic. We need to take the York subway line budget and transfer it for the Yonge subway extension.

Alan Shefman: I want to continue to provide the most timely and efficient response to residents in the community.

People talk about services and lowering taxes. But there are complexities to managing a large city. It's a balance. We need to keep taxes low, but maintain and enhance services.

I will continue to help expand our libraries and build more community centres.

My priority is to improve rapid transit in our community, with my major project as the Yonge subway extension. We're putting pressure on the federal and provincial governments to lobby for this... and working on alternative funding approaches.

Over the last six years, I've seen a remarkable response from the city on Jewish community issues. I don't think anyone plans anything in Vaughan without first contacting my office to make sure we don't make plans on Jewish holidays. In Ward 5, it's likely 60 to 70 per cent of the population is Jewish. I want to solve problems and help the community go forward as well as continue working with York Regional Police to help them understand the Jewish community's security issues.

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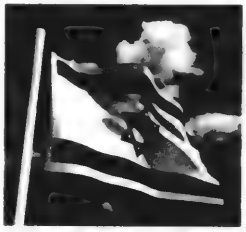

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Shaarei Tefillah rabbi marks 30 years at shul's pulpit

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Moshe Stern, spiritual leader of Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, says that some people in the community consider him a zealot or a fanatic for his views on Israel.

But, he said, "if zealotry, or even fanaticism, means caring profoundly about the future of Israel and its security, and the need to maintain the boundaries of the Land of Israel as dictated in the Torah… that, I will never apologize for. Never."

The 67-year-old rabbi, who is as down-to-earth and affable in manner as he is passionate about his beliefs, is being honoured with his wife, Sarah, at a gala dinner at the synagogue on Oct. 28. The event marks 30 years since he began leading the congregation, which has about 400 member families.

In an interview at Shaarei Tefillah in the small study overflowing with books, Judaica and memorabilia that Rabbi Stern calls his cubbyhole, he reflected on Judaism, Israel and life.

But first and foremost, he wanted to talk about his wife, who he noted is "very involved in the chesed aspect of the synagogue.

"She is very much part of what I do," he said of Sarah, who taught at Bais Yaakov High School. "I always remind the people here they got two for the price of one."

The Sterns "grew up together," the rabbi said, referring to the early years of their marriage, which began when she was 19 and he was 22. Last year, they became great-grandparents when their great-grandson Yair was born in London, England.

The rabbi received his smichah (rabbinic ordination) at his wedding ceremony from the late Rabbi Isaac Schwei and Rabbi Pinchas Hirschprung of Montreal's Rabbinical College of Canada, Lubavitcher Yeshiva.

A native of Montreal whose paternal grandfather was a rabbi and whose father was a pedlar, Rabbi Stern attended the yeshiva, then an outreach institution, as a child. He is also an alumnus of Baron Byng High School on St. Urbain Street and went on to study at Sir George Williams University, the University of Georgia and the University of Alabama. He has degrees in political science and philosophy.

Rabbi Moshe Stern

"I studied constantly," Rabbi Stern recalls. "I wanted to get out into the world."

In 1965, he began his career with a three-year stint as an assistant rabbi in Savannah, Ga., before taking on his first pulpit in Mountain Brook, Ala., a suburb of Birmingham.

"My intention, in all honesty, was to be there for a short period of time," he said. "The short stay turned into 12 years."

When the Sterns' oldest daughter reached bat mitzvah age, they realized they needed to be in "a more mature" Jewish community with a Jewish high school.

The rabbi says his approach to congregants hasn't changed over the years. "My outlook in the rabbinate is teaching and hopefully inspiring people to become more knowledgeable Jews… and to show them that one can live an Orthodox, traditional, observant lifestyle in this modern technological world."

He said he is proud that Shaarei Tefillah is "an inclusive kind of family synagogue" that welcomes everyone, regardless of their level of observance.

A remark he made in this paper in an Aug. 12 article might indicate otherwise, and the rabbi raised the issue himself during the interview.

Commenting on a statement of principles calling for the acceptance of gays in the Orthodox community, Rabbi Stern told *The CJN* at the time that although he didn't sign the document, he welcomes everyone into his shul. "I accept homosexuals into my shul like I accept any sinners," he said.

In retrospect, he reflected, "maybe I might have said it a little differently." However, he said he doesn't regret "the general concept" of his words.

"[Acting on homosexual feelings] is a sin. The non-observance of Shabbat is a sin. The non-observance of kashrut is a sin… The basic point is that [homosexuality] should not prohibit anyone from coming to a shul."

Speaking in more general terms about his shul, he said the congregants are "kind and generous and giving and respectful."

Among the changes he has seen over the course of his rabbinate, he said that synagogues have become "primary as a place of education" and "secondary as a place of prayer."

"It has always been a place to pray, but… it has now become the function of the synagogue to educate a younger generation of Jews who have not been exposed to the kind of Jewish education that they should have been as children. We are, in a sense, filling a void."

Shaarei Tefillah offers classes virtually every night, he added. This was not the norm when he started out.

Rabbi Stern takes particular pride in the shul's Israel-related programs. "The very least we can do is to speak up and defend, – every way we know how – the cause of Israel."

For the rabbi, that has meant, among other things, participating in demonstrations and spending a night in jail in 1981 with the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, founder of the Jewish Defence League (JDL), when Rabbi Kahane was arrested after speaking at Shaarei Tefillah.

"I didn't necessarily agree with everything he said, but I was enamoured by his personal self-sacrifice for Israel."

Rabbi Stern, who has marched with the JDL but is not officially affiliated with the group, said he "would never advocate anything beyond peaceful demonstrating." But, he said, he is fully supportive of Israel using military power when necessary.

A past president of the Va'ad Harabonim of Greater Toronto, Rabbi Stern is a member of the board of governors of B'nai Brith Canada, and is also involved with Canadian Magen David Adom.

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New principal followed Penna's progress from afar

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

As a Jewish educator in the United States, Rhonda Rosenheck had been following the progress of Toronto's Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School for years, never imagining that she would end up running it.

"I thought it was interesting to watch the school grow up," said Rosenheck, who moved here from New Jersey at the end of the summer to become its principal.

Rhonda Rosenheck

She succeeds Janet Nish-Lapidus, who is retiring. Nish-Lapidus remained at the school until Sept. 29 to ease the transition, because Rosenheck had committed to working for the summer at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center in Connecticut, running its internship program.

"I think a compelling factor in my interest in the school was the real celebration of diversity in its population and potential population," Rosenheck said.

The Penna school – subject of a 2008 book by Alex Pomson and Randal Schnoor, *Jewish Day School in the Lives of Adult Jews* – is unique for its non-traditional location away from the suburbs, and for its diverse student body. With almost 160 students from senior kindergarten to Grade 8, its community includes same-sex and intermarried parents, single-parent families, and children with a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds.

One of the reasons the 12-year-old school's celebration of diversity, not just tolerance, resonated for Rosenheck is her own background, she said.

A self-described "mutt, Jewishly," Rosenheck said her mother's family was Orthodox, and her father, a photographer, was "a New York labour union, anti-religion Zionist." Her family attended a Conservative congregation, and her mother, a social worker, taught Hebrew school in a Reform congregation while Rosenheck was growing up on Long Island.

As well, she added, her maternal grandfather was from Salonika and had a minimal Jewish background, while her grandmother was Orthodox.

"You have to learn how to bridge that difference and still be cohesive," she said.

A budding entrepreneur in the early 1980s, Rosenheck – who studied English literature and took a few business courses as an undergraduate at Binghamton University– stumbled into Jewish education unexpectedly when she was teaching Hebrew school to earn some extra money.

"To my shock and horror, my enthusiasm for business diminished in direct proportion to the amount of time I had to spend on teaching."

Rosenheck, 48, who has been involved in Jewish education since 1983, also has a master's degree in Jewish education from the Jewish Theological Seminary and has participated in educational programs through Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Mandel Teacher Education Institute in Ohio and the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem.

But she says she has remained entrepreneurial in the educational field. Prior to her most recent position as education director for a company creating online Jewish educational programming, Rosenheck co-founded the Schechter Regional High School in New Jersey, was principal of the Ivry Prozdor High School in New York, and served as consulting head of school for a Long Island day school that was about to close.

"A community at a point where there's growth and change is exciting for me," she said.

But Rosenheck also takes pleasure in the smaller things, such as her interactions with children seeking approval for a project or even a brief respite in her office.

As well, to her delight, students at Penna call her by her first name. "I've always wanted to just be called 'Rhonda,'" she said. "I've never found it to impede the level of respect that I got."

Rosenheck's main goal now is to implement the board's decision to "grow the school," which has acquired more space in the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, where it is housed. This winter, the space will be renovated and turned into classrooms, Rosenheck said.

As well, she added, part of the plan is to strengthen Penna's nascent middle school as "a compelling component" of the school.

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The Jews of Lithuania

By D'ARCY MCGEE
Special to The CJN

Paneriai! The very name of this small Lithuanian town, 10 kilometres outside Vilnius – the capital – conjures up horrifying visions. For it was in an otherwise beautiful pine forest outside the town that Nazi occupiers of Lithuania brutally murdered and buried the bodies of some 100,000 people including 70,000 Jews, in seven large pits and three trenches in what the Lithuanian poet S. Bistrickas describes as a "kingdom of death."

There was a pervasive silence as my Lithuanian friend and I walked in a cool rain along the pathway linking the pits and memorials. We thought about the men, women and children. They stood here in line – waiting – for their turn to be killed by a bullet in the back of the head, for their bodies to be piled up in the pits, deep fuel storage tanks built by Red Army soldiers. Later, as German forces began to retreat from the Soviet Union in 1943, the Nazis attempted to hide their crimes by exhuming the bodies, burning the remains, pulverizing the bones, mixing the ashes with sand, and pouring them back in the pits.

"I feel very upset," my friend whispered. "I can feel their souls around me. I couldn't help them." All we could see were circles of wet green grass marking the sites of the pits. All we could hear was the gentle wind blowing through the pines and the sound of rain drops.

Nearby was a small group of mourners from Poland grieving at the memorial constructed to honour soldiers of the Armija Krajowa, and other Polish victims also murdered and buried here.

The Synagogue in Kaunas

The bullets and flames of Paneriai erased nearly six centuries of rich Jewish culture, which had flourished in Lithuania since Grand Duke Vytautas introduced the Charter of Privileges, granting Jews the same rights and privileges as other free people of the Grand Duchy. With the murder of over 90 per cent of its Jewish population, Vilnius seemed to have lost its title of "the Jerusalem of Lithuania," a vibrant centre of Orthodox Jewish learning and culture.

The return of the Red Army, thrusting the country back into the embrace of the Soviet Union, was hardly reassuring to surviving Lithuanian Jews, or to most other Lithuanians. It was during the Soviet period that the Great Synagogue was destroyed, graves desecrated and all religious activities banned.

As devastating as the Nazi occupation and Soviet rule had been for Lithuanian Jews, known as Litvaks, independence of Lithuania in 1991 and its entry into the European Union, represented important developments for the community. "Since independence, there have been big positive changes," Faina Kukliansky, vice-chair of the Jewish community of Lithuania told me. "Overall, official policies of the government have been very supportive."

Challenges remain. Issues related to the restitution of Jewish communal and private property continue unresolved. The Jewish community's recovery from its brutal near annihilation is still fragile. But signs of revitalization are tangible.

At the heart of this recovery is the Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum, named for the great Jewish scholar, Elijah ben Solomon Zalman (1720-1797), known as the Genius of Vilnius (Vilna Gaon). The institution – largely financed by Lithuania's Ministry of Culture – comprises five separate entities: the Paneriai Memorial Site; The Holocaust Exhibition (Green House), which was reopened on September 10; the Historical Exhibitions and Administration; the Tolerance Centre; and the Lipschutz Memorial Museum in Druskininkai, which is currently closed for renovations until 2012.

Deputy director, Dr. Kamile Rupeikaite, told me that the museum's Tolerance Centre "must reach out to the broader Lithuanian community. We know that anti-Semitism is alive here. We need to counter this with programs that attract support outside the Jewish community in Lithuania."

The centre's outreach programs are positive endeavours to introduce works of history, art and music, not just because they are Jewish, but because they offer significant historical and artistic merit and interest.

Rupeikaite pointed out the centre's cultural hall has hosted major musical events, including a Klezmer band from Chicago, an exhibition of some works of American artist Man Ray, and a concert by the chief cantor of Vienna. "We have to offer quality," she stated.

The Tolerance Centre's museum is a must-see for any visitor to Vilnius. We attended the official opening of a new exhibit of the works of Litvak artist Lasar Segall, on loan from the Museum of Jewish Art and History in Paris. The Tolerance Centre museum offers a rich array of Jewish art, cultural and liturgical objects, including important fragments and objects from the Great Synagogue, which was damaged during World War II.

Rather than restore the venerable edifice, Soviet authorities demolished it, along with the prayer house of the Vilna Gaon, the Strashun Library and other historic buildings of the Jewish Quarter between 1950 and 1957.

Still, many buildings and streets of the former Jewish Quarter remain in Vilnius' vibrant Old Town, a UNESCO Heritage site. The Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum has published a wonderful small book, *Vilnius: 100 Sites of Jewish History and Culture*, which is an informative and interesting guide for visitors to the city. Copies can be obtained at the Tolerance Centre on Naugarduko Street, or at the Vilnius Jewish Culture and Information Center on Mesiniu Street.

Continued on page 19

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The monument at Paneriai
[Photos by D'Arcy McGee]

Continued from page 18

Among the many surviving buildings is the Choral Synagogue at Pymlio Street 39, built in 1903, and now the only functioning synagogue in Vilnius. It was in the synagogue that we enjoyed a marvellous evening concert of Jewish liturgical and folk music, sung by great international singers

The Soviet regime destroyed the original Jewish cemetery, dating from the 15th century and located on the right bank of the Neris River. The remains of the Vilna Gaon were transferred to the current cemetery in Sheshkine Suderves kelias Street. There a mausoleum housing the Gaon's remains stands as a memorial to the spiritual and intellectual leader of the Litvaks

Following independence, the government of Lithuania unveiled a plaque on the house at 3 Zhydu Street in Old Town, adjacent to the site of the Gaon's home. Nearby, the government also commissioned a sculpture, entitled Jewish Sage, which marks the site of his home, near the Great Synagogue.

The Soviets also destroyed the second Jewish cemetery in Uzhupis between 1961 and 1963, using the gravestones for construction projects. The Jewish community of Lithuania commissioned a very moving memorial at the site, financed by the U.S. Commission for the preservation of America's Heritage Abroad with funds donated by American Litvaks and the city of Vilnius. The monument, using gravestones which the Soviets had used to construct a pedestrian stairway, was unveiled in 2004.

The Jewish heritage in Lithuania is by no means confined to the city of Vilnius. Scattered in small towns and villages are at least a dozen small wooden synagogues. Most are in very bad condition, like the one that we visited in the town of Zhiezhmariai, east of Kaunas, Lithuania's second largest city and capital during the interwar years. (Perhaps there is a project here for the Canadian Jewish/Litvak community.)

Kaunas was a delightful surprise – an interesting, beautiful and culturally rich city, definitely underrated as a tourist destination, even within Lithuania. Unfortunately, our time in the city was limited, and we were unable to visit the once vibrant Jewish ghetto or the infamous Ninth Fort Museum, a prison used by the Soviets as a holding station for thousands of Lithuanian prisoners awaiting transportation to the Siberian Gulag, and during the Nazi occupation as a place of execution for some 5,000 Jews and others. And the Kaunas Choral Synagogue was closed when we went to see its striking black and gold interior and its memorial to the 1,600 Jewish children executed at the Ninth Fort.

Our visit to the Sugihara Centre was a highlight of our visit to Kaunas. It was here in the summer of 1940 in the office of the Japanese Consulate, that Consul General Chiune Sugihara saved the lives of some 6,000 Jews by issuing transit visas for passage to Japan and rail transportation across the Soviet Union. During a one-month period, Sugihara worked 18 hours a day, overcoming impediments thrown up by Nazi spies and by the Soviet authorities who, in June, had moved in to occupy Lithuania and ordered the closure of all foreign missions in the country. He also had to deal with indifference and opposition within the Japanese government. However, he received major support from the Netherlands Consul, Jan Zwartendijk, who issued visas indicating the Netherlands territory of Curacao as the final destination of the refugees, an essential step to validate the temporary transit visas to Japan. However, none of the refugees ended up in Curacao.

After the war, Sugihara retired from the Japanese diplomatic service. A humble man, neither he nor his wife Yukiko spoke publicly of the events of 1940 in Kaunas. It was not until some survivors located the "Japanese Schindler" that the world began to hear of his remarkable achievements. In 1985, a year before his death, the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Institute in Jerusalem recognized Sugihara by granting him its "Righteous Among the Nations" honour. It granted the same honour posthumously to Zwartendijk in 1997.

In 1999, the Sugihara Foundation, a private foundation, opened the museum in the former Consulate at 30 Vaizhganto Street, which the Soviets had previously converted into an apartment building. The diplomat's widow visited in 2001 and planted four cherry trees in front of the building. While we were visiting, a busload of Japanese tourists arrived. The manager, Ramunas Janulaitis, told me that over 90 per cent of the centre's visitors are from Japan.

I return from Lithuania with many emotions – wonderful memories of its people, its rich history and culture, beautiful Baltic coast dunes and beaches, and vibrant cities. But there are also memories of the horrors inflicted on the country, especially its Jewish community, by the double tragedies of the Holocaust and Soviet occupation.

Much has changed. Vilnius may no longer be the Jerusalem of Lithuania. But Lithuania has been free and independent for 20 years. In 2004 it became a member state of the European Union. Problems persist both for Lithuania and its Jewish community. But both are moving forward – interdependently, and as part of a broader European fabric.

D'Arcy McGee is a freelance journalist based in Guelph, Ont.

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Giving something back

By RABBI MORDECAI ZEITZ

Rabbinic Reflections

After the excitement of Creation there is trouble, not only in Paradise but even outside – "*Vatimaleh ha'aretz chamas*" (and the earth was filled with treachery and robbery). God suffered in silence for 10 generations and then Noah was chosen to be the bridge between the old and the new. He and his family, together with pairs of other species, would be the forerunners of a renewed creation.

It's hard to imagine that the entire civilization was corrupt. Is it possible that everyone was a robber or a highwayman? The punishment of the flood was a result of *chamas*, robbery, but what was was stolen that brought down an entire civilization?

Well, maybe there is a form of robbery that does affect and infect a total societal mindset, a form of *chamas* that affects all humankind, thus destroying the very worthiness of life.

While this idea is hard to conceive, just consider what a robber does? He/she takes. They take what they feel is coming to them. There is no respect of property. The rationalization: it's out there, so why shouldn't I have some of it?

We would all agree this is criminal. But it applies to not only material things that don't belong to us, but also to a wide range of ongoing experiences in life that we assume are coming to us. *Chamas* is the act of *taking* rather than *giving*, of expecting things and assuming that this is the way it's supposed to be.

Do we automatically take the blessings of daily life without giving or offering something in return, whether it be just a thank you or a blessing? Are the good things in life coming to me because I assume that's the way it ought to be? Simple things like getting up in the morning, the blessings of good health and welfare, food on the table and a roof over my head, a family to enjoy, self-respect and esteem, a solution to a problem or some naches from something. These are actually gifts to be cherished.

The crime is not in the taking but in our failure to give something back in return. Sharing our good fortune; helping someone; being grateful to those who surround us; recognizing the role of community in our well-being and giving something back; taking time to honour, through prayer and celebration, our ultimate Provider.

And so Noah and his family were placed in the ark. True, they got salvation from the flood, but there was a basic lesson to be learned: the challenge, the creation of a renewed world without *chamas*. To create a society wherein, if you are fortunate enough to receive, then you know full well that you should give something back in return.

The famous biblical ark is not just a rescue vehicle, but is, in fact, a mini-schoolhouse. On board, the "survivors" had to feed and care for all the animals. Just as in real life there is no free ride, the takers became givers, the foundation of the new tomorrow.

The continuing lesson of Noah is that the world will continue to thrive only if I learn to balance my taking and receiving with my giving and sharing. *Chamas*, then and now, is a reflection of a world of takers. It is a just and lasting society that transforms takers into givers, and as we give, so shall we receive in return. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Mordecai Zeitz is the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Tikvah in Montreal.

The burning of books

Bookmarks
Bernard Baskin

There is nothing new about the censorship and burning of books. Rev. Terry Jones, the Florida minister who drew international attention recently with his threatened burning of the Qur'an, has a lot of company.

Consider the Qur'an. Muslims believe that it was revealed by God to the Prophet Muhammad, transmitted over time by the Angel Gabriel, beginning in 610 CE until the Prophet's death in 632 CE.

The Qu'ran preaches the oneness of God. He is the creator of Heaven and Earth, of life and death. It also emphasizes God's divine mercy and compassion. As his omnipotence is tempered with justice, he is forgiving to the sinner who repents.

This hallowed book provides the basic rules of conduct fundamental to the Muslim way of life. This religion took on the title of Islam because Allah decreed in the Qur'an, "Lo the religion with Allah is al-Islam [the surrender] to his will and guidance."

When the Arabic text of the Qu'ran was first published in Europe in 1530, Pope Clement VII ordered it burned. Latin translations of the Qu'ran were prohibited by the Spanish Inquisition, a ban that remained in effect until 1790.

The Talmud is a multi-volume collection of teachings, laws and debates that were set down by Jewish sages in Palestine and Iraq over a period of 700 years, ending in 500 CE. Its importance to Judaism is second only to the Torah.

In 1244, Pope Innocent IV ordered Louis IX of France to burn all copies of the Talmud. This order was repeated in 1248, when 20 wagon loads of books were burned in Paris, and again in 1254.

In 1490 in Spain, the Grand Inquisitor Torquemada burned scores of Hebrew books by order of Ferdinand and Isabella; he later conducted at Salmanca an *auto-da-fé*, or burning, of more than 6,000 volumes. Active suppression of the Talmud by the Catholic Church lasted through the 18th century.

Soon after Moses Maimonides' death in 1204, his *Guide of the Perplexed* sparked furious controversy. Orthodox Jewish opponents objected to Maimonides' sympathy for Aristotelian thought, which was considered fundamentally incompatible with Hebrew tradition. They stressed the impossibility of being both a believer and a philosopher, contending that religion proscribed theoretical inquiry.

In 1232, in Montpellier, France, the learned talmudist Solomon ben Abraham led an attack on *The Guide of the Perplexed* and obtained the support of the rabbis of France and some of the important scholars of Spain. The work was banned from Jewish homes under penalty of excommunication.

In 1233, Dominican friars burned *The Guide* at the request of Jewish leaders. Three hundred years later, *The Guide* was again condemned by the influential yeshiva of Lublin, Poland. The work still faced bans as late as the 19th century.

In 1933, in the first of the infamous Nazi bonfires, students from the University of Berlin gathered 25,000 volumes by Jewish and other denounced authors that were consigned to the flames. Similar demonstrations took place in other German universities.

As a fitting conclusion to this essay, I offer a number of brief quotations. Thomas Jefferson wrote, "If the book be false in its facts, disprove them; if false in its reasoning, debate it. But for God's sake, let's hear freely from all sides."

The German poet Heinrich Heine believed that "wherever they burn books, they will also, in the end, burn human beings."

The writer Rebecca West asserted, "God forbid that any book should be banned. The practice is as indefensible as infanticide."

Jewish Life

Does God really matter?

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

Does God exist in any way as a moral ground for the non-believer? Is God like a distant volcano that they have heard about – imposing, inaccessible, somewhat brooding but capable of eruption? Or is God just a complete epistemological blank, like a leprechaun but not as charming? Or is God simply just a word, three random letters in English, four in French and German, of several lengths in Hebrew? Does the injection of some kind of a divinely based morality into a contemporary ethical conversation have any standing, or is it, ironically, reduced by cultural relativism to just another opinion in the spectrum.

JEWISH EDUCATION The Next Generation

In the opening to *A Brief History of Time*, Prof. Steven Hawking relates an anecdote about a lecture on astronomy given by a well-known scientist who described how "the Earth orbits around the sun and how the sun, in turn, orbits around the centre of a vast collection of stars called our galaxy. At the end of the lecture, a little old lady at the back of the room got up and said: 'What you have told us is rubbish. The world is really a flat plate supported on the back of a giant tortoise.'

"The scientist gave a superior smile before replying, 'What is the tortoise standing on?'

"'You're very clever, young man, very clever,' said the old lady. 'But it's turtles all the way down.'"

For many students today, God is the turtle theory as presented by a little old lady – quaint, charming, a tad loony, a relic of pre-scientific knowledge. Not that they would assert outright atheism or anything as strident as that. Indeed, many would profess to believing in God without that belief having much, if any, consequence in their lives in any practical way. No need to attack God when the divine can simply be absorbed, meekly assigned one of the stalls near the end of the row of the relativist flea market.

I have never been offended when people talk about religion as a matter of faith. There are Bible codes out there and "proofs of God seminars," paradoxically using the language and methodology and mindset of science to try and bolster faith. But once you do that, you're just playing on someone else's turf. Whenever I hear these endless debates over the supposed glories or horrors of religion, I always wonder why the next step after the assertion that religion lacks a solid empirical basis is that faith is mindless. I must have missed something in this segue.

One of the most famous questions ever posed about morality comes from Plato in his dialogue *Euthyphro*, in which Socrates asks the title character, "Is it good [pious] because the gods love it, or do the gods love it because it is good [pious]?"

Why are things good or bad, right or wrong? And how do we know?

The Platonic question, which is of great importance to me, doesn't resonate as a major issue for those I teach. As a student once told me, "Does it really matter? In the end, people just do what feels right to them, and they don't stop to think about whether their ethics are consistent, or whether God approves, unless they are, you know, religious."

You and your bashert

On Shabbat over the next couple of months, we will read from the book of Bereshit and hear in detail about the genesis of the Jewish people. It's hard to imagine what the world would have been like if Abram hadn't met Sarai and Isaac hadn't married Rebekah.

Jewish & Digital
By Mark Mietkiewicz

The story of our matriarchs and patriarchs meetings their basherts is well-known. But what about the rest of us? Translated as "fated," bashert is often used to mean the predestined soulmate. Today, a look at this intriguing concept.

According to tradition, 40 days before a child is conceived, God has already decided one's bashert, "literally, a match made in heaven." But just because a match is made in heaven "doesn't mean that your marriage will be trouble-free. Marriage, like everything worthwhile in life, requires dedication, effort and energy." **[http://bit.ly/bashert1]**

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin says there's no excuse for just waiting for things to happen. He quotes the statement in the Talmud that bringing two people together in marriage is as difficult as the splitting of the Red Sea (Sanhedrin 22a). "Comparing marriage to the splitting of the Red Sea is how the sages address the doubts and fears all couples face. The comparison tells the questioning, and even fearful, loving friends at the brink of a critical decision that they have to take the plunge, make the first move, be willing to work hard and to constantly move forward. Neither he nor she may sit back and wait for 'bashert.'" **[http://bit.ly/bashert7]**

Rabbi Micah Kelber has problems with the concept. Preoccupation over whether you are with your intended "can usher in regret or even panic – encouraging you to ignore the failings of a relationship or to celebrate, disproportionately, the present stage of your love… Meanwhile, if you're not currently in a romantic relationship, the concept of bashert also puts unnecessary pressure on you to find 'the one.'" **[http://bit.ly/bashert3]**

One of Emuna Braverman's students asked her, "How will I know he's my bashert, my soulmate?"

"It doesn't matter," she replied. "Make a commitment to him, put in all the hard work and effort necessary and he'll become your bashert." **[http://bit.ly/bashert4]**

Martin Bodek uses a different approach: arithmetic! In "How to Find Your Bashert," Bodek makes some interesting calculations to prove how there are billions of people in the world who are wrong for you. But don't despair, Mr. or Ms. Right is out there… if Bodek's math is right. **[http://bit.ly/bashert5]**

Tamar Caspi was once sure she had met her bashert. And then he moved away to university in another state. Ten years later, Caspi believes that she finally has found her "bashert, but not because some cosmic force propelled us toward each other. Rather, it was because of a mixture of a number of components, including timing, maturation and the willingness to compromise.

"Man, am I glad I waited and didn't settle! Too many people reach their breaking point and are just so sick of dating that they pick the best of the 'just okay,' and figure that may be as good as it gets – and maybe it is for them – instead of getting what they need from the relationship, and then moving on. It may sound daunting, and I'm sure many singletons probably feel like they're looking down a tunnel and not seeing the light at the end, but it will happen, it (almost) always does." **[http://bit.ly/bashert6]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Conversion to Christianity was a 'mistake'

Continued from page 6

The door of a Bene Ephraim home decorated with Jewish symbols.

As the Bene Ephraim's spokesman, Sadok Yacobi explained it to them, their community's conversion to Christianity was "a mistake" prompted by social pressures and by famine, as Christians were giving out food at the time, Rabbi Gerald said.

While they had maintained several Jewish practices over those years, including resting on Sabbath and eating kosher food, in the 1970s they reclaimed their Jewish heritage. The Bene Ephraim had been among the Madiga sub-caste of the Untouchables, the lowest rung on the highly stratified Hindu culture, he said.

Historically they worked with leather, which made them impure by Hindu standards, "so, many say that they wanted out of the Hindu caste system that put them at the bottom."

Asked whether they might be motivated to assume a Jewish identity in the hopes of immigrating to Israel, Rabbi Gerald said, "No one saw going to Israel as a realistic possibility. They're very poor agricultural labourers, and the kind of life in modern Israel is very far from them. I did not hear a big desire to go to Israel."

Some Jewish organizations have taken their story to heart and are trying to improve their conditions. Rabbi Marvin Tokayer of Great Neck, N.Y., who served as rabbi in Tokyo for a time and became an expert on Asian Jews, has raised funds to allow the Bene Ephraim to purchase a couple of water buffalo, whose milk is sold to supplement their incomes. A Jewish group in California provided funds to allow the purchase of chickens, while Kulanu contributed $500, which the Sussmans supplemented with their own funds, to provide one family with three bicycles, a sewing machine and a candle-making machine, Gerald said.

After spending time with them, Rabbi Gerald's impression is quite positive: "I like them. There's something about them that's appealing. They're very steadfast… After the Lashkar incident, they debated whether to go low key. They decided not to, and they even felt [our] arrival justified their decision to be connected to the wider Jewish world."

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Ottawa puts lid on imam

Compiled by CJN Staff

Imam Zijad Delic, executive director of the Canadian Islamic Congress, was prevented from speaking at National Defence headquarters in Ottawa on Monday because the former head of the group had made anti-Semitic statements in the past.

A *CTV News* report on Oct. 2 cited comments made by Mohamed Elmasry in 2004 in which he said Israelis over 18 were legitimate targets for suicide bombers. Elmasry later apologized for and retracted the remarks.

But because of those remarks, Defence Minister Peter Mackay cancelled Imam Delic's planned Oct. 4 address in honour of Islamic Heritage Month.

"These types of comments don't support Islamic Heritage, they simply divide Canadians and promulgate hate, and they have no place in [Islamic Heritage Month] celebrations. Instead, Monday's celebrations will focus on the evolution of Islam in the Canadian Forces and the positive contribution of Canada's Muslim community to our society," a ministry statement said last Friday.

Imam Delic told CTV his organization views suicide bombings as a "totally un-Islamic act."

"There is no such thing in the Qur'an that would tell Muslims to go and kill a Jew, for indeed that is against our basic concepts," he said.

Imam Delic said he believed Mackay unfairly targeted his group, which seeks "better relations between Canadian Muslims and the general Canadian population."

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Class Acts

STUDENT TZEDAKAH: Students at Leo Baeck Day School's Holy Blossom campus took part Sept. 26 in an awareness-raising community walk to simulate the treks that African women and girls take every day to get water for their families. The event was sponsored by Holy Blossom Temple, where Leo Baeck graduates presented a cheque for $12,750 from last year's event. Pictured, from left, are Marlee White, Sophie Nisker and Rachel Strauss of the 2010 graduating class and members of the first-ever Leo Baeck Social Justice Committee, and Marc Kielberger, a representative of the group Free the Children.

SIMCHAT TORAH CELEBRATION: Some of the junior kindergarten students at Bialik Hebrew Day School are seen here waving their handmade flags created in celebration of Simchat Torah.

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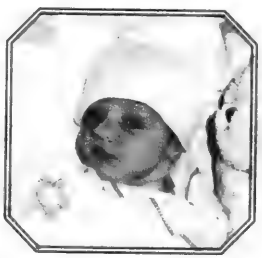
Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Happy 10th birthday to Eitan Aufgang! With lots of love from his parents, brother Noam, grandparents and all the family.

Russ, Vera, Glenda and their families wish Jamie Gillman & Kailee Novikoff mazel tov on their recent engagement.

Mazel tov to Danial Dewhurst & Daryn Britt on their recent engagement. Love, Bubbie & Zaidy.



Shira & Sol Lev are overjoyed with the arrival of Bayla. She is welcomed by bubbies Debra & Barbara, zaidies Allan & Phil, uncles and aunts.

Wishing Jarryd Shneer a happy second birthday. You are my ray of sunshine every day! Love, Mommy.

With great joy, Nicole & Arie Boltiansky announce the birth of Maya Rachel. Proud grandparents Debbie & Frank Myers, Frida & Michael Boltiansky

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Please note holiday deadline for What's New. Deadline for Oct. 21 is Oct. 7. Deadline for Oct. 28 is Oct. 18. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Oct. 7

ADULT HEBREW ACADEMY

Hebrew classes at Temple Sinai, study at a beginner or intermediate level. Starts Oct. 7, 7:30 to 8:45 p.m. Sessions also in January and March. For pricing and to register: 416-487-3281, education@templesinai.net.

CIRCLE OF CARE

"Hope through healing" spousal bereavement support group. To Nov. 25. Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. 530 Wilson Ave., 4th floor. **Rebecca**, 416-635-2900, ext. 462, to register.

'LITTLE SUPERSTARS'

Bring your baby or toddler and join songwriter and educator **Mark Weinstock** for singing, dancing, instruments and storytelling at Temple Sinai. Thursdays, Oct. 7 to Dec. 16. 11:30 a.m. Members $180 guests $200. education@templesinai.net, 416-487-3281.

Sunday, Oct. 10

FILM SCREENING

The movie *The Boys of Esplanade* focuses on the two sons of Jewish east European immigrants. Following the screening, some of the actors will take part in an audience discussion. 7:30 p.m. City Playhouse Theatre. 1000 New Westminster Dr. $10 each. Order at 905-882-7469. Portion of proceeds to Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation.

Tuesday, Oct. 12

THE JEWISH FUTURE

"Will Our Children and Grandchildren Be Jewish? How to Secure the Future of the Jews?" Lecture with **Rabbi Shlomo Riskin**. 8 p.m. Holy Blossom Temple, 1950 Bathurst St.

"EAT WELL – BE WELL"

Learn which foods and nutritional supplements can help arthritis, osteoporosis and high cholesterol. With health nutritionist **Aviva Allen**. Beth Tzedec, 1:30 p.m. Free. Pre-register at 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

Wednesday, Oct. 13

PARKINSON'S PROGRAM

Parkinson's self-management program at Baycrest. 17 sessions, Mondays and Wednesdays. $25. 416-785-2500 ext. 2683.

CAMPUS AGAINST ISRAEL

Speakers Action Group and Canadian Jewish Civil Rights Association present **Richard Cravatts** of Boston University on "The Campus War Against Israel." 12 p.m. 40 King St. W. 21st floor. Lunch, $25. Reservation required. speakersaction.com, 416-966-0722.

Other News

JUDY KLITSNER SPEAKS

Toronto Partnership Minyan scholar-in-residence programs in October and November. Oct. 28-30: **Judy Klitsner**, senior faculty of Pardes Institute. Nov. 30: **Rabbi Daniel Sperber**, Talmud professor at Bar Ilan University. www.TorontoPartnershipMinyan.com.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Join Beth Tzedec on Oct. 15 at 6 p.m. to celebrate **Lorne Hanick**'s 50th birthday and his years of service. Kabalat Shabbat service led by **Cantor Simon Spiro** and the Beth Tzedec singers and a tribute dinner. Adults $72, youth $18. 416-781-3511 to reserve by Oct. 8.

DRIVERS NEEDED

The Jewish Club for the Vision Impaired requires volunteer drivers to reach out to visually impaired seniors. One evening a month, 7 to 10 p.m. **Bess**, 905-508-2892.

SINGERS WANTED

Holy Blossom is looking for members to join its volunteer choir. Rehearsals held each Sunday, sings at least twice a month. Starting Oct. 17, 10 a.m. **Mari Lynn Rusak**, 416-789-3291 ext.224.

Continued on page 27

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SUN 24/10			MON 25/10			TUE 26/10		
Precious Life	Presentation by Dr. Raz Somech	The Matchmaker	A Green Chariot + Wasserman	Presentation by Gilad Goldschmidt	Eyes Wide Open	A Matter of Size	The Assassin Next Door	
6:30 pm	8:00 pm	9:00 pm	6:30 pm	8:00 pm	9:00 pm	6:30 pm	8:30 pm	
WED 27/10			**THU 28/10**					
A Film Unfinished	Precious Life	Presentation by Dr. Raz Somech	The Matchmaker	A Matter of Size				
6:30 pm	8:30 pm	10:00 pm	6:30 pm	8:30 pm				

Tel Aviv was recently ranked among the Top 10 Beach Cities of the world by NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Magazine
Ticket Hotline: 416-233-2868
SHEPPARD GRANDE CINEMAS 4881 Yonge Street, Yonge/Sheppard
www.israelfilmfestival.ca
Sponsor
ELAL
Festival guests will stay at the Novotel North York Hotel

Continued from page 26

YORAM ETTINGER SPEAKS

Beth Tikvah scholar-in-residence program featuring **Yoram Ettinger**. Oct. 15-17. Friday night dinner and talk, "Obama and Israel." 6 p.m. Services followed by dinner. Members $25, guests $35. Child pricing available. Sunday morning breakfast and talk, following 9 a.m. services: "Israel's High Tech." $10. Register at 416-221-3433.

'RELATIONSHIPS SUCK'

"Sometimes Relationships Suck" is a program for teens Grade 7 and up, grouped by age, and their parents to discuss teen dating abuse. Oct. 21, 7:15 p.m. Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St. Unit 211. Register at srstoronto.ca or 416-630-9313.

MEN'S GROUP VOLUNTEER

Baycrest's volunteer services department requires a seniors men's group leader to facilitate conversation with the men who attend the Baycrest Day Centre on weekdays. 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

'HEROES OF THE BIBLE'

Hana Werner, educator and lecturer, conducts 16 classes on topics, including insights drawn from traditional and modern commentaries on the Torah. Mondays starting Oct. 18. 7-8:30 p.m. Beth David, 55 Yeomans Rd. $50 members, $100 non-members. 416-633-5500.

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Temple Har Zion's chesed committee presents a three-part series of workshops to explore strategies and resources for dealing with chronic conditions. With life coach **Carolyn Swirsky-Polisuk**. Oct. 14, 21 and 28. 7:30-9 p.m. $5, registration limited. RSVP: cpcaring@gmail.com.

SURVIVOR MEMOIRS

The Azrieli Foundation launches its third series of Holocaust survivor memoirs with readings by the authors or their family members. The keynote address is by **Linda Hooper**, who initiated the Paper Clip Project at Whitwell Middle School in Tennessee. Participants will receive a complimentary set of the three memoirs. Oct. 26, 7 p.m. Toronto Centre for the Performing Arts, 5040 Yonge St. Free event. Register at azrielifoundation.org or 416-410-5875. RSVP by Oct. 19.

TEMPLE SINAI SOCIAL CLUB

"Current Events," with **Erika Biro**, international politics lecturer. Members $8, guests $10. Oct. 14, 7:30 p.m. Reserve at 416-487-3281.

HEALING SERVICE

Jewish Healing Program presents a healing service on Oct. 17, 3-4 p.m. Beth Tzedec, 1700 Bathurst St. Facilitated by **Rabbi Adam Cutler** and **Yehudit (Judy) Shier Weisberg**. Sponsored by Jewish Family & Child. 416-638-7800, ext. 6287. Free, wheelchair accessible.

50+ COMEDY/PUB NIGHT

Beth Emeth's Club Sameach hosts a comedy pub night on Oct. 14 at 6 p.m. Fischtein Hall. With **Lawrence Morgenstern** and **Mike Nemiroff**. Members $40, guests $45. Catered pub fare served at 6 p.m., followed by an evening of comedy. RSVP by Oct. 11. Visa, MasterCard or cheque at Beth Emeth office or by phone: 416-633-3838. No tickets sold at the door.

JF&CS GROUPS

Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. Registration required for all programs.

When you're about to separate: what to tell the kids. A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. Oct. 14 at Promenade Mall, Suite 313. 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Beyond the chupah, becoming a couple. A six-session marriage preparation group for couples who are going to be married in the next year. Starts Oct. 19, 7:30-9 p.m. at Adath Israel Synagogue.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC. Seymour Epstein gives the first talk in a new series: "Jewish Communities of the World: Free Soviet Jewry: The Movement and Its Outcome." Oct. 7, 1:30 p.m.

Join the inter-generational program, with catered kosher lunches with students and a complimentary guided visit to the Royal Ontario Museum. 416-924-6211 ext. 155.

Beginner computer course for seniors, personal attention: six students, three instructors. 416-924-6211 ext. 155.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama Oct. 13, departs 10 a.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 p.m. Bingo Tuesdays, 12:30 to 3 p.m. Line dancing Oct. 7, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30 to 3 p.m. Sunday night dance Oct. 24, 7-9 p.m. with live music. Complimentary lunch for members and non-members, Oct. 18 12 p.m. at Earl Bales Community Centre. **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Membership $25. All welcome.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Lecture: "The Next Anatevka," with **Frank Dimant**. Oct. 12. 10-11:30 a.m. Members $3, guests $6.

Wellness lecture: "We Live in Our Minds: Interactive Workshop, Part 2," with **Harvey Silver**. Oct. 14, 1:30-3 p.m. Free.

Intermediate computer class, Oct. 18-Dec. 20. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. or 2-4 p.m. $60 members, $90 non-members. **Dianne Erdos-Rush**, 416-225-2112, ext. 128.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Very limited space available in Tic Tac Two, a morning program for two-year-olds that encourages exploration and discovery. Includes outdoor play and weekly Shabbat program. Healthy snack provided. **Kailah**, ext. 4351.

First annual cycle-for-a-cause spin-a-thon. All welcome. Food and refreshments provided. DJ, prizes, raffles and giveaways. Oct. 17, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Prosserman JCC. bridlebashfoundation.com/spinathon Minimum donation $100 per hour per participant. Ext. 4016, dorotab@prossermanjcc.com.

Bamidar, an advanced Torah class progressing through the Book of Numbers in Hebrew. New students welcome. With **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein**. Mondays, Oct. 18-Dec. 6. 6:30-7:30 p.m. Room 105.

Sports with **Jay**, Mighty Munchkins to Dec. 12. 10-10:45 a.m. 2-1/2 to 4 years.

Pre-Shabbat music with **Mark Weinstock**. Oct. 7-Dec. 16. From birth to 4 years. Limited space. Ext. 4235.

Movie Mondays, films reviewed by **Larry Anklewicz**. Starts Oct. 18 with *Defiance*. Pass for 12 films $50, or $5 each. Registration required for first film. 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Current events with **Peter Diamant**. Starts Oct. 7. 12:45-2:15 p.m. Room 205. Members $1, guests $2.

Lunch 'n' Learn with **Rabbi Meir Rosenberg**. Oct. 8. 12-1 p.m. Free. Bring lunch, coffee and tea served.

This week marks the registration cut-off date for some courses. Call ext. 4235 or register online.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts. Closing reception for *Portraits at a Threshold*. Oct. 7, 5-7 p.m.

"Israel: Reflections of an Outsider from the Inside," with **Elyse Goldstein**. Thursdays, Oct. 7-28. 8-9:30 p.m. 416-638-1881.

Study music this fall: "Planet Music" with **Barry Livingston**, starting Oct. 14. music@mnjcc.org.

"Start your own business," three Friday workshops with **Debbi Arnold**. Oct. 15, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Register: 416-762-7171.

Sundays on Bloor: "Joseph to Nasser – The Jews of Egypt," with **Diana Mingail**. Oct. 17, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. $9, light refreshments. Ext. 154, sharonis@mnjcc.org.

"Media Mondays: The Cinema of Israel," with **Shlomo Schwartberg**. Oct. 18, 7-9 p.m. Films discussed include *Sallah* and *Broken Wings*. $12. Ext. 606.

imagineNative Teen Night. Teens go to opening night at the imagineNative film festival. Oct. 20, 5:30 p.m. at MNJCC for dinner, followed by the film *Boy*. RSVP: ext. 277, sarahbn@mnjcc.org.

Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.kofflerarts.org.

La'hit T.O. – new Israeli dance troupe for dancers aged 15-19. Audition Oct. 17, 3-4 p.m. Room 211, 4588 Bathurst St. For info: **Teme**, ext. 4364.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION: Myer Gordon recently celebrated his 89-1/2 birthday with 89-1/2 people – the half being his young granddaughter. In lieu of gifts, guests donated to Cancer Ontario in memory of Gordon's daughter, Carol. From left are Gordon, his daughter, Marilyne Hennek, and his cousins, Carol and Bram Vatch.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 32

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Bridal Registry

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Mair Michael Langer	Sep 6/10	111 Avenue Road
Eva Kayfetz	Sep 6/10	7 Austin Crescent
Rita Kagan	Sep 6/10	111 Avenue Road
Shoshana Hartman	Sep 6/10	3840 Bathurst Street
Sheldon Kert	Sep 9/10	2500 Bathurst St.
Doris Grodinsky	Sep 10/10	55 Ameer Ave.
Sylvia Green	Sep 11/10	152 Regina Ave.
Anita Katzman	Sep 9/10	131 Torresdale Ave.
Jack Kelman	Sep 11/10	205 Wynford Dr.
Frankie Bender	Sep 20/10	784 Center Street
Anna Farkas	Sep 20/10	149 Viewmount Avenue
Davida Hoyos	Sep 20/10	521 Finch Avenue East
Anne Pritzker	Sep 20/10	645 Castlefield Avenue
Sidney Stein	Sep 20/10	19 Northern Heights Dr.
Jack Holder	Sep 23/10	24 Simonston Blvd.
Faye Litowitz (Freeman)	Sep 21/10	616 Avenue Road,
Joe Gutmacher	Sep 23/10	3595 Keele Street,
Jean Goldstein	Sep 24/10	2 Covington Place,
Jack Freedman	Sep 23/10	150 Searle Avenue
Jack Pattenick	Sep 25/10	398 Lawrence Avenue
Ethel Ritchie	Sep 23/10	19 Lower Village Gate
Max Kriezman	Sep 22/10	10 Kirtling Place
Maurice Gartenberg	Sep 21/10	2075 Bayview Avenue
Ahuva Boyer	Sep 25/10	25 Bobwhite Crescent

The family of the late
JOLAN KLEIN ז"ל
would like to express our heartfelt appreciation for the comfort given during our recent bereavement and for the many donations made in her memory.
Louis Klein and family
Susan Roitman and family

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
J. RICHARD (DICK) SHIFF ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, October 10th at 11:00 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Bathurst South of Steeles
Tzozmerer Society Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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In loving memory of our beloved daughter,
Stacey Louise Baer
(Jan. 18, 1971 – Oct 11, 2004)
In the 6 years you've been gone, we have learned that this "mountain of hurt and loss is part of our landscape". However, the light from your joyful memory, shines in the darkest night, and illuminates for us, the path that makes light, our burden of sorrow.
Forever in our hearts, with much love,
Mom, Dad and Jenn

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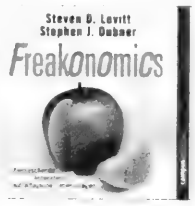
Coast to Coast

'Catholic' Jew helps kick off Ottawa drive

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — Internationally famous for his best-selling books, *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* and the 2009 sequel *Superfreakonomics*, Jewish author Stephen J. Dubner spoke in Ottawa recently about one of his previous books, *Choosing my Religion*, about growing up Catholic.

The book, first published in 1998, was originally titled *Turbulent Souls: A Catholic Son's Return to his Jewish Family*, and that was the story he shared with the audience.



"It has been said that all families are strange. It has been said additionally that Jewish families are particularly strange. My Jewish family is even more strange because they were also Catholic," said Dubner, who spoke Sept. 19 at the Canadian Museum of Civilization at the Jewish Federation of Ottawa's 2011 campaign kickoff.

His parents had both been born and raised Jewish in Brooklyn, N.Y. For various reasons, at approximately the same time, each had become disillusioned with Judaism and sought comfort and meaning in Catholicism. Ironically, a Catholic priest introduced them to each other and the rest, as they say, is history.

The young couple married and moved to a small town in upstate New York, far away from their families and their past. There they raised a family of eight children in a household that revolved around their religious observances. "We observed holidays that most Catholics don't even know exist. My parents saw it as their mission to out-Catholic any Catholic," Dubner said.

The family never discussed their Jewish roots and the children knew nothing about Jews or Judaism, had no contact with their relatives or their past. "Every Sunday after mass, my father had his after-mass nosh of matzah and gefilte fish," said Dubner. "When they wanted to talk about something so that we could not understand, they spoke Yiddish. I knew my parents were odd, but I didn't know what it was about. I thought it was just because they came from Brooklyn," he said.

Only when Dubner moved to New York in his 20s did he discover that "a Jew is not someone who grows up and becomes a Catholic. New York was a strange place that was full of Jews who did not turn into Catholics," he said.

Dubner embarked on a journey to find out about his family, about Judaism and about his place in the religion. He ultimately chose to identify as a Jew, the only one in his family to do so. This decision upset his mother terribly – his father died when Dubner was only 10 – and caused a rift that was only healed shortly before her death, with the intervention of a Catholic clergyman.

The Ottawa campaign kickoff was co-chaired by Ilana and Harris Prehogan and Avalee and Ron Prehogan. The 2011 campaign chair is Steven Kerzner and women's campaign chair is Linda Kerzner.

Montreal students remember murdered teen

Emotional tribute held for Shirel Attar

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

Marymount Academy students gather for the dedication of a tree planted in memory of their classmate, Shirel Attar. From left are Joshua Casanova, Shakeira Bernicky, Stephanie Lopez, Kelsey Dos Santos, Ashley Ighorewo, Niroshana Thirunavukarasu and Priscilla Guerra.

MONTREAL — Shirel Attar was remembered by her fellow high school students at Marymount Academy in an emotional, but dignified, memorial that included candle-lighting, singing and poetry reading.

Many of the 200 girls and boys who gathered Sept. 22 in the school's cafeteria wept, as did the staff and other adults. All who spoke stressed how beloved Shirel quickly became during her one year at the school in 2009-2010 and that her spirit will have positive impact.

They wore blue armbands they had made with Shirel's name printed on it and decorated with a white ribbon and tiny plastic dove, as they sat solemnly watching the proceedings.

The mood was set when the school choir, dressed in black, sang *Tears in Heaven*, Eric Clapton's heart-rending ballad that he wrote after the accidental death of his young son.

Grade 8 student Rachelle Allen composed a poem for her late friend in which she asked "I want to know how she's doing so far away. Is she laughing and running today. I'd love just a little peak into heaven, to know how she is doing."

Another friend Bianca Saudelli, in her poem, said she thinks of Shirel as just beginning a new journey, "resting from sorrow and tears," and that "she will never pass away."

Attar, 14, died Aug. 9 at her Côte St. Luc home. Her brother Maor, 18, has been charged with her first-degree murder.

Shirel attended Grade 8 at Marymount last year, after going to Jewish People's and Peretz Schools (JPPS) and Grade 7 at Bialik High School.

Vice-principal Debra Michael represented JPPS at the memorial. She told *The CJN* that Shirel, whom she had known for several years and had taught, was "a very sweet, very quiet girl."

Marymount, which is under the English Montreal School Board, has about 700 students who come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and areas of the West End, and its curriculum includes an international baccalaureate (IB) program.

Principal Craig Olenik said that the turnout, which was voluntary, is "a testament to the fact that Shirel touched so many lives in her short time" at Marymount.

"I was impressed by the number of students who came forward to express their thoughts or be involved," he said. "I am overwhelmed by the grace, maturity and caring we have seen exhibited today."

The printed program of the service featured a drawing of a giraffe by Shirel and the quote: "I am very proud and satisfied of my work, the reason why was because I took my time and I was paying a lot of attention."

Those words only underlined how brief Shirel's days on earth were.

Her mother, Anat Kirko, and older sister, Karine, were present, but they did not speak and declined any comment.

On the table at the front of the room was a burning red taper used to light three memorial candles, representing the past, present and future, said spiritual facilitator Erico Santos.

One of Shirel's closest friends, Destiny Hinckson, lit the first candle and spoke of Shirel's brief life as having been a gift that brought "many joys and special moments." She sang a solo rendition of the inspirational *You Raise Me Up*, made popular by Josh Groban, her clear voice cracking at times.

The second candle was lit by Tracy Mangel, co-ordinator of the IB program, and the third by Santos, who said it symbolized hope, despite this tragedy.

Grade 11 student Darragh Kilkenny-Mondoux, a representative of LOVE (Leave Out Violence), made a few remarks. The award-winning national organization that aims to steer youth away from violence was founded in 1993 by Twinkle Rudberg, whose husband was murdered by a 14-year-old boy in Montreal.

"It's disheartening, but not discouraging, when things like this happen, but we can take wisdom from this," she said.

Kilkenny-Mondoux read a verse she wrote comparing Shirel to a star in the sky that vanishes, leaving the heavens less bright. "But stars don't die," she concluded. "They may no longer be burning, but they are still there."

The assembly then moved outdoors where, in front of the school, located on Côte St. Luc Road, a tree has been planted in memory of Shirel. Many students hugged each other as the double-trunked birch was dedicated.

Students and staff who need it have been able to seek counselling with the EMSB's special trauma team.

WHERE LEARNING MATTERS.

GREAT WEEKEND SERIES
Rabbi Steven Weil
Executive Vice President and Chief Professional Officer of the Orthodox Union (OU)
Shabbat October 16
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Rabbi Steven Weil is the Executive Vice President and chief professional officer of the Orthodox Union. In that capacity, he has day-to-day responsibility for running the largest Orthodox synagogue umbrella group in the world, overseeing staff and programs, maintaining fiscal responsibility, and above all, projecting an image of leadership and vision throughout the Orthodox Jewish community worldwide.

Rabbi Weil served for eight years as rabbi at Beth Jacob Congregation in Beverly Hills, CA, the largest US Orthodox congregation outside of the New York metropolitan area. Prior to that, he served for six years as Rabbi of Young Israel of Oak Park, Michigan in suburban Detroit. Both congregations grew in striking fashion under Rabbi Weil's leadership. A man of great personal charm, Rabbi Weil has gained a reputation as a gifted orator, weaving inspirational messages of contemporary relevance into his teaching of traditional texts.

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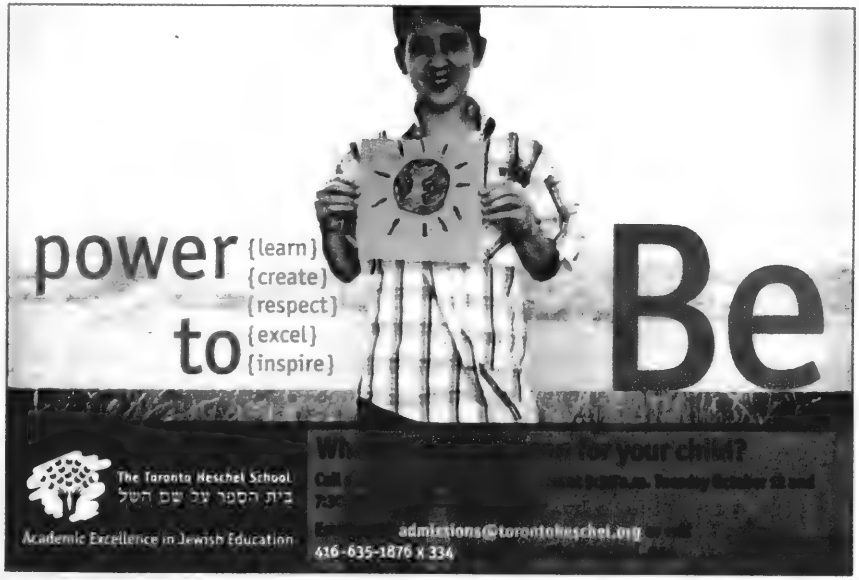


Sapling from Anne Frank tree planted in Montreal

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Much hope for a better world was planted along with a scrawny, leafless stalk not much more than a foot high in the courtyard behind Federation CJA's Cummings House last week.

The humble sapling grew from a chestnut that was the fruit of the very tree that Anne Frank wrote about from her hiding place in Amsterdam. The mighty chestnut that she could glimpse daily, her only link with nature and the outside world, gave her comfort during the family's two years of hiding from the Nazis during World War II.

That chestnut, which was about 150 years old and stood outside what is today Anne Frank House, was toppled by a storm Aug. 23. For three years, there had been an international campaign to save the rotting tree, which in its final year was being held up by a steel support.

The sapling was obtained by Montreal lawyer Michael Vineberg, president of the Canadian branch of the Anne Frank Foundation, from Anne Frank House, and donated to the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (MHMC).

Vineberg said that this will be the only sapling given to Canada. For the past five years, Anne Frank House has been germinating chestnuts from the ailing tree in order to perpetuate it through its offspring, should it die.

One hundred and fifty seed pods from the old tree have been planted in Amsterdam, and a limited number have been made available – at least 25, according to Vineberg – to other countries.

Eleven have gone to the United States for planting, including at the White House and two sites that evoke the consequences of intolerance and violence – New York's destroyed World Trade Centre and Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas, where black students were forcibly segregated in the 1950s.

The tougher part was getting permission to bring the sapling into this country, because of stringent regulations concerning the importation of plants, he said. Clearance was finally granted after four or five months of communication with Agriculture Canada, he said.

But Montreal is luckier than some U.S. states, where the saplings were ordered kept in quarantine for two years.

The sapling was planted in a ceremony on a rainy Sept. 27 evening by Vineberg, Federation CJA president Jack Hasen, whose parents were Holocaust survivors, and Michael Polak, the honorary Dutch consul in Montreal, whose Dutch-born parents are also survivors. His mother, Celien, went to the same school and was in the same grade as Frank, but did not know her personally.

Lawyer Michael Vineberg, centre, takes part in the planting ceremony of a sapling from the Anne Frank tree in Federation CJA's courtyard. Looking on, from left, are D'Arcy McGee MNA Lawrence Bergman, federation president Jack Hasen, MHMC president Susyn Borer and Michael Polak, honorary consul of the Netherlands.

Recalling his most recent of many visits to the Anne Frank House in July, Polak said, "I had never seen lineups like this before, and most of them were young people. They spoke languages from all over the world, including Arabic and German. This means the message of Anne Frank is still very much alive."

Among the numerous survivors and their children present for the planting was someone who did know Frank, 84-year-old Ilse Zilversmit. Her mother and Frank's mother had an uncle and aunt in common, but were not directly related. The families went to the same synagogue, and Zilversmit was friends with Anne's older sister, Margot, while her younger sister was closer to Anne, who would be 81 today.

"Anne was a nice girl, but a little, I wouldn't say wild, let's say energetic," Zilversmit recalled in an interview, "while her older sister was very serious."

The Zilversmits were deported to the Westerbork camp in Holland in 1943, and later to Bergen-Belsen, where one day they came in contact with the Frank sisters again.

"We spoke to them, but couldn't see them because there were two rows of barbed wire with straw in between. Anne asked if there was anyone from Holland, and then when we answered, if we had any food. We found some bread and threw it over, but someone else grabbed it first. Those were the last words we had with them."

Margot, like Anne, would also die in Bergen-Belsen in March 1945.

The little tree-to-be is near the Westbury Avenue gate of the courtyard, known as the Peace Garden, and beside it is a plaque reading: "In memory of Anne Frank killed in the Holocaust. This sapling is from the chestnut tree which so inspired her."

Vineberg said it's hoped that the tree, as it grows – and it can easily reach 25 metres or more – will likewise inspire generations to seek to live in mutual respect with others.

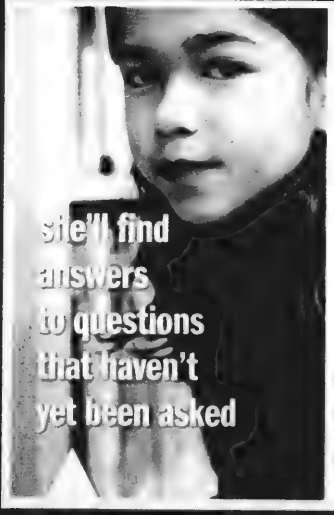
The MHMC, which has a large museum, had 13,000 visitors this past year, including some 6,000 students.

Vineberg's personal wish is that he will be able to come back in 10 years and see young people sitting under its branches, perhaps reading from The Diary of Anne Frank and learning from its timeless lesson that we must continue to believe in the essential goodness of people.

Anne Frank, who died at 15, became a symbol of the millions who perished in the Holocaust, particularly the 1.5 million Jewish children. Her book was translated into more than 70 languages and has sold 36 million copies around the world, making it the best-read piece of writing related to World War II of all time, Vineberg noted.

Montreal is a fitting site for the sole Canadian home of the Frank tree descendant, Vineberg said, because it is "a cosmopolitan and tolerant city" and became home to 9,000 survivors after the war, and many other victims of genocides since then in Cambodia, Bosnia and Rwanda.

MHMC president Susyn Borer said, that Frank, though she died so young and so tragically, is a survivor. "Jewish tradition holds that a person can suffer two deaths. The first is physical death, which we all go through, but we also die a second time when we are forgotten. Anne Frank, thankfully, will never experience that."



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Neighbourhood hit by anti-Semitic graffiti

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — A swastika was found last month on a sign on the site of a new Chabad-Lubavitch centre being built in the River Heights neighbourhood of Winnipeg's south end, where many of the city's Jews live.

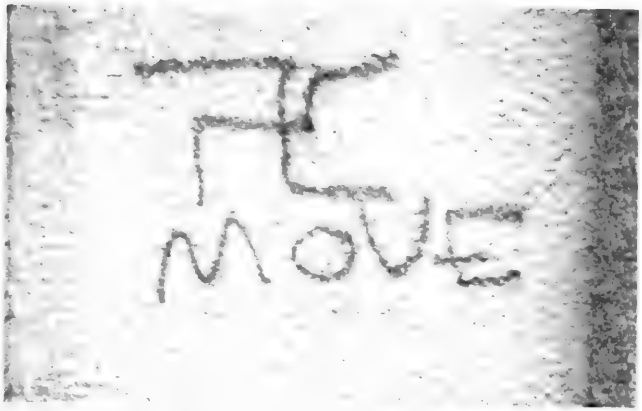
The Sept. 11 discovery was the latest in a series of incidents involving anti-Semitic graffiti in the area since this past spring.

Michael Kowalson, a resident of River Heights, reported the swastika to Winnipeg police. He said that he told them "this was the third or fourth incident of a swastika in River Heights that I've heard about this year and that... the way to address this situation is through citizens reporting to police suspicious persons or activity and through increased police patrols in the community."

Last May, a swastika was found on a bus shelter on a major thoroughfare near the new Chabad-Lubavitch centre.

Another Jewish resident of River Heights also reported finding a swastika with the words "Heil Hitler" scrawled on her neighbour's garage this past June.

The woman's non-Jewish neighbours down the street, David and Christine Lind, had 32 swastikas drawn on their garage door the same week.



Last May, a swastika and the word "move" were spray painted on 792 Campbell St. in Winnipeg's River Heights neighbourhood. *[Rhonda Spivak photo]*

"In one of the boxes on the garage the words 'Heil Hitler' had been written," David Lind told *The CJN*. "Not all of the swastikas were drawn properly, but they all looked to be written by the same hand. In another box, the words 'white power' were written."

Lind said that whoever drew the symbols was "tall enough to reach the top part of my garage door, so it couldn't have been an eight- or nine-year-old. I figure it had to be someone who was at least five feet tall."

Lind also said the attack was particularly bad, because his house faces Fleet Avenue, "and on Saturdays, there are a lot of Jewish people who walk by, going to and from [Herzlia-Adas Yeshurun] Synagogue [located a few blocks away on Fleet], and because we are on a corner, they could see this from Fleet."

The latest swastika on the Chabad-Lubavitch property appears to have been drawn in permanent black marker, similar to others found in earlier incidents.

Last May, Rob Vittera, whose son attends the Hebrew bilingual program at Brock Corydon School, came forward on his own initiative to paint over some very large swastikas that were spray-painted on the home of Kay Robertson and Earl Varlow at 792 Campbell St., also in River Heights.

A large swastika with the word "move" was spray-painted on an area of the house that faces the kitchen window of the couple's Jewish neighbour, Marsha Singer.

Although Robertson and Varlow, who are not Jewish, were aware of the swastikas, they didn't report them to police until Vittera convinced them to do so.

Alan Yusim, executive director of B'nai Brith Canada's midwest region, said he's asked the Winnipeg Police hate crimes unit to investigate whether the recent incidents in River Heights are related and possibly the work of the same culprit or culprits.

Const. Natalie Aiken of the Winnipeg Police Service told *The CJN* that "these instances have been flagged and sent to our hate crimes co-ordinator. The investigations are ongoing. If there is further information that comes to light suggesting [the instances] are linked, we will pursue this."

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Coast to Coast

Galloway challenges Kenney to debate

Compiled by CJN Staff

A colourful and controversial former British MP who had been barred from entering Canada last year because of his connection with Hamas challenged Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney to go five rounds with him in a debate.

Sporting red and white Roots mitts, George Galloway told an enthusiastic audience at Trinity-St. Paul's United Church on the weekend that Kenney ought to resign. He said he planned to sue the Canadian government for slandering him.

Galloway's Canadian visit last weekend came a year and a half after Kenney's office said Galloway should not be admitted because he had raised funds for the terrorist organization, Hamas.

Galloway challenged that finding in court and last week Federal Court Judge Richard Mosley accepted Galloway's contention that federal authorities were motivated by political considerations in barring him.

Although Mosley ruled there was no basis for a judicial review, as Galloway did not appear at a border crossing to test whether a border officer would actually turn him away, he said that if Galloway had done so and been barred, he would have overturned that decision. Mosley stated there was a reasonable apprehension of bias, based on statements from Kenney's office suggesting Galloway should be prevented from entering Canada.

Galloway was to appear on a three-city speaking tour, but a spokesperson for Kenney stated he was unwelcome in Canada after having provided Hamas with $44,000 in cash.

In a 60-page judgment, Mosley addressed the question of whether that contribution, which Galloway claimed was for humanitarian purposes, amounted to supporting a terrorist organization.

Mosley said that to be barred from entry, the Crown would have had to show Galloway's purpose was "to enhance the ability of a terrorist group to facilitate or carry out a terrorist activity… Absent such a purpose, the mere assertion that material support was provided to such an organization is not sufficient."

Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, said as long as Galloway does not violate Canadian law, "he should be allowed to come into the country, no matter how offensive his views may be."

In his speaking engagement, Galloway tore into the government of Israel, saying Jerusalem was being "ethnically cleansed." Earlier, upon arriving at Pearson International Airport, he alleged barring him had put his life in danger.

Galloway said he planned to return in November for a 10-city speaking tour.

Correction

The article "U of T club gets Heritage Toronto plaque" (Sept. 29) should have said that the Ontario Jewish Archives is no longer run through the Latner Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Learning, but is a department of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. Also, the photo of a New Year's Eve party held at the Primrose Club in 1959 should have had the following caption: New Years Eve party at the Primrose Club, ca. 1959. Ontario Jewish Archives, accession 2009-6/1.

The CJN regrets the errors.

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שיאר נינו

גידי קורן וחברים

על השטר מפי השטרר

הסרידה דרך פרסמה ב"שלום מדרונטי" כתבה מרתקת עם יענ ורד, אל"מ במלואים, שסיים תקופת שליחות ארוכה בקנדה לניהם כספים למטרות ישראליות. הוא היה בקנדה מספר פעמים וייצג בד השאר את הקרן הקיימת ואת ראשות העתירות הלאומית. לא כל יום ניתן לשמוע דברים כנים על גיוס כספים מפי המגויסים עצמם. יש לאל"מ ורד, שבילה בקנדה שנות שטר רבות, ביקורת נוקבת על כך שהקהילות בקנדה מציגות את ישראל לעתים לרוב מהזוית המסכנה כדי לעורר רחמים ולגיים תרומות. ועל כך שבטיפי של דבר חלק ניכר מהכסף שמגויים לשדרות ולשאר מרקדי מבוקה בישראל נשאר בקנדה למטרות הקהילה כאן. "יש הנזמה בשימוש בעצבניות, בהתבטיעות, במלחמות, בילדים ובקשישים רעבים ללחם.....כי מצד שני ישראל מתגאה שהיא בין המדינות המתקדמות והמתעשות בשולם....אז למה מנשיכים לשנדר?"

בעניין הצגת המסכנה- ראיתי לא אחת ולא שתיים בתי ילדים ישראלים ששולחים מישראל בקשות תמיכה תוך הצגת הזוית המסכנה, כך שעניין המסכנות אינה מאפיינת של יהודי הגולה, אלא גם של יהודי מדינת ישראל. "רחמו יהודים ורחמו" לא נולדה בקנדה.

אין כמעט בית חולים ישראלי, מוסד אקדמי או כמעל תרביותי שאינו שולח אנשים לקנדה לגיים כספים. בכלל, בישראל הביטוי "יהודי הם", או "לב יהודי הם" מסמן רק יהודים שתורמים כספים, אפילו אם הם מנהלי בתי בושת בגרמניה. אין רע בכך, וטוב שיהודי קנדה יתרכו למטרות בישראל, אבל להאשים את הקהילות כאן בהצגת ישראל המסכנה- נראה לי מוגזם ולא מוצדק. גיעל הנפש של אל"מ ורד מקשעים משיריים של שנור ולא מאורים מזכיר לי את הסיפור העתיק על שני קיבוצניקים רשתנים שמתערבים מי מהם יכול לאכול קערה מלאה של זבל פיזות. הראשון אוכל ואוכל וכמעט מסיים, כשפתאום היא נוקף בגעל ומקיא את נשמתו בקול גדול. שואל אותו חברו המופתע מה קרה לו דוקא לקראת הסוף, ועונה לו המקיא: "אריה גיעל נפש, היתה שם שערה באמצע.....".

אבל שיאר בינינו.

אמירות הפז של הרב עובדיה

הרב עובדיה הוא מבהיגם הרוחני של מאות אלפי ישראלים, ודברי הדרשה בשעורי התורה השבועיים שלו הם בר לרגליהם. הוא גם הפוסק העליון על כל ההלכותיה של מפלגת ש"ס, כמו גם על ההלכותיו של הרב הראשי הספרדי. אפשר לומר בביטחה שאין עוד ישראלי שיש לו השפעה כל כך מאסיבית.

למני מספר שבועות התייחס הרב בדברי הדרשה שלו לכיכוי ההפגד עם הפלשתינאים ואמר "שימותו כל הפלשתינאים וילכו לעזאזל". הדברים זכו לכיסוי עיתונאי בינלאומי, לגינוי של רוב ארגוית העולם ולביקורת אמריקאית קשה. היחיד שהתנגד בפלחות היה דווקא מבהיר פלשתינאי שאמר לסי אן אן: "אפילו הישראלים יודעים שהוא אהבל וחרשבים שהוא בדיחה".

אפשר להתבדח על זה כאירוע מזרח תיכוני נישיס סיקאסבי ואפשר להתייחס לעניין כלאחר יד. אבל אז-אל לנו לצדוה כמו תרגלות בדרך לשחשה כשמנהיג איראן קורא להשמיד את מדינת ישראל.

דבריו של הרב שבדיה הם עבירה על התוק. נכון שהוא כבר בן תשעים ואולי היכולת שלו לשלוט על סוגיו נחלשה- אבל לשם כך קיימים בתי אבות, שם הוא יכול לדבר כאוות נפשו והמשפלה הפוליטית שלו תחיך.

"The Town"

בן אפלאק מחשב עד לאחרונה ליפיוף הוליוודי שמפיע בסרטי צ'יקס פוליקס ושאר הזמנים רומנטיים. על כן היה מפתיע מאוד לראות אותו מביים ומשחק כפושע בסרטי שמנסה לשבור ולהשתחרר ממעגל הפשע. הסרט מרתק מאוד, גדוש בשוקנים משליים וונריים משכנע, שגם הוא נבתב על ידי אפלאק. אין מה לומר- שידידנו מבודך.

שמיעה בסולם קורן.

On Campus

Jewish Business Network expands across Canada

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

Matan Hazanov wants to inspire business students to get involved in the Jewish community.

One casino night at a time.

Hazanov, along with Adam Renkosinki and Jordan Bizouati, noticed that their Jewish classmates in York University's Schulich School of Business weren't engaging with the school's Jewish community.

This is partly why, last year, the three students started the Jewish Business Network (JBN), a social organization that helps Jewish business students to network, socialize, find internships and connect to the wider Jewish community.

"Over 75 per cent of Jewish students in business are not involved in anything Jewish," said Hazanov, JBN's national director and a fourth-year student at Schulich.

"We realized it's not because they don't want to be involved, it's because there's a lack of incentive to be involved."

At JBN, students are offered networking oppaortunities with successful Jewish businesspeople, social nights, Shabbat dinners and internship options.

"Business students want to succeed. One of the main ways they'll do that is by getting internships and meeting successful businesspeople," Hazanov said.

In addition to creating business opportunities, JBN also strives to infuse its events with Jewish values.

"Every single one of our events has Jewish educational content. Our education is largely focused on business ethics, happiness, relieving stress... A lot of these concepts can be derived from Judaism."

And the organization has been well received. While the group started out with eight student leaders last year, they now have 40 nationally.

The organization recently launched chapters at schools including Ryerson University, The University of Western Ontario, Queen's University, McMaster University, the University of Toronto and the University of Winnipeg.

"All we're trying to do is inspire Jewish students to take responsibility for the Jewish community," Hazanov said.

But running JBN isn't an easy task. Or a cheap one. Hazanov and his peers have been fundraising and approaching private donors in the community to support the group's events, which included a trip to New York last year.

"Every single thing costs money. I approach private donors, anyone that wants to get more involved in the Jewish community and wants to develop Jewish leaders," he said.

Max Kalles, the founder of AutoShopit.com, sees the value in JBN.

JBN members on a group trip to New York last year

"I decided to get involved. One of the main reasons was, when I was in university, there was no JBN. When I graduated, I found that I really didn't know what to do," said Kalles, who graduated from Carleton University in 2004 with a degree in international business.

"When I heard that there was an organization whose goal was giving Jewish business students an edge, I thought it was a great idea."

Kalles spoke to members of JBN about starting a business and the importance of networking.

"I tried to instil in them the value of joining a network. I found, when running our business, the [social] network was what allowed us to be successful," he said.

Tyler Gould, a third-year business student majoring in accounting at Ryerson University, understands the importance of networking.

"The job market, especially now, is not so good. Business is who you know, not what you know," said Gould, president of JBN's chapter at Ryerson, where the organization is in the process of becoming an official campus group.

Gould sees JBN as a way to spread Jewish values in business.

"We thought this would be a good way to get Jews who were uninvolved to actually care and come to events," he said.

"We wanted to show people that Jewish values [like don't lie, cheat and steal] are relevant in business."

For more information, visit www.thejbn.ca.

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Spice of Life

Temptations in Jerusalem

By SYBIL KAPLAN
Special to The CJN

Dafna Baruch is the chef and owner of two successful Jerusalem restaurants. The first, Pituim (which means temptations), is in the German Colony just off Emek Refaim. Her second restaurant is in the Mamilla Mall, just above the new Gap store.

This 34-year-old mother of three exudes a lot of self-confidence, creativity and talent.

Baruch was born in Jerusalem, and her parents were born in Jerusalem, although her father's parents came from Turkey. Her mother's parents were many-generation Jerusalemites on one side, and her grandmother was from Lebanon.

"All my life until the age of 15, I never stepped into the kitchen!" she exclaims.

When she took a cooking course at school, she says, "for the first time, I saw I had a talent for this," but her mother didn't want her in the kitchen.

In the army, she taught martial arts because she had a black belt in taekwondo and then did some post-army travelling in the United States.

When she returned to Israel in 1994, she knew she wanted to do two things – cook and learn archeology. Since the timing was wrong to start university, she started cooking for a French restaurant and enrolled in the culinary course at Hadassah College.

She married Meir, a personal trainer, and by the time she had completed her Hadassah course, she was sous-chef at the French restaurant.

Baruch decided that "a good chef has to know to cook and to bake, and this was what I wanted to do," and she went to London for six months to study pastry at Le Cordon Bleu.

When she returned, a friend of her husband's told her his dream was to open a restaurant, but only with her. So at the age of 23 and pregnant, she opened a very small place in the German Colony, called Pituim, temptations.

Dafna Baruch at one of her restaurants. *[Photos by Barry A. Kaplan]*

Why this name?

"When I thought of a name, I thought it was exactly what I do. Everyone will go and say, 'You can tempt me today,'" since it was more bakery than restaurant.

After about three years, Baruch decided to move to a bigger space, at the side of German Colony, "so people who come would come to me, not the street," she said. She chose a place "with history," in a building 70 or 80 years old that she remembered from when she was six years old.

Inside are wooden chairs and tables with red checkered tablecloths in an area that seats about 21; in the garden with wicker chairs, there are seats for about 40.

Baruch later opened a second restaurant in Mamilla Mall. "I really like this place. It's one of the most beautiful malls in Israel. Also, my father was born in Mamilla; it was the border then. When he was two years old or younger, he went across the border and the Jordanian soldiers were pointing their guns at him and my grandmother was trying to get him back with candy."

Continued on page 35

Beth Tikvah Synagogue - 3080 Bayview Ave. Toronto

LUNCH & LEARN TUESDAYS – FALL 2010
Celebrating its 100th Program

Lunch 12:15 - Learn 12:45

October 19
Cantor Beny Maissner, Cantor and Director of Music at Holy Blossom Temple. Cantor in Residence at Hebrew Union College's 3 campuses in New York, Cincinnati and Jerusalem, with piano accompanist, Nadia Adler, will give a musical presentation of **The Hebrew Art Song: Hebrew Language Through Poetry and Song.**

October 26
Dr. Ronald Pruessen, Professor in the Department of History at the University of Toronto. With President Obama's falling approval ratings and the continued stagnation of the U.S. economy, what does the future hold? **The Mid-term U.S. Elections, The Blue/Red Divide**

November 2
Gerald Ziedenberg, historian, Chair of Beth Tikvah's Adult Education Committee. While Jews comprise 0.25% of the world's population, they account for 22% of the Nobel Prize winners between 1901 and 2009. **The Nobel Prize and the Jews.**

November 9
Dr. Doris Bergen, Chair of Holocaust Studies at the University of Toronto and author of numerous articles on religion, ethnicity and gender in WWII. **'Holocaust Survivors and Holocaust Historians: Changing (and Challenging) Relations'**
Part of Toronto's Holocaust Education Week

November 16
Corey Keeble, Curator at the Royal Ontario Museum in the Department of World Cultures. He has been a Lunch and Learn speaker in the past and is returning by popular demand. **An Architectural History of Toronto - 1800 to 1970**

November 23
Gary Clement is the award winning political cartoonist for the National Post since the paper's founding in 1998. He is also a freelance illustrator and author of children's books including Governor General Award winner The Great Poochini. **Seriously Funny: My Life as a Cartoonist.**

November 30
Marina Nemat spent 2 years as a political prisoner in the Evin prison. Author of her memoir, international best seller, Prisoner of Tehran (2007) and soon to be published book After Tehran: A Life Reclaimed (fall 2010). Nemat was awarded the first Human Dignity Prize by the European Parliament in 2007. **Prisoners in Iran**

December 7
John Tory Canadian businessman, political activist, former leader of the Conservative Party of Ontario and currently a radio broadcaster. He will bring insights into the issues that matter to Torontonians.

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Beth Tikvah Synagogue - 3080 Bayview Ave. Toronto

JUSTICE AND RETRIBUTION

Tuesday, October 12th, 7:00 p.m. **The Music Box** (1989)
Starring Jessica Lange 124 min
Hungarian immigrant Mike Laszlo has done well for himself since arriving in the USA nearly 50 years ago. He is particularly proud of his daughter, Ann, a successful lawyer. Following the release of some secret WWII records by the Russians, Mike finds himself accused of being a notorious war criminal. He's convinced it's a communist plot to discredit him and insists that Ann defend him in court.
$5. at the door.

Monday, October 18th, 7:00 p.m. **Inglourious Basterds** (2009)
Directed by Quentin Tarantino 153 min
In Nazi occupied France, a young Jewish refugee witnesses the slaughter of her family by the Germans. Narrowly escaping with her life, she plots her revenge several years later when a German war hero takes a romantic interest in her and arranges an illustrious movie premiere at the theater she now runs. With the promise of every major Nazi officer in attendance, the event catches the attention of the "Basterds", a group of Jewish-American guerilla soldiers. The relentless executioners and the conspiring young girl's plans are set in motion. Their paths will cross during a fateful evening.
$5. at the door.

Each presentation includes an introduction and commentary by:
- Larry Anklewicz – Programming Coordinator, Toronto Jewish Film Festival
- Gerald Ziedenberg – Lecturer and Historian

Monday, October 25th, 8:00 p.m. **NO CHARGE.**

A panel discussion, moderated by Gerald Ziedenberg, will focus on the moral, ethical and historical issues raised by these movies.

Panelists:
- Rabbi Wayne Allen (Beth Tikvah)
- Prof. Derek Penslar (University of Toronto)
- Prof. Rebecca Whittmann (University of Toronto)
- Larry Anklewicz (Programming Coordinator, TJFF)

This Series is sponsored by
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Restaurant showcases 25 desserts

Continued from page 34

Pituim is a kosher mehadrin dairy restaurant where one can have breakfast, lunch or dinner. Breakfast can be for one or two, and includes a long list of sandwiches that come with a salad. Specialties include a portobello burger, a round and crispy polenta with mushroom and pesto and white wine, lasagna, and fish such as salmon with red wine and almonds. There are also soups, salads, pastas and quiches. Pituim salad has lettuce, avocado, red grapefruit, pine nuts and fried Bulgarian cheese in a mustard vinaigrette. There is a fixed menu, but some changes are made every season. No one should leave the table without a temptation such as mousse cakes, tarts and pies or a special temptation – hot chocolate souffle.

The showcase features 25 different desserts, which Baruch makes herself, including sweets to buy and take home, in boxes with the restaurant's rolling pin logo.

Today, Baruch has three children, ages nine, five and two, and she is not done with Pituim.

"Now I have a project to open Temptations as a kosher bakery in Los Angeles. It's very interesting," she says. "I think it can work wonderfully."

Pituim is located at Rachel Imenu 5. Phone 02 566 2899
For Pituim Mamilla, phone 02 500 4006.

Here is one of Dafna Baruch's temptations.

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE WITH NOUGAT AND HAZELNUTS

Base
1/4 cup crushed cornflakes
3 1/2 oz. milk chocolate
2 tbsp. nougat (Hazelnut paste)

Filling
10 1/2 oz. dark chocolate
2 tbsp. nougat
13 oz. 42 per cent heavy cream
2 separated eggs plus 2 egg yolks
1/4 cup sugar

cocoa powder
chopped hazelnuts
hazelnuts dipped in chocolate

Preheat oven to 325. Place parchment paper in the bottom of a soufflé pan.

Melt milk chocolate in a double boiler. Blend together with nougat and mix with corn flakes. Pat mixture on the paper and bake in preheated 325-degree oven for 2-3 minutes. Let cool.

Melt dark chocolate with nougat in a double boiler.

Whip two egg whites, adding sugar as they get stiff. Set aside.

Whip heavy cream until it starts to get thick then add egg yolks, one at a time. Add chocolate with nougat. Fold in egg whites. Spoon mousse onto base. Freeze at least four hours.

Garnish with cocoa powder or chopped hazelnuts or hazelnuts dipped in chocolate.

Dafna Baruch preparing a dessert

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PROGRAMS FALL 2010

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Jewish Communities of the World
Free Soviet Jewry, The Movement & Its Outcome
Dr. Seymour "Epi" Epstein, an engaging speaker, talks about Soviet Jewry & shares anecdotes about past experiences when he was posted to this region by the *Joint Distribution Committee*

October 28
Jewish Canada: Immigrant Toronto, Portrait of a Jewish Past
Prof. Harold "Hesh" Troper, coauthor of *None Is too Many*, gives an illustrated talk about immigration and early Toronto

November 18
Jewish Canada: Great Personalities
J. B. Salzberg, His Life and Times
Prof. Adam Fuerstenberg will discuss the life of this colorful great Canadian

November 25
The Lives & Music of Broadway's Great Jewish Composers & Songs We Love to Sing: *Over the Rainbow*, Harold Arlen
Jordan Klapman, musician music historian speaks, plays piano, brings early recordings in the first of a continuing series

December 9
Chanukah Musical Celebration
Tasty *latkes*, good company, music and song by talented recording artist **Aviva Chernick**

Psychiatric centre accepts all as working 'members'

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — It has been up and running for only a few months in a renovated building off a parking lot at 6909 Decarie Blvd.

But the Donald Berman UP House clubhouse, a new non-denominational centre for adults with psychiatric disorders, is already forging partnerships with Jewish and other community agencies and can claim a number of Jewish figures among its founding supporters and benefactors.

The UP House, which opens officially Oct. 8, uses a model of a "community of people working together toward the common goal of recovery." The first such clubhouse in Quebec and one of more than 300 all over the world including in Israel, it's affiliated with the International Centre of Clubhouse Development (ICCD), established in 1948 in New York City as Fountain House.

UP House executive director Ruth McLellan said that "working together" is what makes this psychosocial rehabilitative model unique. Individuals with psychiatric problems – which could include bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or depression – join voluntarily as "members," with work a key element in building a positive sense of autonomy and self-empowerment.

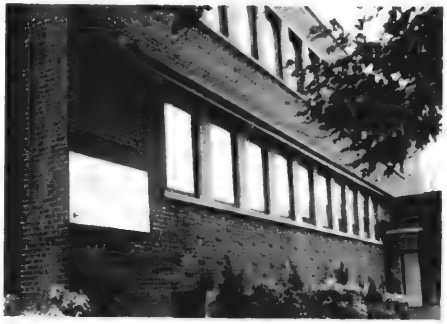
"They have responsibilities, and everything is work-activated," McLellan said. "Staff people and members work side by side. There are no therapy sessions."

The "UP" in UP House is an acronym for "Urban Pardes," a charitable organization established locally to fund the non-profit clubhouse and other charitable projects. "Pardes" is the Hebrew word for "orchard" or "garden," and in this case, also points to the level of Jewish input in UP House, even though it is non-sectarian. Significant participants and benefactors include the Donald Berman and other private foundations, as well as a number of Jewish individuals who prefer to remain unidentified.

McLellan pointed to a sign on the wall describing UP House's four main underpinnings: members have "a right to a place to come; a right to meaningful relationships; a right to work; and a place to return."

"This is what we're all about," she said. "We focus on the 'well' part of the person, to help them get in touch with who they are, with their hopes and dreams."

Already, McLellan said, local Jewish agencies such as Federation CJA's Agence Ometz, as well as the psychiatry department at the Jewish General Hospital, and non-Jewish agencies such as AMI-Québec and the Forward House, have welcomed the presence of an ICCD clubhouse in Quebec.



The new Donald Berman UP House, a clubhouse for people with psychiatric disorders.

"Someone at AMI-Québec said to me: 'Where were you 40 years ago?'" McLellan said.

A tour of the facility with McLellan showed how work in a congenial, collegial environment is what the place is all about and how effective it seems. Members can chose from any of three work units: administrative tasks such as filing and working on a newsletter; communications tasks such as reception and computer work; or kitchen-related work including food purchasing, cleanup, pricing and gardening.

There is a modern, stainless steel kitchen, a library and a bank of computers that members may use. Members may come and go as they please, McLellan pointed out, but they are expected to fulfil their obligations during the 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. day, which includes joint member-staff meetings. The morning and afternoon work periods are broken up by a healthful lunch prepared by members. Although there is a nominal $2 charge for lunch, UP House membership is free.

The clubhouse also has education and employment programs to give members the skills they need to achieve career goals.

"Everything they do here can be put onto a CV," McLellan said.

Launched unofficially in July, the UP House already has more than 90 members. There are about 20 other ICCD clubhouses across Canada, with many, if not most, also receiving financial support from the provinces in which they are located. While UP House is registered in Quebec as a charitable, non-profit institution, it is awaiting its full accreditation from ICCD.

UP House is also in the process of establishing its own website – it will be, www.uphouse.org – and its own Facebook page.

Meanwhile, for more information on UP House and clubhouse model, call 514-764-5599, e-mail McLellan at, ruth.mclellan@clubhouse.org, or go to the ICCD website at www.iccd.org.

It never hurts to be civil

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 28 years

Question: I am currently separated and my ex and I have joint custody. If she decided to move out of the city or the country, can she do that?

Answer: She would have to have your written approval or obtain a court order. Without your consent this would be very difficult, although it would be somewhat easier if she had sole custody of your child, according to the Ontario Court of Appeal. In reality, the trial division courts make decisions on the child's "best interests" on a case-by-case basis, even when the parent leaving has sole custody. However, if a parent with sole custody loses on the trial level, that parent may consider appealing to the Ontario Court of Appeal because sole custodial parents do very well up there on this issue.

Question: I have a one year old child with someone that I no longer have a relationship with — not even a civil relationship. All our communication is done via email. He pays his child support on time, but I want something "legal" in writing from him. Do I have to go to court?

Answer: You can either obtain a court order and alienate the guy or you can send him a friendly email – something like "Dear dad of my child who I don't have a civil relationship with any more. I think it's a good idea for both of us to sign a child support agreement to protect both of us. I attach a draft agreement my lawyer prepared. What do you think?" It never hurts to be civil. It doesn't necessarily lead to dancing.

Question: Can two brothers marry as a gay couple or two sisters marry as a lesbian couple in Ontario, then claim tax benefits?

Answer: Yes. The Marriage Act Regulations (Ontario and the Marriage (Prohibited Degrees) Act (Canada)) bar the lawful solemnization of marriage between a brother and sister, by whole or half blood or by court order of adoption. But these statues are silent about marriages between two sisters and/or between two brothers. Further, I cannot find anything in the Income Tax Act or its regulations. Even if there was such a provision it would likely be deemed unconstitutional.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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בית צדק
Beth Tzedec Congregation

Foster child speaks out about positive experiences

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

When Alex Smilansky, 23, was six years old, he raided mall restrooms with his older sister to obtain toilet paper.

"At that young age, it seemed normal for me to go hungry, and to wear several pairs of pants so I wouldn't feel my parents' [blows]," he said, speaking at the annual general meeting of Jewish Family & Child, held Sept. 21.

Now, the young man has a degree in kinesiology and health sciences from York University and is pursuing a master's degree in biomechanics.

Born in Molodova, Smilansky, who has two sisters, lived in Israel before moving here with his parents, "and it was then that the alcohol and abuse happened."

The siblings went into foster care, he said, after his sister ran away from home and told the police she was afraid to go back. "JF&CS was contacted, and I was brought to a foster home, where I lived in luxury. I had never seen such a life. I had three meals a day, and lots of toilet paper."

The siblings had visits with their parents for a number of years, he said, but their behaviour spiralled downward and the visits stopped. "Today, my father has disappeared, and I don't see my biological mother."

He was reunited with his older sister in a second foster home, he said, and was also set up with a big brother, who he still sees on a weekly basis.

Eventually, he said, his sisters were together in one foster home, and he was anxious to join them. "I would visit them, and play with their son. They invited me to live there when I was in Grade 4, and that is where I stayed until I started university. They are my real family. It is amazing to me that we had no parents, and [this family] stepped up."

Smilansky said that since he was seven, when he was taken into care by JF&CS, "the agency has provided tremendous support. I can't thank them enough for providing me with such positive experiences."

Howard Hurwitz, director of children's services at JF&CS, said that as one of the four children's aid societies in Toronto, it ensures that children are protected, and it provides support for families that can't provide a safe environment for their children.

"Alex's story is unique and inspiring. It is about strong connections to a community, and in particular to one family. It is also a story about working through challenges, and achieving success."

Also at the meeting, Ruth Ladovsky and Ahava Spillman were welcomed to the agency's board of directors, and Fay Geitzhals and Sandy Leibovitz were recognized for 25 years of service to the agency.

Teens get environmental lessons

Compiled by CJN Staff

MONTREAL — High school students are being encouraged to become involved with protecting the environment, and possibly helping to take part in the oil spill cleanup on the Gulf Coast this fall.

The Jewish Eco-Leadership Training Program for grades 9 and 10 Jewish students is being launched by Teva Quebec – The Jewish Coalition for the Environment, spearheaded by Rabbi Schachar Orenstein of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, and the Mona Elaine Adilman Endowment, in collaboration with Congregation Shaar Hashomayim.

Teva describes itself as a grassroots Jewish environmental education and advocacy group, founded a couple of years ago.

One of its major annual projects is taking part in a cleanup of the shoreline along the Lachine Canal. This year, prompted by the BP oil spill, the Adilman Endowment will sponsor this educational program for young Jewish people instead.

The inaugural six sessions of the Jewish eco-leadership program will focus on water resources within the context of what Judaism has to say about the environment.

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And now for something completely different: **HEEBONICS**

Former lawyer turns to children's book

By Rita Poliakov
Staff Reporter

Leanne Milech never really wanted to be a lawyer. But it seemed like a good idea at the time.

"I was always writing... Anyone that knew me would never be like, 'Leanne's going to become a lawyer,' said Milech, 29.

But after finishing her degree in film theory and religious studies at Queen's University, law seemed like the rational choice.

"While I was still in my fourth year at Queen's, I thought I wanted to be a film professor. I applied to Tisch [School of the Arts] in New York, but I didn't have the money," she said.

"I ended up with a year off, and I was totally discombobulated. Like anyone that freaks out, I was like, 'I'm going to take my LSATs'... It was totally out of fear."

From Day 1, Milech, who spent her time at Queen's taking as many writing courses as she could, knew law school wasn't for her. But it was sensible and stable.

"I hated it. I cried. I knew it was wrong for me. I had crazy anxiety, but everyone said, 'Maybe it'll get better.' I ended up sticking it out and doing well," she said of her time at the University of Western Ontario, where she finished law school.

"I was in a whole bunch of debt. I needed a job on Bay Street and I ended up getting one, but it never felt right."

Milech began working at Heenan Blaikie, a Canadian law firm, as a first-year general corporate lawyer.

"That was when the economy was tanking. It was great they wanted me, and frankly, I needed the money because of my debt load, so I just braced myself and said, 'I'm going to try it.'

"I woke up every day feeling like I'm sitting down and doing the wrong thing with my time."

And then, seemingly out of nowhere, the right thing came along.

Alicia Belvedere, left, and Leanne Milech are the creators of Picture It Picture Books, whose publications allow kids to draw their own illustrations.

About a year ago, Alicia Belvedere, 29, a friend of Milech's and an elementary school teacher, asked Milech to write a story she could read to her Grade 4 class.

Belvedere liked the story so much, she wanted to publish it, but Milech disagreed.

"I was like, no, I know how hard it is to get a book published. But she was like, 'Why don't we do it ourselves.'"

As they talked about the idea, Milech started worrying about illustrations.

"[Belvedere] said, 'What if no one illustrates it? What if we made kids' books that kids illustrate themselves,'" Milech said.

"I started researching it, and no one had ever done it before."

Milech liked the idea, so as a side project, she started working on another story with Belvedere, called *Pippa's Planet-Saving Tears*, about water conservation. The friends published 100 copies of their book through Create Space, an online publishing company.

"You upload a Word file, they print and bind it and send it to you. It ended up being $3 a book, and it was a really good way to start."

Last September, while still working at the law firm, Milech went with Belvedere to their first crafts fair, where they sold seven copies of their book.

"And we were so excited. We couldn't believe it," Milech said.

The two continued to go to various fairs, and in January, Milech decided to take a leap.

"I realized I didn't want to do my job anymore, so I quit. It was incredibly scary. Even though I knew it was the right thing, it was like I was leaving my safety net," she said.

"I was so unhappy because I was suppressing a whole side of myself. I had no time to be creative and be myself, and that won out. It sounds so dramatic, but I felt like I was chipping away at my soul everyday."

Milech found a few part-time jobs and started concentrating on Picture It Picture Books, a company that she started with Belvedere.

After the Pippa book, which they eventually discontinued, the friends created interactive books like *Imagining Me*, where kids can draw their futures, *My Alphabet and One, Deux, Three*, a bilingual counting book.

Other books include *Goodnight Dreams*, about a girl who's never had a dream, and *The Moon Story*, about a clumsy boy who travels to the moon because he's afraid to do any activities on Earth.

The books were eventually purchased by Mastermind and Indigo and should hit stores soon.

"It's just to get [kids] to be creative again. We find that so many of the activities kids do are passive – like watching TV. We're trying to inspire imagination."

Milech, whose mother was a paranoid schizophrenic, has always turned to the arts as an escape.

"Since I was a baby, she would get sick two times a year with psychotic episodes. She was always on medication and hospitalized. She passed away a few years ago," Milech said.

"I think that's part of why I was so drawn to the arts and I spent so much time reading and watching movies. It was something I used as an escape from things that were going on at home.

"If I'd had books like these when I was growing up, I would have loved them."

For more information, visit pictureitpicturebooks.com

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Ahmadinejad's visit to Lebanon concerns Israel

By AVI ISSACHAROFF, BARAK RAVID and AMOS HAREL

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Israel has stepped up preparations for the visit of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Lebanon this week, during which he was scheduled to visit the country's border area with Israel.

Through UN, U.S. and French mediators, Israel urged the Lebanese government to prevent Ahmadinejad from visiting the border and engaging in what Jerusalem described as "provocation."

The Iranian leader was to visit Lebanon on Wednesday and Thursday, and was slated to visit the southern Lebanese villages of Bint Jbeil and Maroun al-Ras, each within a few kilometres of Israeli soil. The London-based newspaper *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* has reported that Ahmadinejad is interested in reaching the border fence to hurl stones at Israeli soldiers on the other side.

A top-ranking Israeli official said the Foreign Ministry and security services conducted security evaluations of Ahmadinejad's visit, and that Israel was engaged in military, diplomatic and public relations preparations in the days preceding it.

Last week, Israel sent messages to Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri and President Michel Suleiman through UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and the U.S. and French governments. Two weeks ago, National Security Council head Uzi Arad met in Paris with his French counterpart, Jean-David Levitte, and asked him to transfer messages to the Lebanese government stating that Jerusalem views Ahmadinejad's visit close to Israel's border as a provocative measure that could undermine regional stability and should therefore be cancelled. A similar message was delivered to U.S. officials.

Last week, Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman raised the issue in his meeting with Ban at UN headquarters in New York. Lieberman said his government is "extremely worried" about the Iranian president's visit.

Sources in Jerusalem added that even before Israel asked Lebanon to reconsider Ahmadinejad's stop in the country's south, senior U.S. and French officials had already done the same independently. American officials reportedly did so immediately following the Iranian president's speech at the UN General Assembly last month blaming the U.S. government for the Sept. 11 attacks.

"They told the Lebanese that it wouldn't be wise to facilitate Ahmadinejad's visit to the border," a high-ranking Israeli official said on condition of anonymity due to the subject's sensitive nature.

The Lebanese government has yet to respond affirmatively to the requests. The country's media, however, reported recently that while Suleiman did not oppose Ahmadinejad's arrival per se, he looked into whether the visit conformed with diplomatic protocol, undermined Lebanon's security or influenced the country's relations with "other countries" – presumably Israel.

Recent months have seen heightened tensions along the Israel-Lebanon border. In early August, a battalion commander in the Israel Defence Forces reserves, Dov Harari, was killed by an unidentified sniper near Kibbutz Manara.

Defence officials say Hezbollah believes it has an "open account" with Israel over the 2008 assassination of Imad Mughniyeh, one of its top commanders, a strike the militant group attributes to Israel. Hezbollah, they said, is planning a series of terrorist attacks in revenge for Mughniyeh's death.

Meanwhile, Syrian President Bashar Assad arrived in Tehran yesterday for a one-day visit. Iranian news agencies reported that Assad was welcomed by Ahmadinejad in an official state ceremony and met later with Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Ahmadinejad presented Assad with an award for Syria's support of Hamas and Hezbollah, and Syrian media reported that the two leaders issued a joint statement indicating that Israel's actions – "Judaizing" Jerusalem, settlement building and the blockade on Gaza – prove it is not interested in peace.

Assad said the current attempts to revive Israeli-Palestinian dialogue have yielded no results, and represent little more than an attempt by U.S. President Barack Obama to accumulate political capital.

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Israel extends construction freeze for 60 days

Continued from page 1

"No letter was sent to the prime minister. We are not going to comment on sensitive diplomatic matters," said Benjamin Chang, deputy spokesperson for the White House National Security Council.

It is not clear, however, whether Obama could have made the offer via a means other than a letter.

Most of the American favours that Obama's letter was said to contain are critical to Israel's strategic security needs that Netanyahu has been seeking for years.

Other commitments that Obama reportedly offered Netanyahu include an agreement not to ask for any further building freeze extensions, an agreement to veto any anti-Israel UN Security Council resolution in the next year and an agreement that the future fate of the settlements will be dealt with only as part of a final-status agreement with the Palestinians.

Obama's letter was also said to include a series of guarantees to prevent the smuggling of weapons and missiles into a Palestinian state, a lengthy period of interim security arrangements in the Jordan Valley and a comprehensive regional defence pact for protection from Iran to follow the establishment of the Palestinian state.

The U.S. president also reportedly vowed to upgrade Israel's security capabilities and increase the $3-billion security aid package that Israel receives annually. The letter included commitments to advanced weapons and early-warning systems, including satellites.

Mideast peace talks at impasse: Abbas

By AVI ISSACHAROFF AND BARAK RAVID

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Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said Sunday that he was holding Israel responsible for the impasse in direct negotiations, but vowed to continue to search for solutions that could yield to progress in the recently renewed peace process.

Speaking to reporters after his meeting with Jordanian King Abdullah II, Abbas said "there is an impasse, because we cannot carry on with the negotiations, and we have to follow up this impasse with the Arab side."

"Of course, we are not going to sever ties with the Americans, and we will continue to have contacts with them to search for solutions, but the settlement building should stop and then we will return to the negotiating table," Abbas said.

The PA leader's comments came a day after the Palestinian Liberation Organization announced it would halt direct talks with Israel as long as settlement construction continues. The decision was announced by the general secretary of the PLO, Yasser Abed Rabbo.

Mahmoud Abbas

Abdullah also met Sunday with U.S. envoy George Mitchell, who was shuttling between Jordan and Cairo last weekend in an effort to salvage the peace negotiations.

A statement from the royal court said Mitchell briefed the monarch on his efforts to ensure the talks continue following the expiry of Israel's construction moratorium.

Abdullah meanwhile underlined the "pivotal U.S. role in peace efforts and in finding the suitable environment for continuing the peace negotiations and the achievement of progress towards resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of the two-state vision," according to the statement.

Abdullah expressed backing for the Palestinian stance and warned that "more tension and war" would be a consequence of failure to find peace in the Middle East.

In Cairo earlier on Sunday, Mitchell said both Israel and the Palestinians wanted to continue direct peace negotiations, despite an ongoing dispute over Israel's refusal to renew its moratorium on construction in West Bank settlements.

"Both the governments of Israel and the Palestinian Authority have asked us to continue these discussions in an effort to establish the conditions under which they can continue direct negotiations," Mitchell wrote in a statement posted on the U.S. Embassy in Cairo's website. "They do not want to stop the talks."

Hamas, meanwhile, welcomed the PLO decision to suspend peace talks with Israel as "a good step," but said it needed to be followed by others "to ensure it is not a tactical decision."

"Our position concerning the negotiations is clear, in that we reject being dependent on the American will," said Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, whose movement rejects any permanent accommodation with Israel.

Despite the PLO's declaration, the Palestinian leadership and Arab countries appear in no hurry to actually make the decision final. In all probability, the Americans have requested time from the Arab states to reach a compromise on the settlement issue.

A meeting of the Arab League monitoring committee on the Arab peace initiative, which was initially scheduled to decide Monday on the future of talks with Israel, was deferred until Wednesday and then again until Friday. It will be held in Libya on the sidelines of this week's Arab summit meeting there.

Abed Rabbo said the Palestinian leadership viewed Israel as responsible for the failure of the talks and for scuttling American and other international efforts. At the same time, the leadership welcomed the attempts at reconciliation with Hamas, following understandings reached last week between senior Hamas and Fatah officials on the renewal of talks between the organizations.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office has said efforts to find a creative solution on the matter continue, but last weekend the prime minister's bureau began pointing fingers at the Palestinians in advance of a possible total halt to the talks.

Following the PLO's announcement of the suspension of talks, Netanyahu released a statement calling for Abbas to continue negotiating, with the goal of achieving a peace agreement within a year.

The prime minister said this must be achieved by sitting around the negotiating table rather than leaving it. Netanyahu has said there is still a chance that a compromise can be reached, enabling the continuation of the direct talks.

In surprise remarks, Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Ahmed Aboul-Gheit was critical in remarks to the London-based newspaper *Al-Hayat* of the view that there should no longer be direct talks with Israel as long as settlement construction continues.

He said such an approach would mean a lost opportunity to set the future borders of a Palestinian state. Aboul-Gheit also hinted that Hosni Mubarak would run for re-election in Egyptian presidential elections in November 2011.

Netanyahu will not agree to any compromise that involves a resumption of the settlement construction freeze. He is currently suggesting a commitment to restrained construction activity, possibly under American supervision.

He told advisers on Friday that such restrained building would not in any way affect final borders and said that unlike Israel, the Palestinians were becoming less flexible.

Israel Briefs

Nobel laureate detained

An Irish peace activist was refused entry to Israel because of her involvement in a Gaza-bound flotilla. Northern Ireland Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maisead Maquire was fighting to be allowed to enter Israel Sept. 29, a day after being detained at Ben-Gurion Airport and threatened with deportation. Maguire reportedly was told she would not be allowed to enter Israel for 10 years following her participation in a Gaza-bound aid flotilla in June. At the time she signed a document agreeing not to enter Israel again without a special permit, *Ha'aretz* reported. Maguire, who was scheduled to meet a group of women touring Israel and Palestinian areas to learn about the work of female peace activists, spent the night in an Israeli detention center after refusing to board a plane back to Britain, and was scheduled to have an emergency hearing at a Petah Tikvah court. She arrived in Israel the same day as the interception of a boat carrying Jewish peace activists bound for Gaza carrying a small cargo of symbolic humanitarian goods.

The Israeli Supreme Court on Monday proposed a compromise by which she could remain in Israel until Wednesday and meet as scheduled with the women's human rights delegation.

New community launched

Israel launched its first government-sponsored community for former Gaza settlers, five years after their evacuation. Five families moved Sept. 27 into Naveh, one of six towns planned for a regional community to be named Halutza several miles from the borders with Gaza and Egypt.

Soldiers convicted

An Israeli military court convicted two soldiers of using a Palestinian child as a human shield during the Gaza war. The Israeli soldiers were convicted Oct. 3 of inappropriate behavior and overstepping authority for forcing an 11-year-old Palestinian boy to open bags they believed to be armed with explosives during a search conducted in Gaza City in January 2009. They were the first convictions on the use of human shields, which is prohibited by Israeli military protocol, *Ha'aretz* reported.

AOL buys Israeli firm

AOL has purchased an Israeli web video start-up firm. The deal to acquire 5min Media is reported to be at about $65 million, the Israeli business daily *Globes* reported. The three-year-old firm produces short how-to videos, and also allows people to upload instructional videos lasting less than 5 minutes, which are popular on search engines. The company, headquartered in New York has offices in Tel Aviv, and has a library of more than 200,000 videos. It's AOL's fifth acquisition in Israel.

With files from JTA

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Israel & the Jewish World

Obama aide steps down

JTA

WASHINGTON — Rahm Emanuel, United States President Barack Obama's chief of staff, has quit to run for Chicago mayor.

Emanuel, who resigned last Friday, reportedly was to start campaigning for the top job in his hometown on Sunday.

Emanuel focused mostly on shepherding domestic initiatives through Congress since assuming the job in January 2009. He was very involved in passing health care reform.

Rahm Emanuel

The son of an Israeli doctor who moved to the United States in the 1950s, Emanuel, who speaks Hebrew, also played a role in reaching out to Israeli leaders when tensions between the Obama and Netanyahu administrations flared earlier this year over settlement building.

Emanuel spoke emotionally of his parents at his departure ceremony.

"Both my parents raised me to give something back to the country and the community that has given us so much, and I want to thank you for the opportunity to repay in a small portion of the blessings this country has given my family," he said to Obama. "I give you my word that even as I leave the White House, I will never leave that spirit of service behind."

Peter Rouse, a senior aide, was named to replace Emanuel. Rouse, who was Obama's chief of staff when he was a senator from Illinois, has close relations with Jewish groups.

Berlusconi Jewish joke draws rebuke from Vatican

By SAVIONA MANE

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

ROME — The Vatican journal and the Italian bishops' daily newsletter condemned a "Jewish joke" told by Italian Prime Minister Sylvio Berlusconi on his birthday last week.

Berlusconi, who turned 74, jocularly told well wishers a joke about about a Jew that charged another Jew 3,000 euros a day to hide him during the Holocaust. "The Jew says, the question now is whether we should tell him Hitler is dead and the war is over," Berlusconi recounted as the punchline.

The joke, which was recorded on video, was quickly distributed on the Internet by major daily *La Repubblica*.

"This is an offense to the sacred memory of six million victims of the Holocaust," the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* wrote. The Bishops' newspaper *Avvenire* also slammed Berlusconi.

Amos Luzatto, former head of the Jewish community of Italy, told daily *La Stampa* that "a public figure should act with a degree of caution," noting the joke was reinforcing one of the worst anti-Semitic stereotypes.

Berlusconi's joke comes only days after public outrage over comments by his close associate Giuseppe Ciarrapico, who mocked dissidents in the ruling party by asking if they've ordered themselves skullcaps yet, "because he who betrays once, always betrays."

This is not the first time Berlusconi has tried to joke about Jews and the Holocaust. Last month, he told a joke about Hitler being persuaded to return to power, and warning that "this time, I'm going to be evil."

In 2003, he claimed that Italian Fascist leader Benito Mussolini "did not kill anyone, but sent people to vacation."

CNN sacks anchor

JTA

WASHINGTON — CNN fired anchorman Rick Sanchez after he suggested that Jews run the news business.

Sanchez made his remarks in a freewheeling exchange Sept. 30 with Pete Dominick, a Latino stand-up comedian and radio show host. Dominick is friends with Jon Stewart, the faux-news Comedy Central star who has made Sanchez's robust style the butt of many jokes.

Rick Sanchez

Sanchez, a native of Cuba, alleged that Stewart singled him out because of white bigotry.

Dominick pushed back, saying that Stewart, because he is Jewish, is himself a member of a minority.

"I'm telling you that everybody who runs CNN is a lot like Stewart, and a lot of people who run all the other networks are a lot like Stewart, and to imply that somehow they, the people in this country who are Jewish, are an oppressed minority? Yeah," he said.

On Oct. 1, Sanchez's 3 p.m. broadcast did not appear. At 6 p.m., in a short statement, CNN said he no longer worked for the network.

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CJN Profile

Music network head connects with young audiences

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

Brad Schwartz, the senior vice-president and general manager of the Much MTV Group, says 1992 was a momentous year in his life.

"I was a little 21-year-old kid living in New York City for the first time, working for Lorne Michaels – another great Canadian Jewish man – who became my mentor. I learned a tremendous amount from him working at *Saturday Night Live*," Schwartz says from his downtown Toronto office at CTVglobemedia.

Schwartz is now at the helm of CTV's MuchMusic and MTV channels which broadcast hit shows aimed at young audiences, including *Degrassi*, *Pretty Little Liars* and *Jersey Shore*.

His passion for the arts began at Toronto's Young People's Theatre when he was 11 years old. He also acted at summer camp and at Port Hope's Trinity College, his high school, where he won the best actor award.

At the University of Pennsylvania, Schwartz graduated with a degree in communications and marketing. He took a directing class and worked on a few plays, but once he became Michaels' assistant at *Saturday Night Live*, he began to focus on television.

"It happened to be an amazing year – it was *Saturday Night Live*'s highest rated year ever. It was an election year, and nobody does political humour better than *Saturday Night Live*," the Toronto-born Schwartz says.

Musical guests on the show that year ranged from Mick Jagger to Madonna to Paul McCartney. It was also the year that David Letterman left NBC for CBS, and NBC asked Michaels to create a new late-night show to follow *The Tonight Show*.

"So there I was, learning from Lorne again as we created the Conan O'Brien Show – not a bad young apprentice year!" Schwartz says with a laugh.

Schwartz then went to Broadway Video, Michaels' production company. "There, I managed rock bands and worked on comedy records they were producing for Jimmy Fallon and Norm MacDonald."

When Michaels bought The Burly Bear Network, a TV station for college and university students, Schwartz became director of marketing and business development, helping build it into the largest college television network in the United States.

After Burly Bear was sold to National Lampoon in 2002, Schwartz became director of Global Marketing Partnerships at MTV Networks International based in New York, the largest television network in the world, with a reach of more than a billion people.

When MTV Networks International partnered with CTV in 2005 to bring MTV to Canada, Schwartz returned to his native land.

"After CTV closed the deal, they needed someone to run it, and I guess I was the only Canadian in the room," Schwartz jokes.

In 2006, Schwartz was named one of the Top 35 Under 35 by *The Hollywood Reporter*.

One of his proudest accomplishments is the annual *MuchMusic Video Awards* show that recently brought some spectacular talent to Toronto including its host Miley Cyrus and performers Katy Perry, Adam Lambert, Drake and Justin Bieber.

Brad Schwartz

"That's one of those nation-building events that pulls together young people all across the country into one big evening. We had the biggest numbers ever on that show. It's currently the No. 1 show for total audience in all of specialty TV, if you don't count sports," Schwartz says.

He's also very proud of MTV Canada's *The After Show*, hosted by Dan Levy and Jessi Cruikshank, which gave audiences a platform to discuss the reality show *The Hills*, about a group of Los Angeles friends.

"*The After Show* was way ahead of its time. One of the big trends we've noticed in young people is the communication explosion – young people are communicating with each other more than any time in history, whether it's through their mobile phones or texting or Twitter or through Facebook," Schwartz says.

"We created a show that hit all of those trends. It broke the mould – there was a two-way conversation featuring live webcams, a live television audience, phone questions, twitter questions. It became a show that gathered the community of *Hills*' fans across the country and gave them a place to talk. This show became like a live Facebook group, and the end result made our audience closer, [more] connected to us."

Schwartz takes the responsibility of running a network that speaks to over 40 per cent of young Canadians very seriously by supporting organizations like Free The Children, War Child, Plan Canada and Kids Help Phone.

"That's very important to us. Even though we can air *Jersey Shore*, *Teen Mom* and *Degrassi*, we also have to do some good, and I'm very proud of all the good that we do," he says.

Schwartz is excited about their fall TV lineup, which will include the return of the popular *MuchOnDemand*, a live show that features VJs interviewing top artists. The show went on hiatus while they reconstructed the set into a high-definition studio, but it will be coming back at the end of October or early November.

Schwartz and his team are also developing another show with Dan Levy, whom he considers a special Canadian talent.

"I've always loved being surrounded by creative people, whether it's at *Saturday Night Live* or here at MuchMusic and MTV," Schwartz says. "What I love to do is find the highest mountaintop, take the biggest megaphone and scream to the widest audience about that amazing creative content. I love creativity and try and connect it to people."

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The picturesque towns of Monet's Normandy

By WOLF ARNOLD
Special to The CJN

On the Norman coast between Fécamp and Le Havre with its boundless space and windswept waves, the artist Claude Monet spent a childhood of play and discovery. The hollows in cliffs carved out by the pounding sea were places to explore when he ran and played on mats of grass covering the cliffs. The shrieks of seagulls hovering in the upwinds were the cry of nature while sea and sky appeared in moods of constant change

"School was like a prison," Monet later said of his youth. His Norman character, stubborn, seeking independence, and his reluctance to submit to authority, may have had its roots here on the English Channel coast.

It was in the harbour at Fécamp that Monet, when destitute, thrown out of an inn and driven to despair, attempted to drown himself. It was a foolish thing, but "no harm came to me," he wrote to his close friend artist Frederic Bazille.

Along the road that skirts the coast, you come the small town of Yport, where you can watch fishermen mending their nets while the expanse of the channel looms in the hazy distance. Farther on this road, where green pastures with grazing cattle accompany you, lies Etretat, a pretty resort situated between cliffs that open to a pebble-stoned beach. During the season, the town is full of life and when the sea is calm, the little bay is dotted with windsurfers and sailboats. The cliffs are the most beautiful in this area, called the Côte d'Albatre, the Alabaster Coast

On the right-hand side of the beach is the Falaise d'Amont, while to the left stands the imposing Falaise d'Aval. On the Falaise d'Amont, which can be reached by car, is a small museum and a monument dedicated to two aviators who in, May 1927, attempted a flight from Paris to New York. They were last sighted over Etretat and never seen again. Neither their bodies nor the wreckage of the plane was ever found.

Walk along the crest of the Falaise d'Aval with the channel on your right and meadows on your left, and soon another vista unfolds with the chalk-white Aiguille d'Etretat, the Needle of Etretat, rising from the blue waters. The sight is nothing less than spectacular and immediately evokes Monet's seascapes. The artist painted here during better times in 1883, and you'll wonder how he managed to descend to the secluded beach below which seems accessible only by rowboat.

Further west, the estuary of the Seine comes into sight, marrying the river with the sea. Here at Sainte-Adresse, a suburb of Le Havre and Monet's hometown, tall cliffs tower over the channel. On a grassy plateau that falls abruptly down to the channel, children play and people walk their dogs. You can look down on Le Havre and its harbour where ferries depart for the British Isles while freighters steam to and fro or lie anchored farther out.

Sainte-Adresse used to be a fishing village, but thanks to the initiative of a Paris merchant it evolved before World War I into a pleasant town with villas facing the sea, most of them, one would imagine, homes of retired sea captains.

The Côte de Grace lies on the opposite side of the estuary. Its principal town is Honfleur, a fishing community and a delightful market town. You can reach Honfleur from Le Havre on the Pont de Normandie, but if you take the Tancarville Bridge farther upstream, the approach is more rewarding as the road brings you to Honfleur. You'll pass through a lovely countryside of half-timbered farmhouses, meadows and sloping apple orchards, while here and there on your right, you'll glimpse the shining band of the Seine.

You would agree with Monet's friend Bazille when he first laid eyes on this countryside. The friends were travelling downriver on a steamboat from Rouen to Honfleur, and impressed by the banks of the Seine with its lush greenery, Bazille, more accustomed to the rocks and pines of his native Midi, wrote to his parents in Montpellier, "You will not see richer meadows or more beautiful trees anywhere; horses and cattle graze freely everywhere."

The friends took rooms at a baker's shop and spent their days painting at a farm called Saint-Siméon located on the heights above Honfleur. There they worked with Eugène Boudin and other artists. It was Boudin, a son of Honfleur, who discovered caricatures by the young Monet displayed in a framemaker's window. Boudin was a passionate painter of the sea, but loved even more to paint the sky with its endless changing clouds. He encouraged Monet to work in the open air, and the young artist entered a world of magic. "It was as if a veil had been removed," Monet recalled later.

A general view of Etretat *[Wolf Arnold photos]*

A bakery shop in Honfleur

Boudin taught him that the changing light of the day changes the scene from moment to moment before the eye of the painter, that perception was everything.

Boudin also introduced his fellow painters to the Côte de Grace, among them the Realist master Gustave Courbet and the Dutch artist Johann-Barthold Jongkind. They congregated at the Saint-Siméon, where the owner, a kindly woman called Mère Toutain, provided for a variety of artists and sometimes fed, consoled and lodged them. Now a country hotel with a restaurant, the Saint-Siméon is the most famous watering hole in this neck of the woods.

Since then, painters and men of letters have journeyed to Honfleur, drawn by its beauty and quiet. The town's heart, the Vieux Bassin, is the main attraction with its slate-covered buildings, tall and narrow, which reflect in the water, their shimmering image reminiscent of an Impressionist painting.

Try to get the flavour of this historic place by strolling along the picturesque streets and try to find the rue de la Bavolle, which Monet painted, then reward yourself with a visit at a restaurant in the place Ste. Catherine. From here you can observe life in this charming town, stroll around the old harbour from which Samuel de Champlain set sail for Canada, or just walk over to the jetty and watch the fishing boats returning from the sea.

At the Grand Palais in Paris, the first retrospective in 30 years shows works by Claude Monet. The show runs until January 2011.

Eleven of Monet's studies of the Rouen Cathedral will be on display at the city's Musée des Beaux-Arts.

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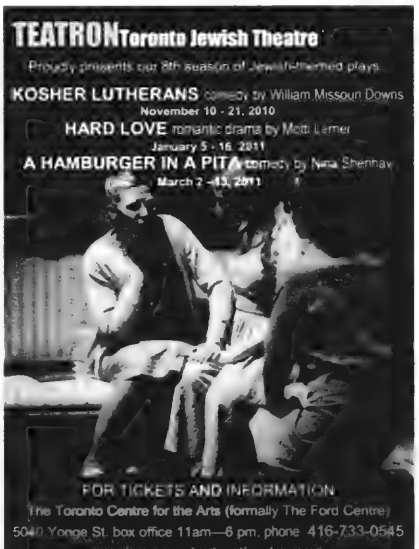

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Arts & Travel

The Concert mixes comedy with tragedy

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Radu Mihaileanu's *The Concert* is an eclectic film in tone and content, blending comedy with drama and nobility of the soul with ugly anti-Semitism.

It opens at the Cumberland Theatre in an exclusive engagement on Friday, Oct. 8.

Unfolding in Moscow and Paris and shot through with black-and-white flashbacks, the two-hour film focuses on Andrei Filipov (Aleksei Guskov), a celebrated Russian conductor whose career was destroyed during the Soviet Communist era after he refused to sack his Jewish musicians.

Filipov's courageous act of defiance cost him dearly. Branded as an "enemy of the people," he was summarily fired from the Bolshoi Orchestra, though he was permitted to stay on as a cleaner.

Thirty years on, Filipov finds an ingenious though risky way to exact sweet revenge on his tormentors.

Seizing a fax from a French cultural institution inviting his company to perform in Paris, he devises a scheme in which he and 55 cast-off musicians will impersonate the Bolshoi.

Filipov's wife, Irina (Anna Kamenkova), is ecstatic, saying she has been waiting patiently for this moment.

The Concert, based on a screenplay by its director, switches back and forth between the present and the past.

In the first grainy flashback signifying Filipov's fall from grace, a Communist functionary, a true apparatchik, breaks his baton in mid-performance and abruptly ends the concert.

The incident reminds this viewer of the 19th-century Alfred Dreyfus anti-Semitic affair. After being unjustly accused of being a German spy, the Jewish artillery officer was thrown out of the French army, his sword broken in half in a humiliating ceremony.

Having decided on vengeance, Filipov enlists the assistance of a former nemesis, Ivan Gavrilov (Valeriy Barinov), the man who originally broke his baton. Recognizing Gavrilov's skills as a wily negotiator, Filipov asks him to cut a lucrative deal with the French.

As Gavrilov, an anti-Semite, wheels and deals, Filipov rounds up a rag-tag bunch of musicians who have since been employed in other fields. They include a Roma violinist, a cab driver, a flea market trader and an old Jewish friend, Sacha Grossman (Dmitri Nazarov), a beefy fellow who happens to be a gifted cellist.

As *The Concert* moves forward, it becomes something of a farce, poking malicious fun at the crass materialism and pomposity of contemporary Moscow society since the dissolution of communism.

***The Concert* stars, from left, Dmitri Nazarov, Valeriy Baranov, Aleksei Guskov and Anna Kamenkova.**

In an uproarious scene, perhaps the funniest, Filipov's musicians, now in Paris, clamour for their rooms in a luxurious hotel and loudly demand food and cigarettes.

No wonder Filipov describes them as "washed-up bums."

The Concert takes a serious turn as Filipov reflects on his banishment from the Bolshoi. "It was nothing heroic," he says of his decision to try to protect his Jewish musicians from the wrath of Soviet-style anti-Semitism. He was merely attempting to preserve the integrity of the orchestra, he explains.

His listener, a beautiful young French violinist (Melanie Laurent), has a murky personal history that the film later elaborates upon in a touching vignette.

The Concert, climaxing with a rousing rendition of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto No. 5 that brings down the house in waves of applause, is ultimately a feel-good movie tinged by tragedy and humour.

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Hebrew letters and Kabbalah yoga

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Hebrew letters have transformed Audi Gozlan's life.

Or so he claims.

Gozlan, a certified yoga instructor from Montreal, has devised a new discipline he describes as Kabbalah yoga.

A fusion of the meditative art of yoga and the ancient secrets of Kabbalah, it is a system based on shaping the body into the postures of the Hebrew alphabet.

On Oct. 10, starting at 9 a.m. and continuing at 11:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. on the Body, Mind & Spirit channel (Bell TV 606 and Shaw Direct 575), he kicks off a series of programs called *Kabbalah Yoga with Audi Gozlan*.

Filmed on location in Israel and Canada, the program shows you how to tap into your "essence" and thereby achieve greater self-awareness of your "divine self."

By way of example, Gozlan shapes himself into a number of Hebrew letters as he demonstrates his techniques on a barren hill in the Judean Desert and in a Montreal studio adorned with stained glass windows.

Inhaling and exhaling, Gozlan runs through a series of letters, claiming that "*yud*" stands for humility while "*lamed*" represents a heart filled with understanding.

Asserting that Kabbalah yoga enables you to balance mind and body, Gozlan presents it as an physical education and mystical system that can improve and uplift your life.

Audi Gozlan demonstrates his techniques in the Body, Mind & Spirit channel's *Kabbalah Yoga* program.

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

KOFFLER CENTRE DANCE GALA PRESENTS INTERNATIONAL STARS OF DANCE WORLD

Six world-renowned ballet companies and their principal dancers will grace the stage of the newly refurbished Sony Centre for the Performing Arts next week for Stars of the 21st Century, the Koffler Centre of the Arts Gala.

Performers include **Bridgett Zehr** and **Zdenek Konvalina** of the National Ballet of Canada as well as dancers from the New York City Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, Mariinsky (Kirov) Ballet, Berlin Opera Company, American Ballet Theatre and Berlin Opera Ballet.

Founded in Toronto by **Solomon Tencer** and **Nadia Veselova-Tencer**, the annual gala has since gone on to grace stages in Paris, Cannes, Panama City, Moscow, Bucharest and New York. Artistic director Veselova-Tencer is a graduate of the Kirov Ballet Academy in St. Petersburg and co-founder with Tencer of Toronto's Academy of Ballet and Jazz.

Tickets range from $40 to $200. Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, 1 Front St. E. Thursday, Oct. 14, 8 p.m. 416-872-2262, www.sonycentre.ca.

• • •

Names in the News: This week marks the 100th anniversary of the great Yiddish novelist and poet **Chaim Grade** (pronounced Grad-duh). The famed YIVO Institute in New York is memorializing the acclaimed writer of *The Yeshiva*, *My Mother's Sabbath Days* and *Rabbis and Wives* with a one-day symposium featuring talks by Yiddish literary critic **Ruth Wisse** as well as Grade scholars **Allan Nadler** and **Jonathan Brent**. There will also be a screening of the Canadian-made film *The Quarrel* (1991), based on Grade's story *My Quarrel with Hersh Rasseyner*.

YIVO has also mounted a display of the various pertinent books, manuscripts and letters by Grade in its collection. These may include the series of about 50 letters that Grade sent to a Toronto couple, **Sally** and the late **Leon Eisner**. *The Canadian Jewish News* assisted Sally Eisner in donating the letters to YIVO three years ago.

What likely won't be included are the various papers that Grade left behind when he died in 1982, and which his widow, **Inna Hecker Grade**, had fiercely guarded in the intervening years until her death last May.

Ms. Grade had denied all requests from publishers and literary scholars to examine the papers. Because she died without a will or survivors, a Bronx public administrator has taken over the estate. The administrator has invited four interested institutions, including YIVO, to examine the papers and suggest how they might be preserved.

Another of the institutions invited to examine the papers was the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Mass. "This is our thrilling moment in Yiddish literature, this is our Dead Sea Scrolls," **Aaron Lansky**, its president, told the *New York Times* in May.

• • •

Names in the News II: This column is not officially a fan of **Ozzy Osbourne**, the English rock performer and reality television star. However, in our books, the mere fact that he eagerly performed in Israel last week puts him in a positive light, given the recent regrettable cancellations by a few international artists.

Ynet, the Internet news service, reported that Osbourne, who held a press conference with his wife **Sharon** at his Tel Aviv hotel, shrugged off any suggestion that he boycott Israel for political reasons. He said that he tries to stay away from politics because "I wouldn't know what I was talking about."

• • •

Tamara Miller

Arts in Brief

• **Tamara Miller**, whose song *60 Seconds* was featured on the TV series *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, launches her new CD, *Changing Lanes*, at the Supermarket, 268 Augusta Ave., Tuesday, Oct. 12, 8 p.m. www.myspace.com/tamaramiller.

• Producers **Michael Rubinoff** and **Daryl Roth** have extended their hit Toronto production of *Love, Loss, and What I Wore* to Oct. 30. An intimate collection of stories by sisters **Nora Ephron** and **Delia Ephron**, the theatrical offering has a changing cast that, as of Oct. 7, features **Trey Anthony**, **Mary Lou Fallis**, **Stacey Farber** and **Leah Pinsent**.

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Arts & Travel

Civil rights museum shines a light on American history

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — In solemn and ringing tones, the American constitution enshrines the hallowed principles of egalitarianism and democracy for all its citizens. But for much of its history, the United States was hardly the land of freedom and opportunity for African-Americans

The injustices they endured for far too long shine through like a beacon of light at the National Civil Rights Museum, which is one of the most impressive museums I've had the privilege of visiting

The museum, in downtown Memphis, essentially recounts the story of the American civil rights movement, whose struggles to beat back racism and force the United States to live up to its highest ideals is an inspirational chapter in the cause of human rights in one of the world's oldest democracies

Appropriately enough, the museum is housed in the old Lorraine Motel (450 Mulberry St.), where an iconic and ultimately tragic figure of the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King Jr., was assassinated by James Earl Ray on April 4, 1968. After King's murder, the segregated motel, located in an African-American neighbourhood, went into a steep decline and eventually closed.

Concerned that the property might be demolished by developers, the Martin Luther King Memorial Foundation purchased it in 1982 with the intention of building a museum. Construction began in 1987. The museum opened four years later.

Although it focuses on the travails of African-Americans, the museum acknowledges the role of foreign-born Americans in the fight against the twin scourges of racism and xenophobia.

Frances Slanger, a Jewish woman born in Lodz, Poland, in 1913 is cited as an example.

A nurse, she served with the 45th Field Hospital during World War II. Killed in a German artillery barrage, she was the first American nurse to die in the Normandy landings in France in 1944.

Adjacent exhibits pay homage to 22 Asian-Americans who won the Medal of Honour and to Helen Suzman, a Jewish South African parliamentarian who spoke up against the evils of apartheid.

This sign recalls the murder of Martin Luther King Jr.
[Sheldon Kirshner photos]

The Lorraine Motel, now part of the National Civil Rights Museum

From the earliest slave revolts in the British colonies to uprisings in the 18th and 19th centuries, African-Americans fought for their rights in a struggle punctuated by tragedy, violence, courage and strength.

Through its exhibits, consisting of photographs, documents, posters, letters and memorabilia, the museum makes it clear that the battle for human rights in America was both violent and peaceful.

The rebel Nat Turner, the subject of a novel by William Styron, turned to violence, but the abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison, John Brown and Frederick Douglass preferred non-violence.

The legal struggle for equality hit a roadblock in the mid-19th century with the Dred Scott case, but the 1862 Emancipation Proclamation, enacted by president Abraham Lincoln during the U.S. Civil War, formally abolished slavery.

The 13th, 14th and 15th amendments, passed in the wake of the Civil War, respectively outlawed slavery, denied states the right to abridge the rights and privileges of U.S. citizens and granted Americans the right to vote, regardless of race and religion. These landmark amendments were complemented by civil rights acts passed by the U.S. Congress.

But after Reconstruction, an era during which federal troops occupied the South and African-Americans won many rights, a reactionary period of retrenchment set in. The Ku Klux Klan emerged and Jim Crow laws limiting the freedom of African-Americans went into effect.

With the 1896 Plessy vs. Ferguson U.S. Supreme Court verdict, the 19th century ended with the races firmly segregated.

Some African-American leaders, namely Booker T. Washington, stoically accepted the status quo, urging hard work and patience. But as a panel of stark photographs of race riots in New York, Atlanta and Houston suggests, some African-Americans staunchly rejected his accommodationist philosophy. Still other African-Americans, such as the firebrand Marcus Garvey, gave up on America altogether and founded the Back to Africa movement.

In a jolting reminder that racism reigned supreme for decades after the Civil War, the museum displays "colored section" signs that shamefully circumscribed the rights of African-Americans at public facilities ranging from hotels to restaurants.

Documented, too, is the rise of the NAACP (the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and the National Urban League, both of which were in the forefront of combating racism. But as another exhibit reminds a visitor, segregated units in the American armed forces were common before and during World War II.

The museum also chronicles major developments of the 1950s and 1960s: the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the Brown vs. the Topeka Board of Education case, the desegregation of Central High School in Little Rock, Ark., the standoff pitting the University of Mississippi against the federal government in the James Meredith case, the voter registration drives, the sit-ins, the freedom rides and the bus boycotts, all of which unfolded in the South.

Reproductions of newspaper headlines recall those chaotic days, as do FBI "missing" posters of civil rights workers Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner and James Cheney, who were murdered by the Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi.

As their cold-blooded murders suggest, American Jews were visibly involved in the struggle for the full emancipation of African-Americans. An inflammatory poster published by the racist National States Rights party, based in Savannah, Ga., attests to this fact. Accusing Jews of encouraging "race mixing," it singles out Arthur Spingarn, a Jewish founder and supporter of the NAACP, for opprobrium.

At the end of the tour, Martin Luther King's room at the Lorraine Motel comes into view. Chilling the blood, it reminds a visitor that the struggle for human rights is a never-ending task.

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A balanced biography of the seventh Chabad rebbe

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

For a small and formerly obscure rabbinic sect, Chabad Lubavitch is disproportionately influential, both in the Diaspora and Israel.

Although Chabad has only about 40,000 active followers – some 10,000 in Brooklyn's Crown Heights district, 5,000 in Kfar Chabad in Israel and perhaps another 25,000 throughout the rest of the world – its presence is felt quite strongly in the Jewish world.

Chabad morphed into a significant religious force under the leadership of its seventh rebbe, the late Menachem Mendel Schneerson. "He breathed new life into a chassidic movement that most observers thought had been crippled by the blows of Zionism, communism, Nazism and Americanism," write Samuel Heilman and Menachem Friedman in *The Rebbe: The Life and Afterlife of Menachem Mendel Schneerson*, published by Princeton University Press.

In their balanced account, Heilman and Friedman, professors of sociology at Queens College in New York City and Bar-Ilan University in Tel Aviv respectively, focus on the rebbe's formative years, his ascent to prominence, his contributions to Chabad and his embrace of an ancient idea, messianism.

Born in Russia in 1902, he was the scion of a long rabbinical line, his maternal great-great-grandfather having been a student of the third Lubavitcher rebbe.

Interestingly enough, he acquired a secular education, his tutor having been a confirmed socialist and Zionist who would immigrate to Palestine, join a kibbutz and become a cabinet minister in one of Israel's first governments.

The rebbe cultivated his interest in science in Leningrad, where he met his wife, Chaya Moussia. Later, in Paris and Berlin, he studied mathematics, chemistry, physics and engineering, hoping to pursue a career as an engineer.

The rebbe's predecessor and father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzhak, escaped Nazi tyranny by immigrating to the United States. The rebbe himself, after a sojourn in Latvia, arrived in New York City in 1941 via Spain and Portugal.

Prior to being crowned rebbe in 1951, he lived a life that was neither "distinctively chassidic nor Jewishly insular," the authors say.

Indeed, he continued his studies in engineering and worked as an assembler of electrical circuits at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. (His younger brother, Leibel, a Trotskyist, settled in Tel Aviv and lived a totally secular lifestyle).

Though he carried out some missions and tasks for his father-in-law, he remained a largely unknown figure to rank-and-file Chassidim. But those who knew him on a first-hand basis were impressed by his Jewish knowledge and easy charm, according to the authors.

It was widely assumed that Rabbi Yosef Yitzhak would be succeeded by his right-hand man and older son-in-law, Shmaryahu Gourary. But when Schneerson was drafted, he was careful not to accept the position of rebbe until he was certain there would be little or no resistance. Within Gourary's circle, "embers of resistance" flickered, but they were systematically doused.

The new rebbe faced three formidable challenges.

First, he had to deal with the messianic fervour Rabbi Yosef Yitzhak had nurtured but not fulfilled. Second and third, he had to recalibrate his community's stance toward Zionism and the United States.

Heilman and Friedman elaborate, "The previous two Lubavitcher rebbes had waged an intense war against Zionism, which they dismissed as false messianism. America posed similar challenges...excoriated as a *trefene medina* (impure state)."

Distinguishing himself from the Satmar sect, whose leader considered the United States destructive to Jewish traditions, the rebbe adopted a different approach. Though he concurred with the Satmar belief that outside culture was corrosive and seductive, he wanted to engage and change it.

He did so by sending *shluchim*, or missionaries, to the furthest reaches of the earth. As the authors put it, "The missionary imperative became the special concern of Menachem Mendel Schneerson." His primary targets were non-religious Jews with a minimal Jewish education.

"By the time of Rabbi Menachem Mendel's death in 1994, there were thousands of *shluchim* scattered across the globe, in places as exotic as Katmandu, Nepal...and as mundane as Long Island, New York," Heilman and Friedman write.

They add that the sending of emissaries to cities around the world was an old idea, having been started in earnest by the fifth and sixth rebbes. Unlike them, however, the seventh rebbe dispatched young married couples, charging them with the task of "saving" assimilated Jews.

For a long time, the rebbe believed that the secular state of Israel was an enormous obstacle to his messianic program of redemption. Like haredi Jews, he claimed that the Jewish state was a heretical challenge to Jewish tradition.

But after Rabbi Yosef Yitzhak established a settlement in Kfar Chabad, attitudes to Israel within Chabad mellowed, hastened by Israel's victory in the Six Day War.

In the wake of the 1967 war, Chabad intensified its work in Israel. Menachem Begin's election as prime minister in 1977 solidified ties between Chabad and Israel. Less than a month after his triumph at the polls, Begin met with the rebbe in Crown Heights, the latter urging him to retain the territories captured in the Six Day War.

The rebbe was of the view that Israel's retention of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and Sinai Peninsula could bring about the coming of the messiah and, thus, redemption.

The theme that the arrival of the messiah, or *mashiach*, was imminent became a recurring leitmotif during the childless rebbe's four-decade reign.

His acolytes went further, claiming that the rebbe had to be the messiah. Their belief, curtly dismissed in non-chassidic quarters, was based on the rebbe's piety, knowledge and erudition, his ability to speak foreign languages, his access to world leaders and the mass media, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the defeat of Iraq in the Gulf War.

Heilman and Friedman suggest that Chabad's fortunes may dim in the future. In the "marketplace of ideas in the modern world, where religion is a lifestyle choice and no longer a matter of fate, Orthodox Judaism, let alone Chabad Chassidism, is not an easy sell."

As well, they write, Chabad must now compete with all sorts of other "spiritual attractions," from Aish HaTorah to New Age groups.

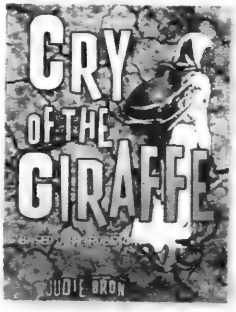
During his life, the rebbe reinvigorated Chabad. But now that he is gone and the messiah has not appeared in a blinding flash of redemption, "the future can only promise disappointment or the emergence of a new sort of Judaism," Heilman and Friedman conclude.

Ethiopian Jew's rescue to Israel

By MORDECHAI BEN-DAT
Editor

Cry of the Giraffe (Annick Press) is intended by its author Judie Oron for young adults. Older adults, however, ought not be deterred from reading the book.

It is a gripping, high-drama, life-and-death tale of a teenager's liberation from slavery and degradation and her hair-raising rescue to Israel.



Based on a true story, *Cry of the Giraffe* recounts the story of Wuditu, daughter of Berihun. Wuditu and her family are Beta Israel, Jews from Ethiopia, who were able eventually to rebuild their lives in Israel.

Scorned, hated and derided by their fellow countrymen as "*Falashas*," the pejorative epithet given to the Jews of Ethiopia, Wuditu and her family set out on the long, dangerous march through Sudan, that was to take them to Yerusalem, the Land of Israel.

But all their planning and precaution collapse in the chaos of hostile soldiers, rebels, bandits and an unrelentingly harsh climate and topography. Wuditu is separated from her family and through a confluence of unforeseen, ill-fated events is left behind.

She is enslaved by ruthless exploiters and suffers calamitous indignity. But she never loses hope. And though her strength wanes and flags, she never loses her courage. Inspired especially by the memories of the image of her younger sister, Lewteh, and the guiding words of her mother, whom she assumes are safe in Israel, Wuditu overcomes the ugly, dark, frightening adversity that is unimaginable to most of us.

Wuditu narrates.

Oron, a former Montrealer who now lives in Toronto, is an experienced journalist and writer. She tells the story in Wuditu's voice unsparingly, capturing the innocence and the determination of the youngster, as well as many of the harrowing details of the child's suffering. Indeed, a young person will require adult supervision when reading some of the details of the story, as well as an explanation of them. Many of the individuals along Wuditu's path to rescue were unsavoury. Many of the occurrences were shudderingly harsh.

Adding to the extraordinary poignancy of the book, Oron was the woman who actually rescued Wuditu.

Today, Oron views Wuditu and Lewteh as daughters. Wuditu considers Oron's rescue of her from Ethiopia as the moment of her second birth.

In an interview with *The CJN* (Sept. 2 issue), Oron explained, "I wanted people to know what a hero my daughter had been and how brave the Ethiopian community was."

She succeeds entirely.

Cry of the Giraffe will be launched in Toronto on Oct. 12 at the Gladstone Hotel from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Oron also appears at the Jewish Book Fair in Toronto on Oct. 28.

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Israel & the Jewish World

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Haredi singers Yishai Lapidot, standing left, and Lipa Schmeltzer, standing right, last week sang for Noam Schalit, father of kidnapped IDF soldier Gilad Schalit in the protest tent outside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's house in Jerusalem.

[Photo by Abir Sultan/Flash90]

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Schachter sitting on top of beach volleyball world

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When Sam Schachter looks into the future of beach volleyball, he's actually looking in the mirror.

A few weeks ago, that was hardly the case. He and his playing partner Garrett May were ranked 18th going into the under-21 world beach volleyball championships in Analya, Turkey, but after posting a 7-0 tournament record and knocking off No. 2 seeds, Brazil, in the gold medal game, the two Toronto players are sitting on top of the world.

It was the first time Canada won a medal of any kind at the championship, and the feat is all the more remarkable because Schachter and May were only thrown together about three or four weeks before, when Schachter's regular partner was unable to play because of injury.

"In three weeks, we beat the world," Schachter said in the heady aftermath of the win.

"I can't find words for it. You're not winning a gold for yourself, but for your country."

The Canadian duo defeated second-seeds Alvaro Filho and Vitor Felipe of Brazil 21-23, 21-16 and 15-13 to win the gold medal.

May, 18, and Schachter, 20, lost three sets over the course of the entire tournament. Besides the second-seed Brazilians, they also knocked off the sixth, seventh and 10th seeds, Volleyball Canada reported.

Coming into the event in Analya, Schachter and May had finished fifth in the Canadian nationals (played against older players) and, playing with other partners, Schachter had finished fourth in two North, Central America and Caribbean Volleyball Confederation (NORCECA) regional pro events. His best previous showing at the worlds was a ninth place finish.

So what happened in Analya?

"I don't think we played above ourselves," the six-foot-five Schachter said. "We kind of figured it out" and continued to improve throughout. "We figured out the dynamics together. We were stronger mentally than the others, we didn't let a bad call bother us. Other teams got rattled and lost points in bunches."

Sam Schachter, left, and Garrett May defied the odds to win a world championship. *[Jon Schachter photos]*

"We had a really solid defence, set up and co-ordinated really well together... and our 'side out' [ending the other team's serves] was good."

Playing in blistering heat that Schachter estimates hovered around 35 C, the Canadians took a medical time out in the third and deciding set when they trailed 7-4. "I could barely breathe out there," he said. It was one of the few points in the tournament when the Canadians were in danger, the other being in the quarter-finals versus the United States. After a rest, Schachter and May rebounded, took control and ended up with a 15-13 victory.

Sam Schachter tests his medal to make sure its really gold.

Schachter's dad, Jon, who attended the tournament, was justifiably proud of his son. "Sam has worked incredibly hard throughout the summer preparing for this event, and he displayed incredible heart winning three tough matches in 30 degree heat," he said.

"Then in the finals, he and his partner, Garrett May, beat a highly ranked and skilled team from Brazil. It's certainly a fun thing to say your son is a 'world champion,' but what makes me proudest is how he conducted himself throughout the tournament. Sam and Garrett supported each other at all times and sent a strong message to each other and to their competitors, they were not to be broken. When they played the Canadian national anthem after presenting the gold medal, I'll never forget the proud look on the boys' faces."

So what do they do for an encore?

Surprisingly, the two who meshed so well together are not slated to play together until some time next year. In the meantime, May has returned to university and is playing indoor volleyball, while Schachter is attending Wilfrid Laurier University, where he's studying communications. He hopes to complete a postgraduate degree in marketing.

As for volleyball, he'll continue to work out with the national team, commuting from Waterloo, Ont., twice a week to train during the winter at Beach Blast in Toronto.

He'll also continue to participate in FIVB (the international volleyball federation) tournaments and NORCECA biannual national events.

In the meantime, it's nice to be at the top of your game. "We seem to be the future," he said, "the top level of our generation."

And he's got the medal to prove it.

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Time and again, yes to peace

By LILAC SIGAN
Israel 21c

What a great Rosh Hashanah present from *Time* magazine: a cover story telling whoever is willing to listen that Israelis are not into peace. Just like that. Why? Because Israelis are making money, they got off easy with the world economic crisis, the real estate is booming even when Hamas fires rockets in the air and above all it's been over two years since the last mega-suicide bombing. In short, we're all having a ball and couldn't care less about peace. Who needs it, right?

So if for some reason we imagined that we're bummed over the unsolvable conflict with the Palestinians, if we thought the flotilla story mattered to almost every citizen here, or if we were fantasizing that we're worried about the well-being of the IDF soldiers, Gilad Schalit in particular, we were totally off.

According to *Time* magazine, we are all completely indifferent. It showed a photo of three guys on the beach smoking a hookah and found some old survey that "proves" only 8 per cent of Israelis are worried about the conflict, because most of them find that education and security problems are more severe.

Surprised? Probably not. This is the way the neo anti-Semitism works.

It's not open, it is sly and sophisticated. It hides behind academic lectures that select very specific articles for their arguments; it prospers behind movies that put certain things in the spotlight and ignore others and it slithers through everyday headlines that stretch the limits each time a little more. The neo anti-Semitism is so intelligent that sometimes it even catches us at a moment of insecurity and we tell ourselves "Hey, maybe it is true."

Maybe I really don't care.

So let me remind you how much we don't care. Because we don't care we continue to raise our children on songs of peace while the other side educates on hatred and violence. Because we don't care every Israeli prime minister in the past decade has tempted the Palestinian leaders with peace offers that were continuously refused. Because we don't care, tens of thousands of citizens joined a walk across Israel that called for the freedom of kidnapped soldier Gilad Schalit, whose rights have been abused for over four years.

The problem is that while we know the truth, a new truth is being formed as time goes by.

Facts do not play a role when a journalist decides on a thesis and later finds a way to "prove" it.

This is the modern politically correct way to sell lies.

The encouraging thing is that the hundreds of comments on the *Time* website for this article prove that we actually do care, and a lot. Most of the comments told *Time* magazine that the article was not journalism, it was racism.

But let's stop hating *Time*. Let's look at ourselves. Is it possible that we care, but we're just too quiet about it? Maybe we just don't communicate it enough.

Maybe we are so busy with defensive responses that we forget to say that we want peace. It begins with our prime minister and ministers who have to say this whenever they can, and it continues to each and every one of us. During conversations, comments or even on our Facebook page.

It may sound tedious because it seems so obvious, but it is important to say it. All the time. Why?

Mainly because it's the truth.

Abridged and reprinted courtesy of Globes, Israel's Business Arena.

UNSTUFFED CABBAGE

1 large cabbage, sliced into 1/2" strips

MEAT BALLS
2 lbs. ground meat
2 eggs
4 oz. tomato sauce
3 tbls matzo meal or bread crumbs
1/2 tsp paprika
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp salt
1/8 tsp ground pepper

SAUCE
16 oz. tomato sauce
1/2 cp water
2 tbls lemon juice
3 tblsp brown sugar

Boil 2 c water in large soup pot. Add cabbage. Lower to medium heat; cover pot & steam 20 min.

In a bowl, mix together meatball ingredients. Form mixture into meat balls. Place balls on top of cabbage. Cover, simmer on low heat. In bowl, mix sauce ingredients. Pour on top of meatballs. Cook 1 hr., then stir. More water or tomato sauce can be added according to taste at this point. Cook another 1/2 hr, or until meat is cooked through and cabbage is tender.

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Stunned

Dear Stunned,

While it's always nice to receive news about happy occasions, in this case, it's been overshadowed by the request for gifts. Having never heard of this type of gift-giving, I showed the invite, which you attached to your letter, to a number of people. I showed it to older people, younger people, and people in a range of socioeconomic and cultural groups. I thought, possibly, that with the fast pace of technology, such as e-mails, text messaging, social networks and e-cards, this might be a new way people are doing things. No need for an expensive wedding or baby shower – what a waste of time and money when we could simply cut to the chase and get to the important part: the gifts!

I polled more than 100 people, and the opinions were unanimous. The shock and bewildered looks I received as they realized what they were reading were all similar. Some thought maybe these people were needy, but the gift registrations were for expensive, trendy stores, so that theory was quashed. Clearly this couple was misguided and oblivious to how people would react. Maybe they received poor advice from a well-meaning friend or relative?

Whatever the reason, I can find no redeeming conclusion. I welcome any thoughts or opinions from my readers. Is this a sign of the times? Will we start seeing more of this type of gift appeal?

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *e-mail, ella@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional*

Meditation can de-stress anyone

Acceptance. Letting go. Letting love and goodness in and letting go of what doesn't work anymore. It's a new year and it's a chance for forgiveness, and for letting go and beginning anew. How wonderful is that? We all have that chance.

Life Coach Corner
By JUDY SIBLIN-LIBRACH

As we begin the new year, I want to share a wonderful CD with you, *The Voice of Relaxation* (on iTunes), created by Leonor Mowry, owner of Village Yoga. This relaxation and meditation series is designed to relax and de-stress anyone, and bring more joy into life.

What is meditation and how does it relate to letting go?

"Meditation is clearing the mind of thought…" says Mowry. " It's like a vacation for the mind, it infuses us with greater creativity, compassion and energy, and the ability to experience life one moment at a time, undistracted by thoughts of the past and the future that plague our minds, to the detriment of the potential for joy in our lives.

Another reason to meditate is to stop the worry habit. Mowry's take on worry is: "One of the biggest disservices we do in our society is we teach our children to worry. What we should be teaching them is that if they are doing their best, they're doing just fine, and to trust that all will be well.

"By meditating, you're letting go of the worries of the past or future, it makes you … less likely able to be knocked over by the harsh and disruptive thoughts that the mind creates. Meditation creates a sense of acceptance and, in acceptance, lies peace. Suffering lies in resistance, peace lies in acceptance."

If you're feeling stressed out at school or at work, Mowry offers some techniques on how to restore yourself to a feeling of being centred and calm. Here is one of them.

"Just close your eyes and imagine yourself in your favourite place in the world and focus on your breath… Take a big inhale and let out a sigh and do that three times. And imagine the stress leaving you with each sigh.

"The breath is important because it is the vehicle to the present moment. The key to happiness is being present, and the breath is the key to presence because it is happening right now."

Mowry suggests people meditate three times a week, and ideally every day. But she believes that any relaxation, even 20 minutes a week, is better than none.

I asked Mowry how forgiveness relates to letting go and to meditation.

"The heart knows how to forgive better than the mind ever can. So if you just have the intention of forgiveness, whenever you are thinking harsh thoughts, replace it with a mantra of forgiveness and say, 'I forgive and release the past,'" she said. "

The benefit to you is that eventually the forgiveness happens without you even realizing it. The heart knows how to do what the mind doesn't know how to do. You're letting go of the need to be right, to win, the need to be heard… We want to be happy, and happiness lies [in being present] and in acceptance. *It* doesn't lie in being right, or being hurt, or winning. If you are truly accepting, you are in the flow. You are not fighting for every step."

Judy Siblin-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com; e-mail: judyelle@ican.net.

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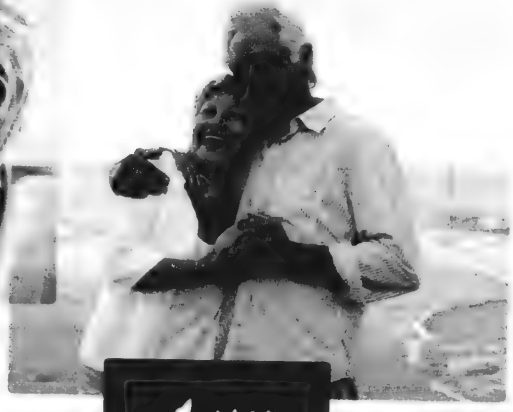

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The Canadian Jewish news

BRIDES

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Thoughts on a 14-Year Marriage

By LAUREN KRAMER
Pacific Correspondent

When he asked me to marry him, the word "yes" fell from my lips immediately. It felt glorious to be in love, and there seemed nothing better than the prospect of a wedding and building a life together.

We were two twenty-somethings full of dreams, and over the years that followed we saw those dreams come to life. We graduated and slowly began chipping away at our careers. We travelled the world together, exploring burial caves in the South Pacific and marveling at rattlesnakes in the African jungle. We held hands on long walks, gazed at each other over candlelit dinners and supported each other through flu, birthing pains and the devastation of suddenly losing a parent.

It's been 14 years since we tied the knot, and I'd like to think I've learned a few things about marriage in that time.

I've learned that today's bridal magazines are full of misconceptions. They teach couples that they require a "theme" for their nuptials, a colour scheme that reflects their deep unity and an expensive gift for each member of their wedding party. They don't mention that no one cares or remembers what was on the menu, whether or not you had chair covers, the precise colour or shape of the wedding gown or the selection of music. What do your friends and family remember? How you treated each other in public, how you resolved problems when they arose and how you spoke of each other in private.

Lauren & Mark

I've learned that romance is overrated, and that true love is measured by compassion when your spouse is feeling ill, or by an offer to watch the kids so your other half can have a night out with friends. A slow walk on a beautiful night can be more meaningful than a fine restaurant meal, and a spouse who keeps loving you and thinking you're beautiful – even on your ugliest days – is one who really cares.

I've learned that money and how it is handled says a lot about a couple's trust. As children enter the family and work versus home responsibilities alter, it's good to have a strong sense of what's "ours." There's little place for possessiveness in a strong marriage, which is most often characterized by a willingness to share everything – from bank accounts to bath towels to e-mail.

I've learned that there's always opportunity to cheat on your spouse, but it's how you handle those opportunities that determine whether your marriage will make it. Will you choose to flirt, or look away? Will you declare "I'm married," or will you take off your wedding ring? We all have choices, and in love and marriage, there's no excuse and often no forgiveness for bad judgment.

I've learned that sex every night is a figment of Hollywood's imagination, a concept rendered useless in the real life world of work, dinner, children and homework. Sure, sex is important – vital, even, to the preservation of love, passion and a sense of togetherness. But quantity has nothing to do with quality in these matters, and it's the quality that counts.

Finally, I've learned there's nothing so comforting as slipping into bed every night next to the partner you love, of anticipating their phone calls, caring about their day and listening for their arrival home.

Life can be dark, disappointing and full of confusion. But a good marriage is like a beacon of light that gives you a way around the obstacles, a reason to keep going and a solace that comes from knowing there's two of you united against the world.

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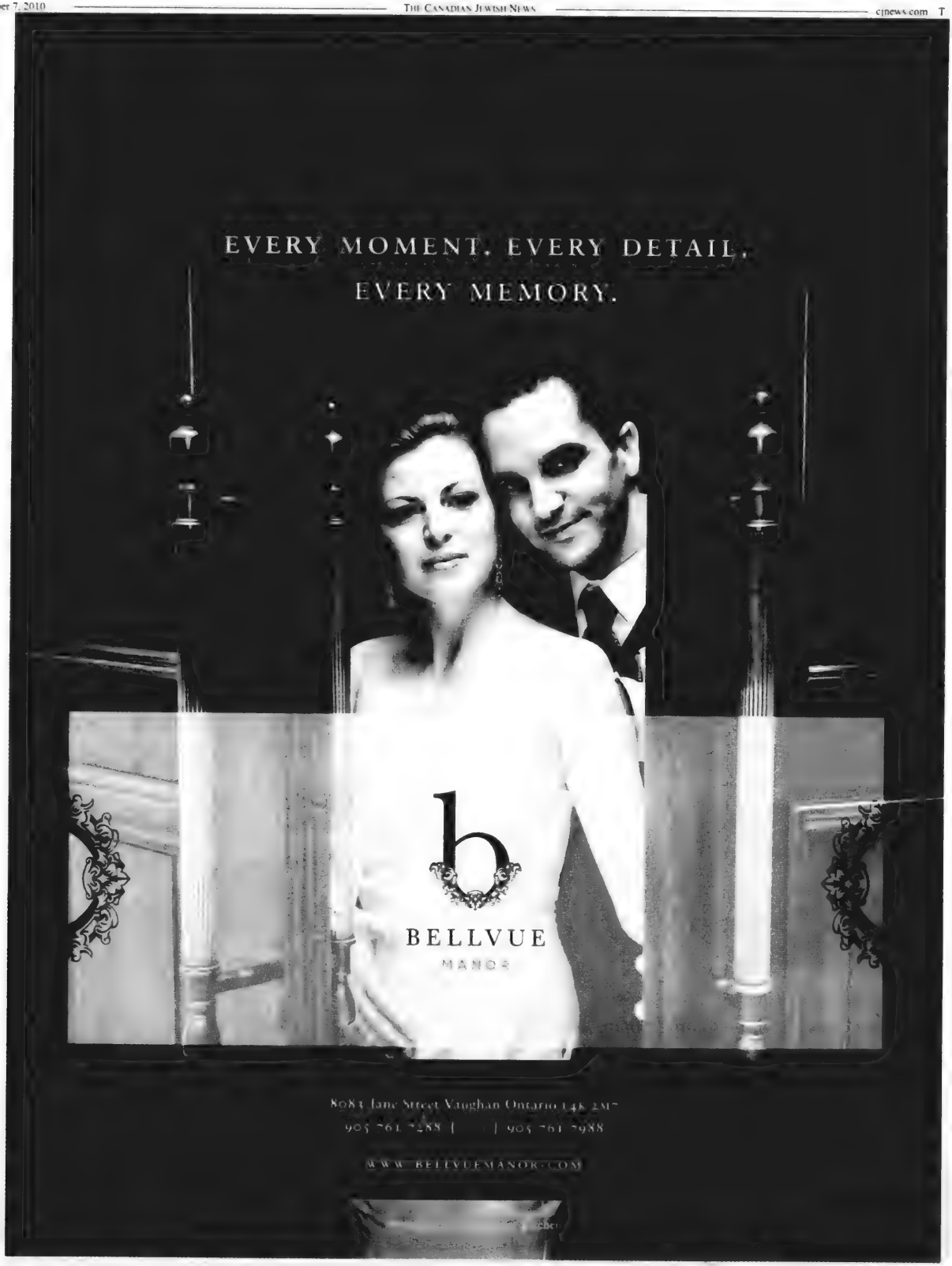
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Brides

The Ketubah is more than a contract

By SYBIL KAPLAN
Special to The CJN

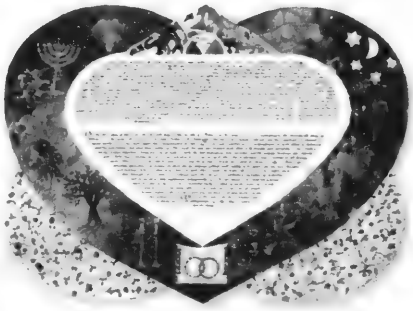
Attention prospective bridegrooms. Start looking for your zuzim (silver coins used in the second century C.E.) You will need at least 200 for a virgin bride, and 100 for a widow or divorcee, but the bride's family may hold out for more!

In 80 BCE, Simeon ben Shetach, a Pharisee (a Second Temple period Jewish religious and political party or sect) and president of the Sanhedrin (the supreme political, religious and judicial body at the time), introduced the idea of a marriage contract or ketubah for wives.

The ketubah is a written contract in which the groom promises to give his bride a certain amount of money if the marriage ends in divorce or if he does not live up to his obligations as a husband. It also guarantees money be paid should the husband die.

But a ketubah is more than that. The real purpose is to guarantee the material, social and sexual rights of a woman entering marriage and to protect her financial rights in case of divorce or death. A lower amount for one married before is not an indication of her lesser worth; rather it is a matter of the likelihood of her having some resources of her own which she is bringing into the marriage.

The ketubah is supposed to be in the bride's possession at all times. Some couples even make a duplicate of the ketubah to carry with them when they travel. If it gets misplaced, a couple is not supposed to live together until a new one is drawn up.



Decorated ketubot date back to the Jewish community of Spain, but the custom has been revitalized in the 1980s. Today many Jewish artists create decorated ketubot.

Although a ketubah is a legal document, there is no injunction in Halachah against women artists creating it. It need not be written by a scribe and may be drawn by hand or printed. The paper may be parchment or another kind of paper, but this is not required.

Two witnesses, who are not related to the bride and groom, must sign a ketubah; in some cases, both the bride and groom also sign. Orthodox rabbis only permit one who is a strict observer of mitzvot to sign.

The main restriction on a ketubah is that it be ready at the time of the betrothal and marriage blessings. Customarily, it is drawn up before the wedding and then signed prior to the ceremony. At the ceremony, the ketubah is read aloud as a bridge between the betrothal and marriage ceremonies which, today, are combined into one but were once two separate events.

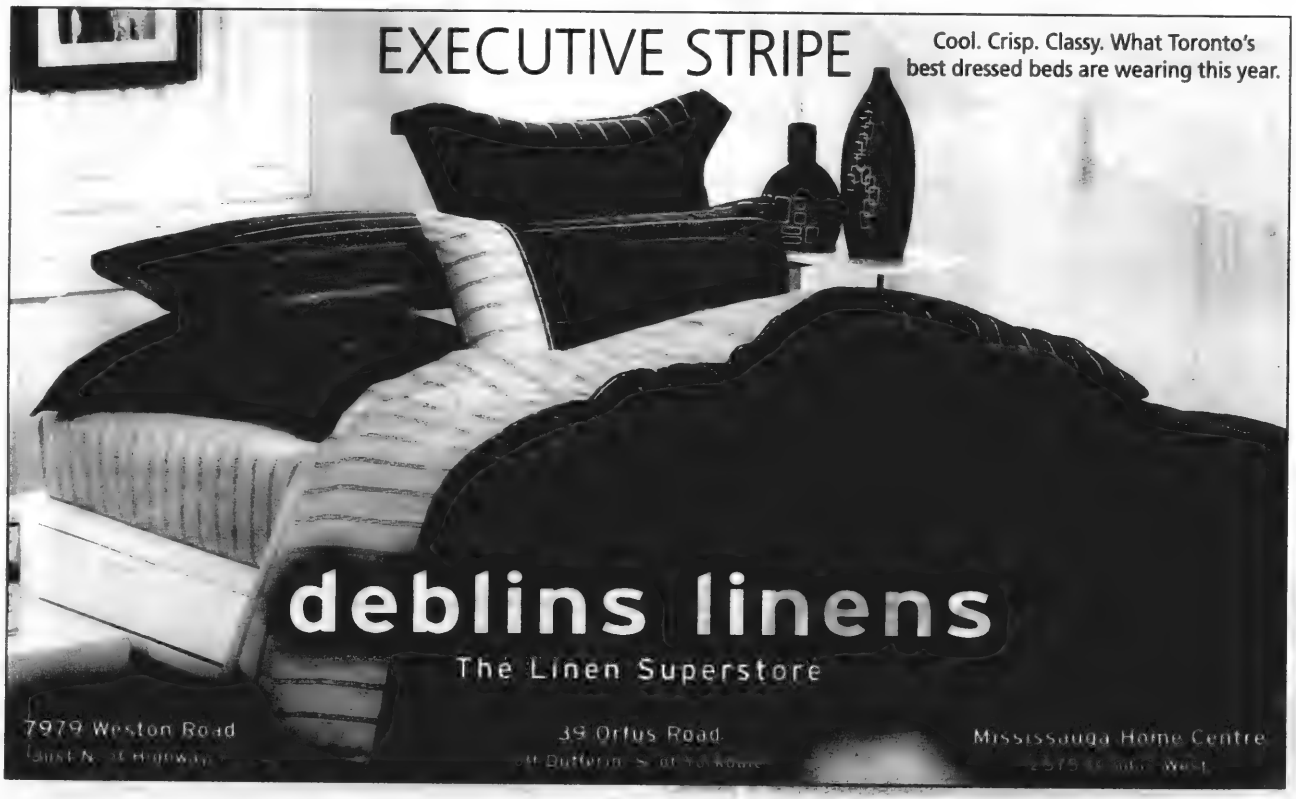
Included are the obligations to the bride and the amount of zuzim exchanged; also included are the day, the city, name of bride and groom and their fathers' names.

The Conservative movement devised a pre-marital document, which the couple signs, which is added to the ketubah and read during the ceremony. This agreement is an authorization by the husband which authorizes a Bet Din (religious court) to act on his behalf and deliver a *get* (Jewish divorce) to his wife, should the need arise.

On occasion husbands refuse to grant the Jewish divorce out of spite or only in return for compensation. It is also used in cases where a husband is assumed dead and when a soldier is missing in action. (If there are no witnesses to his death, the woman cannot remarry and is tied to the man.)

Orthodox do not consider this document to be in compliance with Jewish law.

In New York, the "*get*" law states that a civil divorce will not be granted by a New York court unless obstacles to remarriage of both parties has been removed. Other courts have ruled that the ketubah is a binding contract, and that a *get* is the only way to dissolve the contractual stipulations.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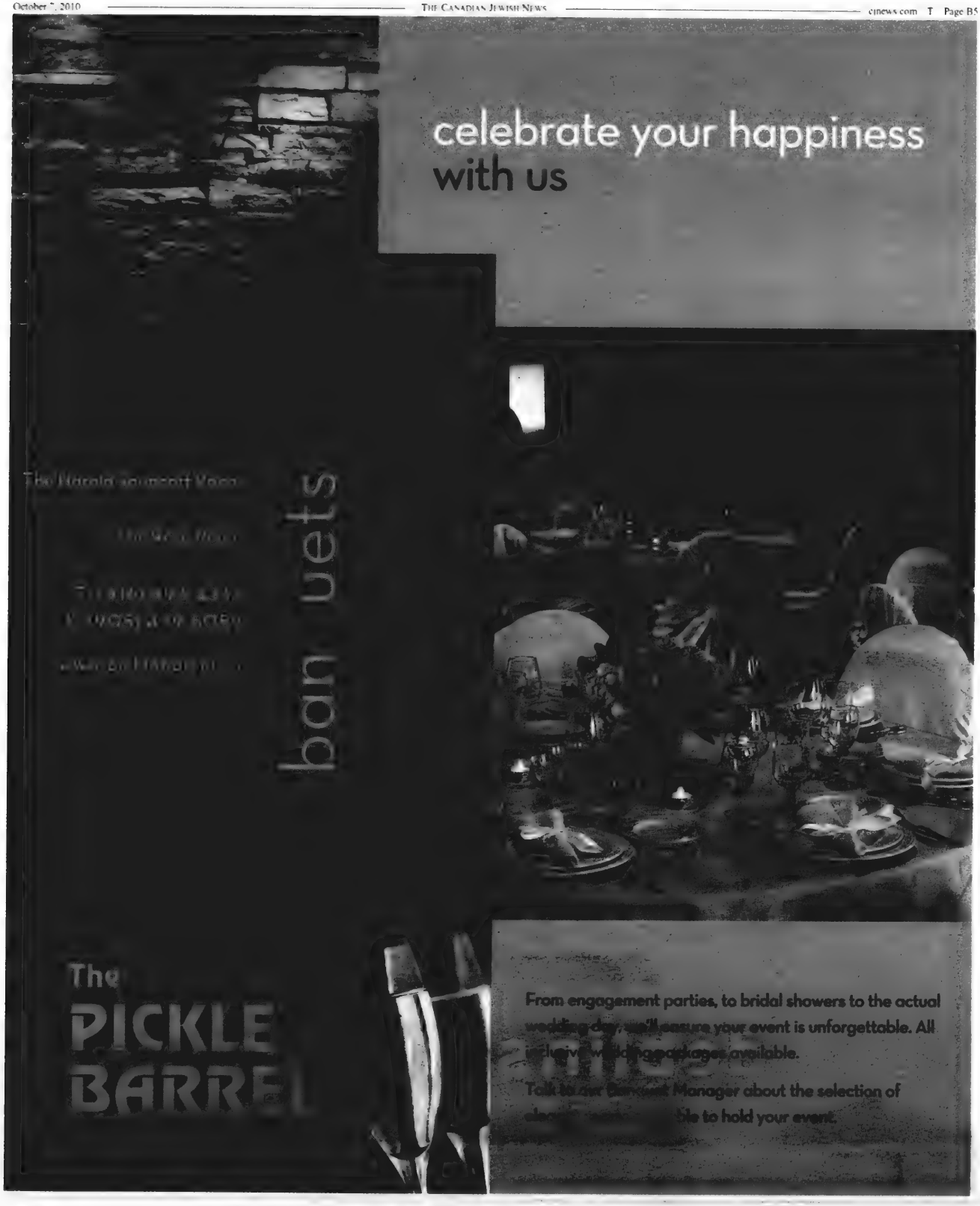
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Brides

Consider a tea party for your shower

By BEVERLY LEVITT
Special to The CJN

During the beautiful autumn weather, an afternoon tea party is a stress-free yet elegant treat for a wedding shower. Tea sandwiches are classic, easy to prepare and best served cold or at room temperature. Desserts can be made at home or ordered from a nearby bakery.

India native Gary Walia, general manager of Tamarind Restaurant and Tea Room in New York, agrees that tea and all the ceremony surrounding it makes a gracious centrepiece for a wedding celebration

"The taking of tea has an intimacy and grace that a cup of coffee or even a flute of champagne can only aspire to," he says. With a chuckle, Walia details the first meeting between his sister and a hand-picked suitor. "In India, many marriages are arranged," he says. "My sister met her future husband for a cup of tea and by the time they emptied the teapot the deal was sealed."

Over a cup of chai tea, the prospective groom gave his would-be bride five minutes to accept his proposal. "My father loves to say, 'That was a good cup of tea,'" Walia says.

When sending out invitations, replace the "High" as in High Tea with "Afternoon." Although authentic High Tea is still taken in Great Britain by hungry youngsters, theatre-goers tiding themselves over until their late supper, or less affluent citizens who grab a hearty meal late in the day and forget dinner altogether, the tradition of afternoon tea was inaugurated in the mid-19th century.

As the story goes, when Anna, Duchess of Bedford served tea and breadstuffs at 4 p.m. because everyone was hungry and couldn't wait until dinner, they enjoyed it so much it became a national ritual.

Today, afternoon tea is so popular that the Ritz London's Palm Court has a three- to six-month waiting list, according to executive chef John Williams. There are five seatings, but the most popular is 3 p.m. The master chef is a traditionalist for his afternoon tea menu and the elegant sandwiches have few, but very specific ingredients.

Cucumber sandwiches are a must, but served only with cream cheese and chives. Mustard cress is the star of its own sandwich, with a dollop of egg mayonnaise. The smoked salmon is always on sourdough, accented by butter, black pepper and a squeeze of lemon, and his tuna is mixed with shallots, chives and crème fraiche mayonnaise.

Desserts at the Palm Court range from fruit tarts to chocolate delice to a mango-topped sponge cake and thick buttery fruitcake.

His favourite teas are Darjeeling first flush, picked from the tiniest, most tender leaves, Earl Gray infused with bergamot, an infusion of lemon verbena, fresh mint tea and South African rooibos.

It is a good idea to follow the lead of these two afternoon tea experts for the party we're about to orchestrate. We've offered slight variations to some of the petit layered sandwiches, but feel free be creative and create your own.

The tea

Tea connoisseurs describe its subtleties as they would a prized glass of wine. The well-dressed tea table offers guests several varieties.

Darjeeling tea is considered the "champagne" of teas. It is described with the same reverence as a fine bottle of wine. Darjeeling is considered a lighter afternoon tea, but the taste varies depending on the time of year the leaves are harvested.

Lapsang Souchong or Tarry Souchong is a smoked tea with the heady aroma of an oak fire. It is delicious alone or with milk and honey

Lemon Verbena is a smooth, citrus-flavoured herbal tea

Moroccan Mint is made by placing the fresh leaves and branches of the plant and infusing it with hot water and a little sugar or honey

Rooibos tea from South Africa is ruby red, smooth and comforting. Serve with lemon or milk and honey

White Peony tea is delicate, refined and filled with healthy antioxidants. White tea is the new green. Chai is basically black tea brewed with selected spices and milk.

Buying tea

Try to find small farm teas that are hand-picked and not machine processed. Buying in bulk rather than a package usually yields fresher, higher quality tea.

Brewing the perfect pot

1. Choose a good teapot — clay, porcelain, or silver. Fill pot with hot water to warm it, then discard the water.

2. Start with great-tasting cold water, spring or filtered. Do not overboil — this depletes the oxygen and tea will taste flat.

3. Add 1 heaping teaspoon of loose tea per 6-ounce cup. For stronger tea add 1 extra teaspoon for the pot. Brewing teas loose rather than in a tea ball or, heaven forbid, a bag, allows the leaves to open fully and release their flavor.

4. For black tea, as soon as water comes to rolling boil, turn off heat, wait 10 seconds and then pour into the teapot. Stir the tea; cover and let it steep for 3 to 5 minutes. When brewing red, white, green or fresh mint tea, water should be well below boiling. Steep for 5 to 8 minutes.

6. Until you are familiar with a particular tea, after a few minutes take a sip. Pay attention to taste rather than colour. When you like the flavour, place a fine strainer over a cup and pour your tea through it. You should have a perfect cup of tea.

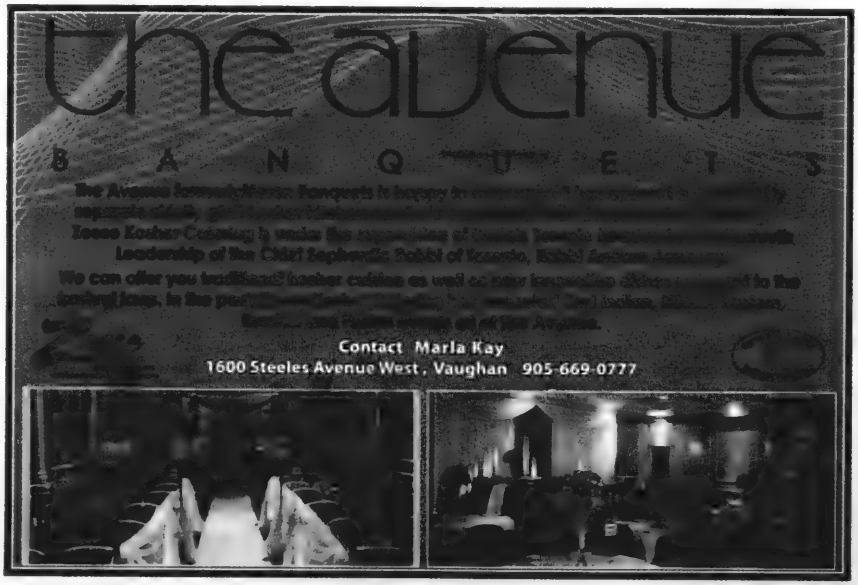
The tea sandwich

(Some hints from party planner extraordinaire in *Effortless Entertaining with Colin Cowie*)

Tea sandwiches are diminutive and delicate. It takes only one or two bites to finish one, so each piece must be flavourful and distinctive.

The bread for tea sandwiches should be very thin. You can ask your bakery to cut it horizontally instead of vertically or buy a loaf of unsliced bread and slice it yourself. You can also use a rolling pin to flatten it.

Continued on page B7



Brides

Give your luncheon an elegant, timeless touch

Continued from page B6

For most of the sandwiches, you can use a spread made of equal parts softened butter and cream cheese, white pepper and a dash of Tabasco

The table

Since most afternoon tea parties are not sit down affairs, but encourage guests to mingle and graze, the tables should not only be gracious and inviting but carefully organized.

Amidst the lovely linens and sumptuous flowers, create a tea area with all the accoutrements — a sandwich section with accompanying napkins and plates and a tray of desserts. There are lovely three-tiered platters available and perfect for a tea party.

Guests can then choose which bite-size sandwiches and sweets to fill their plates with. Utensils are not usually offered as guests will be walking around nibbling from their petit plate of treasures and sipping their delicious tea.

In my grandmother's china closet I found kidney-shaped Depression glass plates with an indentation for tea cups. These are perfect for a garden party, as everything can be placed on one plate. Since tea parties are becoming a popular way of entertaining, expect some resourceful manufacturer to bring them back.

If you're not lucky enough to have a set in the family or to find them at an antique store, choose dishes, cups and glasses that are lightweight and lend themselves to being carried around.

Dress the table with linens and laces, flowers and your most beautiful silver, crystal and china.

Another lovely touch is to offer sherry, port or champagne with the tea.

SMOKED SALMON "TEA SANDWICH", WITH SMOKED GRAPES

From executive chef Matthew Levin, Lacroix at The Rittenhouse Hotel

1 lb. house smoked salmon, diced
2 shallots, diced
15 basil leaves, chiffonade
1/2 bulb fennel, diced
1 Granny Smith apple, peeled and diced
zest and juice of 1 orange
4 oz. mayonnaise
1 tbsp. Dijon mustard
sea salt and white pepper to taste
1 loaf seven grain bread, sliced around 1/4 in. thick
50 red skinned grapes smoked over applewood and dried fennel frowns

Combine all ingredients in a stainless steel bowl, season with salt and pepper. Right before serving, top each sandwich with half of a smoked grape. Makes 15 sandwiches

CUCUMBER SANDWICHES

4 oz. cream cheese or goat cheese
1 tsp. lemon juice
salt and white pepper to taste
8 slices white or wheat bread
1/2 English cucumber, thinly sliced
1/2 cup watercress, stemmed

Mix together cheese, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Spread on slice of bread. Top with cucumber and watercress. Cover with remaining slice. Trim crusts and cut into desired shape.

BRIE, WALNUT AND WATERCRESS SANDWICHES

From *Effortless Entertaining with Colin Cowie* (HarperCollins)

8 very thin slices white or brown bread
4 oz. ripe Brie, softened and rind removed
1/4 oz. chopped walnuts, lightly toasted
1/2 bunch watercress, rinsed and stems removed

Flatten bread with a rolling pin. Spread cheese on one side of the bread slices. Top with walnuts and watercress. Cover with remaining slices. Trim crusts and cut into triangles.

PUNJAB EGG SALAD SANDWICH

Inspired by Chado Tea Room, Los Angeles

2 cups Lapsang Souchong tea at room temperature
5 hard boiled eggs, left whole with shells removed
2 tbsp. mayonnaise
1 tbsp. chives, finely chopped
salt and white pepper to taste
8 slices white bread

Pour tea into a bowl. Marinate eggs in tea for 5 hours or overnight in the refrigerator.

Remove eggs from tea. In a glass bowl roughly chop the eggs. Add mayonnaise, chives, salt and pepper. Gently mix to combine. Spread a thin layer of butter on bread. Spread egg mixture over half of the bread. Cover with remaining slice. Trim crusts and cut into desired shape. Makes 16 sandwiches.

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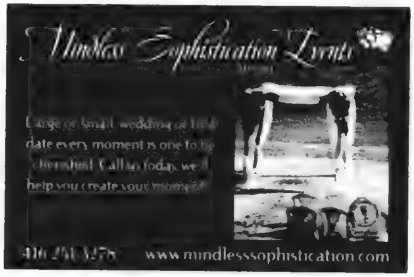

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Brides

Online site catalyst for meeting mate

By ELAINE COHEN
Supplements Co-ordinator

Matchmakers still exist, and people often meet through family, friends and colleagues at work; however, mature singles have another option in the 21st century.

"This is the new age of Internet dating," Marla Pinsky, 35, says, speaking for herself and her fiancé, Howard Scholl, 42. "Lifestyles have changed and so many people in our generation want to complete their education, establish careers and travel before settling down to marry and start a family. We have always led busy lives and wanted to be sure our lifelong mate would share the same traditional Jewish values and similar interests."

For Pinsky, a social worker, and Scholl, a senior IT recruiter, Internet dating (on JDate Canada) proved fruitful. They were able to study each other's profiles to ensure that they had common interests and values before chatting online and eventually meeting in person. Nowadays, career people have busy schedules and often have to cancel social engagements due to commitments, Pinsky says, noting the advantage of being able to communicate online 24/7.

Marla Pinsky and Howard Scholl

Nevertheless, Pinsky, an experienced professional, cautions women to exercise prudence when dating online. Communicate online to learn more about the individual's interests and demeanour before meeting in person. Refrain from divulging sensitive information about yourself or your family. When you actually meet, go to a public place and arrange your own transportation home. Stay alert and in control by monitoring alcohol consumption.

Pinsky and Scholl met in 2008 and became engaged this past summer. They are getting married at a downtown hotel on Sept. 11, 2011. Their delighted parents, Beverley and Harvey Pinsky and Joe and Sarah Scholl, are making the wedding.

"The date also marks my mother's birthday," Pinsky says. "We're inviting relatives and friends from Canada, the U.S. and Israel. Howard and his dad sang in the Beth Ora choir for years, so they are pleased Rabbi Marc Jablon [spiritual leader at Congregation Beth Ora in Ville St. Laurent] agreed to officiate."

An all-round individual with myriad interests and many friends, Scholl was just about to "take a break" from JDate, when he met Pinsky. Scholl advises singles "to be patient and take it slow." Pinsky and Scholl conversed for over a week on JDate before meeting in person.

"We had so much to talk about when we actually got together at a restaurant that we ended up continuing our discussion at Java U and didn't leave until the cafe was closing," Pinsky recalls, with Scholl smiling in agreement. "After that, we conversed daily, and about a month after we started going out, Howard invited me to his cousin's Chanukah party in Ottawa. I immediately felt at home with his family and we had a wonderful time."

The couple became engaged July 25. Although they had shopped for the ring together, Scholl surprised her with a romantic marriage proposal – "We were strolling in the park, and Howard suggested we sit down on a bench. Then he handed me a beautiful card, asking for my hand in marriage. I'll always treasure the moment."

Pinsky and Scholl recently purchased a condo and assumed the mammoth task of gutting and refurbishing it. "Marla is very organized and is extremely adept at home decorating," Scholl says, pointing out his fiancée is inspired by home shows on television. Since they derive pleasure from cooking and entertaining, they intend to make good use of their stylish facilities.

Scholl grew up in Chomedey, attended United Talmud Torahs, Herzliah High, Vanier College and Concordia University. Although he initially majored in biochemistry, his heart was in computers and he switched midstream. Before assuming his current position at Kovasys, a recruiting firm in Internet technology, Scholl worked in computer sales and other facets of the business. Scholl's brother, Maury, 41, is married with two children and lives in Victoria, B.C.

A trivia buff and sports fan, Scholl is on a softball team and participates in many land and water sports. Scholl and Pinsky hail from families that appreciate Jewish liturgical music, and they have both belonged to choirs.

Pinsky grew up in Cote St. Luc, attended Jewish People's and Peretz Schools, Wagar High School, Dawson College and McGill University. She was a camper at Pripstein's Camp Mishmar and a counsellor at Camp B'nai Brith and also travelled on community missions to Israel and Europe. After receiving her bachelor of social work and master of social work at McGill, Pinsky was on staff at Jewish Support Services for the Elderly (precursor to Cumming Jewish Centre for Seniors Support Services). For the past eight years, she has worked in the Home Care Department of CLSC Rene-Cassin. A few years ago, Pinsky and co-partner Katie Fagen established Senior Solutions Montreal, a private practice offering resources and services for seniors. Pinsky has two brothers, Jason, 33, who lives in Montreal, and Daniel, 31, a Toronto resident.

"We both come from close-knit families and everyone gets along beautifully," Pinsky says. "In fact, one of my brothers had known Howard from softball. As for interests, we both love to travel, and between us, there are few places that one of us hasn't visited. We exercise and keep fit. We adore movies, theatre, music, art, Judaism and Yiddishkeit. We value keeping a kosher home and maintaining Jewish traditions. In addition, we believe in giving each other space."

Now that the venue is booked, Pinsky and Scholl are attending to details. They plan to use a tallit that incorporates four tallitot from close relatives. A cousin will sing when they walk down the aisle.

"We'll also use a family kiddush cup," Pinsky says. "Unfortunately, our grandparents are deceased, but this is our way of incorporating their spirit." Young relatives will enhance the procession as ring bearers and flower girls.

Author addresses topics couples encounter in marriage

By ELAINE COHEN
Supplements co-ordinator

"Why didn't anybody let us know," is a common refrain uttered by newlyweds.

As soon as they are engaged, everyone advises them about booking a band, choosing a caterer, picking a venue, and about making myriad other arrangements for the nuptials. However, nobody told them things don't fall into place after the honeymoon is over

Author Caroline Tiger, a realist, aims to set couples straight in *The Newlywed's Instruction Manual* distributed by Raincoast Books in Canada. The comprehensive, colourful pocket-size guide is fun to read because Tiger's sense of humour is laced throughout the seven chapters and 207 pages. In addition, the whimsical graphics by Paul Kepple and Scotty Reifsnyder are bound to elicit a chuckle.

Tiger, formerly an adjunct professor of magazine writing at Temple University and a former managing editor of *The Philadelphia Magazine*, continues to pen a weekly column. She devotes a section of *Newlywed's Instruction Manual* to debunking assumptions. Don't assume your mate can mind read what you are thinking and vice versa. Communicating is the key to getting it right, she says. Impressive illustrations accompany the text.

The first four chapters tackle all the settling in and tidying up chores related to the nuptials. Before merging into your new mutual nest, it's wise to declutter, she advises, and goes on to tell how.

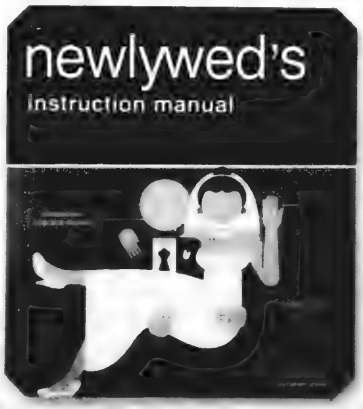
With today's two career households, it's only fair to divide chores. Nevertheless, it pays to sort out each other's preferences. Even poor laundry habits can be annoying. Neither husband nor wife wants a favourite garment ruined by a mate's carelessness. Remember to empty pockets to avoid losing valuables, and items that require dry cleaning shouldn't be dumped in the washing machine.

Cooking and eating habits vary and, here again, preferences should be taken into account. "What type of courtship did you have? Was it so short that you never realized your mate insists on being served and walks away from the table like royalty without taking a dish to the sink? What about cooking, shopping and food preferences?" The author addresses these subjects and offers troubleshooting tips.

Finances, money management, household budget, fixed expenses, variables, digging yourself out of debt and ways to keep costs down are discussed in detail. She even addresses the different personalities and how couples often quibble over different views on money. She believes in bringing these matters out in the open without resorting to verbal abuse. Tiger even set aside a chapter on "How to quarrel". Rule number one, don't shy away from conflict, broach it but also be a generous listener and talk softly. Be prepared to make concessions. As for where and when to fight, she makes some good points. Avoid quarrels, when your partner is burdened with heavy-duty problems or either of you are driving. A motorist could easily become distracted and be involved in an accident.

The author provides a quiz and answers invariably reveal whether the respective individual is a saver or a spender. Chapter 3 is devoted to "The Nest" and since buying a house is probably the biggest purchase the average couple will make, it's worth a lot of consideration. Tiger does a lot of the plotting for readers to ensure they are well prepared and won't have any regrets. For fledgling homebuyers, she defines rudimentary real estate jargon.

Romance is an important part of marriage and mates should always be thinking of ways to enhance the relationship, says Tiger. Leave each other little notes and celebrate occasions such as anniversaries. Among other topics she deals with are health, sex and offspring. The book includes an informative appendix and a handy index.



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Make me a match

By SYBIL KAPLAN
Special to The CJN

What is the most famous expression of the shadchan? Undoubtedly one would say the *Matchmaker* song from *Fiddler on the Roof*.

The *shadchan* is the matchmaker; a *shidduch* is a match or system of matchmaking and *shadchanut* is matchmaking. The first *shidduch* takes place in the book of Genesis, when Eliezer chooses Rebekah for Isaac. The practice has become traditional in Judaism, although rabbinic literature does not mention the profession until the 13th century.

In *Inside Judaism* by Alfred J. Kolatch, there is written a conversation between a Roman matron and Rabbi Yosei ben Halafta, a second century scholar and disciple of Rabbi Akiva.

"What has your God been doing since He finished making the world?" asked the matron.

"He has been matching couples," the rabbi answered.

"That isn't so difficult," said the woman. "I can do as well."

"You may think it is simple," said Rabbi Yosei, "but it is as difficult as the splitting of the Red Sea."

The matron then took 1,000 male slaves and 1,000 female slaves, separated them into couples and joined them in matrimony. After some descended upon her, wounded and demanding the marriages be annulled, she agreed to the rabbi's point.

In the time of the Talmud, the rabbis who conducted the yeshivot recommended the young men to families with eligible daughters. In the 13th and 14th centuries matchmaking took on a significant role, as Jews were spread out in many areas.

According to an article on the Aish Hatorah website, the *shadchan* looked at "character, piety, intelligence and competence that would lend permanence to a marriage and encourage a high degree of moral stability in the community."

By the end of the Middle Ages, the *shadchan* was paid for his work, and one can find rabbinic response on methods, amounts paid and other details.

Shadchanim became peddlers of a different type, travelling from community to community and receiving higher payment when the bride and groom came from different distanced communities.

The Aish website also explains that the *shadchan* held an enormous responsibility matching qualities and "family pedigree and scholastic and economic achievements." The ideal was for a daughter to marry a Torah scholar.

With the later move of Jews to larger cities and the changing roles of young singles, the role of the *shadchan* changed.

Today matchmaking, or an arranged date, is accepted practice among Orthodox Jews as the best way to find a marriage partner. This occurs when the people involved feel they are old and serious enough to think about marriage.

Chabad says that while we are single we are only half a soul. By uniting someone with their other half, you have made them a couple.

In recent years, there have been books published on the subject including *The Survival Guide to Shidduchim* by Shari Stein and *Shidduch Secrets* by Leah Jacobs.

Searching on Google for "Jewish matchmaking" brings up a multitude of dating sites. PerfectMatch, JDate, JewishCafe, Matchmaker, Jewish FriendFinder, Mit Mazel, SawYouAtSinai, Beshert, Shoshanna's Matchmaking Service and JMatch, are just some of the many out there to help Jews meet their match.

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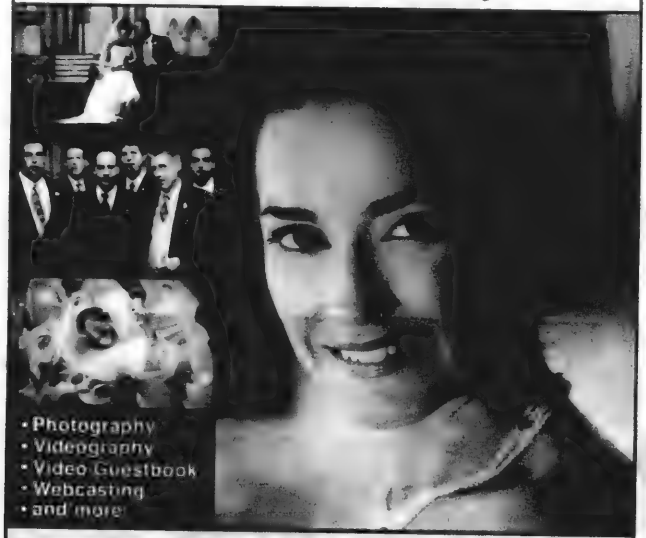
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Brides

Marriage flourishes with cultural enrichment

By ELAINE COHEN
Supplements co-ordinator

On a recent visit to her grandparents' condo in Cote St. Luc, Zoë Mintz, a cool 22-year-old Concordia University student, listens intently as her Bubbie Edith Barr relates how women in the 1950s invariably married in their early 20s.

"I have always found my grandparents' stories to be a true testament to the struggles of their time, and deeply romantic because of it," Mintz said.

Born and educated in Bogota, Colombia, Edith (Vainberg) Barr "felt like an old maid at 21" because she was still single. Most of her contemporaries were married and the remaining Jewish bachelors had been childhood buddies of her brother. Hence, there was no one new to meet.

Determined to chart her course, Edith secured a six-month visa, bade her widowed mother and older siblings adieu and boarded a flight to visit relatives in North America. "The Vainberg family was originally from Romania and we conversed in fluent Yiddish at home, but my schooling was in Spanish and I lacked English," Edith says, alluding to one of many challenges that lay ahead.

Edith and Norman Barr celebrate Norman's 80th birthday in 2009.

The Flomen family in Montreal welcomed their niece, and their accountant fixed her up with a friend named Norman Barr. Born here in 1929, Norman's first language was English. "My mother was born in Canada and my father was a baby when his family immigrated," Norman relates. "So my brothers and I were brought up speaking English at home and school and on the street." Fortunately, Norman had picked up some Yiddish from other relatives.

Edith will never forget their first date. "Norman took me to see Edith Piaf at the Bellevue Casino and we ordered mixed drinks," she recalls, adding she noticed Norman saving the plastic swizzle sticks from their drinks. When queried about it, Norman explained he was a widower with a 3-1/2-year-old daughter, Reesa, and he wanted to bring her the decorative sticks. Norman had been married to Esther (Baizer) for 19 months when she died. The couple's daughter, Reesa, was only seven months old. Norman and Reesa lived with his in-laws, Sarah and Sam Baizer. They hired a nurse for Reesa.

"Nobody had told me he was a widower with a child and I was totally unprepared for this revelation," Edith recalls. When Norman phoned a few days later, she refused to see him. However, one night her relatives were all going to a wedding and her cousin convinced her it was better to accept Norman's invitation than to stay home alone. Fortunately, she listened, and Norman took her to see Louis Armstrong.

Continued on page B12

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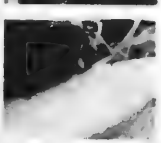

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From Bogota with love

Continued from page B11

"We had a great time and I enjoyed his company," Edith says. "I liked his sense of humour, acts of kindness and generosity. By that time, I had fallen for him and was heartsick at having to leave for a pre-planned trip to visit my aunt and uncle in Winnipeg."

The perfect gentleman, Norman dropped Edith off at the airport but didn't promise any future encounters. "I remember him saying, 'It was a pleasure to spend time with you,' and he presented me with a bottle of Shalimar perfume and a silver lighter from Birks."

One night while Edith was having dinner with her relatives in Winnipeg, Norman phoned from Montreal. He said he would visit her in Winnipeg. Edith's aunt perceived Norman's intentions, purchased a bottle of champagne and chilled it in anticipation of the big question. "Norman stayed at a hotel and my relatives lent him their car. Every night, when I returned, they'd ask, 'So, what's new?'"

Sure enough on his last night in town, Norman proposed and Edith reported the good news. The Winnipeg relatives popped open the champagne and wished the couple mazel tov.

Norman's parents Rose and Max Barr booked the wedding at Montreal's Young Israel Synagogue, Nov. 15, 1958. The Baizers were equally elated and generous. "The Baizers were fine people and we had a wonderful relationship," Edith says.

For Edith, it was a big step. In Colombia, even people of modest means had maids, and domesticity was new for her. In addition, she had never experienced Montreal winters and didn't own any winter garments or gear. Because of immigration laws, the couple had to marry in Canada and her immediate family wasn't present. She also worried about her family's reaction to the marriage.

Fortunately, most of Edith's fears were unfounded. Everyone adored Norman. And Edith adapted to her Canadian lifestyle.

Reesa proved a catalyst in refining Edith's English. "Every day, when Reesa returned home from nursery school, I'd sit down with her and together we'd read her storybooks. I watched television, listened to the radio and kept up with newspapers and the *Reader's Digest*."

A month before the couple's first anniversary, Rochelle was born, followed by Monika in 1963. Today, Edith and Norman are the proud grandparents of Rochelle's children, Zoë and Stirling, 17, of Montreal; and Monika's children – the family lives in Israel – Ra'anan, 19, Sivan, 15, and Amir, 12.

The Barr daughters benefited from the Latin American connection. From 1966 to 1969, they lived in Colombia, where Norman was in the car parts business. Edith's brother David was a silent partner. Edith assigned a private tutor to give Norman Spanish language lessons every evening. The Barr children also learned to converse in Spanish and had an opportunity to experience Colombian culture and bond with Edith's relatives.

When the girls finished university and struck out on their own, empty nesters Edith and Norman travelled and pursued their respective interests. Edith enjoys opera and Norman favours fishing expeditions.

Beautiful mementoes of the Barrs' travels adorn their condo. Although they have derived lots of pleasure, they each endured troubles before and after they met. Edith was 17 when her father was killed by a car, while he was waiting to cross the street. Norman has undergone major surgeries and endured serious health issues. Edith is a breast cancer survivor. Recently, Reesa and Zoë participated in Montreal's Weekend to End Women's Cancers raising a team total of $43,700 in honor of Rochelle, who is currently battling breast cancer.

"We'll get through it," Norman says, motioning to Edith, who nods in agreement. "We've always been positive thinkers and we're not about to change." On Nov. 15, Edith and Norman will celebrate their 52nd anniversary.

"Chupah lady" wants to dance with angels

By PATRICIA GOLDBLATT
Special to The CJN

My daughter calls me "Chupah Lady," because every night after work, for several eye-pinching hours, that is what I am. When my son announced his engagement, I searched for an enduring and unique gift. My answer? A chupah!

I searched the Internet and discovered that the very first wedding was accompanied by a chupah. According to one legend, God made 10 chupahs for Adam and Eve, each fashioned of gold and precious gems.

I begin my search for a mentor. I discover Debra Messer, who owns a needlepoint shop. She has created chupahs for many synagogues but is willing to teach me the process. I have never tried needlepoint,but I am willing to learn the basketweave stitch, which is the basis for this project.

I search ancient manuscripts. I peruse posters and books, on the lookout for icons and traditional motifs. I am excited to create a design. Debra tells me I will need three panels that will be stitched together. When she tells me it will take 1,000 hours to complete, I scoff, thinking she exaggerates. I soon learn she does not.

The process of transferring the design to canvas is laborious and very detailed. I enlist my husband, who is precise and methodical. I find basketweaving to be very tricky. Debra has me practise and practise. I am frustrated that the backs of the practice canvases are a torrent of threads, scrambling into every direction.

Debra explains her grandmother had taught her the art of basketweaving. I imagine the loving looks that passed between them. My long-suffering husband is learning the continental stitch so that he can fill in the background.

Eventually, we settle down to an after supper routine of chupah duty. We pass needle-threaders back and forth. "Scissors," we call out as we exchange these, too. I think my husband has become as obsessed as I am with this project. It takes him an entire evening, 45 minutes for a single row, or three threads to do one line of background.

Although I liken this project to staying in the lines of a colouring book, I find that I am appreciating the joy of creativity. The call of colour, shape, form and texture satisfies me in a way I had forgotten exists. The chupah has reawakened something in me that I did not even know was lost.

The chupah progresses each evening and with it, I rediscover a part of myself that wants to dance with the angels. I look forward to displaying our work at the wedding. When it is completed, the chupah will be a family heirloom: a symbol of our love to be passed down from generation to generation.

Love at first sight

Ricki and Gil Gallen

By RICKI GALLEN
Special to The CJN

In July 1949, a girlfriend called me to arrange a blind double date with two fellows from New York who were taking a roadtrip to Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto.

At the appointed time, a beautiful white Oldsmobile convertible pulled into our driveway. Two young men introduced themselves as Stewart and Gil from Brooklyn.

My girlfriend was waiting in the front seat of the car. Gil tossed his car keys at Stewart, said "You can drive" and moved into the backseat with me.

As Gil told me long after that first meeting, he said that after a few minutes of conversation he had decided I was the one. (What could I have said?)

We went to a Chinese restaurant at Bay and Queen streets and then to Shea's Theatre to see a double feature.

On the way home (again in the backseat), Gil seemed to have more than the usual allotment of hands. Not knowing how to handle the situation without offending a guest to our city, I politely explained that we didn't do this in Canada.

Things progressed well enough that we arranged to drive up to Barrie the next day to visit The Mothers and Babes Rest Home, where I had worked the previous summer looking after disadvantaged families.

After Gil drove back home, I was inundated with phone calls. He flew to Toronto every other weekend on the noisy North Star planes of Trans-Canada Airlines. He'd arrive late on Saturday and leave early Monday morning. Once he brought a container of pistachio ice cream (in the fridge of the plane) because I had once expressed an interest in green ice cream.

In the old-fashioned way, Gil asked my dad for permission to marry me. We set the date for the following July. My new in-laws threw an engagement party for us, and while riding in a taxi from the airport, Gil handed me a box of chocolates. One of the candies was missing, replaced by a small box holding a gorgeous diamond ring.

Flying to Toronto every other week was taking its toll on Gil, financially and otherwise. We changed the wedding date to Feb. 2, 1950. Sixty years later, we are still celebrating.

Ricki and Gil Gallen have two married sons, Steven (Debbi) and Stan (Ida) and four grandchildren; Rob, Joanna, Lisa and Janice.

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Canoe trip love story

By CORY GILLMAN
Special to The CJN

The top picture, was taken in Algonquin Park. Cory Gillman, 6, helps Kristin Thomas, 4, with her life jacket on their first canoe trip together. Twenty years after it was taken it was used as the couple's unique wedding invitation. In the bottom picture Cory and Kristin compare stomachs.

Kristin was four, I was six on our first canoe trip to Algonquin Park with siblings and dads. We kids wrepresented the next generation of trippers. Our parents enjoyed Algonquin trips together as students. The "Canoe Trip" as it came to be known, was an annual end-of-summer bash, with junk food and wild adventures. It was a shake-your-sillies-out kind of trip that helped us transition from summer freedom to the new school year, while giving us a taste of our parents' beloved wilderness. Though we six kids saw each other but once each year for a few days in Algonquin Park, those days added up to a lot of shared experiences. Inevitable outcomes of the fun, hard work, disappointments, stormy weather and unpredictable situations, were the growth of trust and friendships.

My interest in K, as she was known, eventually reached way beyond her canoeing prowess. By the 11th trip I decided to share those special feelings with her. Much to my delight and relief, even though we each had very cute siblings, she was just as smitten with me as I was with her. At parting time that year, our family was invited to her family's cottage to break up the long drive home. My father, obviously oblivious to my predicament and despite my protestations, politely but repeatedly refused. To say I was not happy was an understatement. I was 17 and desperately in love, so when we got home I phoned. Kristin was so logical, no doubt prompted by her mom who answered the phone before passing it on. She sadly reminded me that we live an hour apart with no easy access to transit and no driver's licenses. She also worried about the demise of the canoe trip if our relationship didn't work out.

I reluctantly acquiesced but felt defeated and deflated. After hanging up all I could do was cry. I finally enlightened my father who heard my sobbing. He was sympathetic and tried to talk but became overwhelmed in his empathy and we simply hugged and wept together. With impeccable timing, my mother walked in, took one look at her weeping son and husband and instantly joined in without even knowing why. If the word "weird" had a cousin who was much bigger and way more awkward, that word would describe our relationship during the next three trips. We avoided speaking about anything non-canoe-trip related, even tried not to paddle together, choosing instead to stay in our safe family groups.

But unrequited love doesn't just fade because you will it to. It lingers, grows even, so after an entire year of university behind me, I decided to take another shot and ask her out, even though I was now in Thunder Bay and she was in Halifax. She said yes without hesitation and admitted that she'd been waiting for me to ask. What a difference three years makes.

On the final night of our 20th family canoe trip, the group presented meaningful gifts to each other around the campfire in honor of continuing friendships and annual sojourns. Swiss army knives, portaging paraphernalia and other appropriate trip items were offered. Each of us took turns relaying what the relationship has meant.

I addressed all the members and then turned deliberately and specifically to Kristin, handed her the very special shiny gift that I had literally kept close to the chest throughout the trip, and asked her to marry me. I think she said yes again because I heard a lot of cheering…and the rest, as they say, is history.

K and I recently celebrated our sixth wedding anniversary and are anxiously awaiting the pending birth of our first child. We hope and expect to continue the tradition and to teach this child what we learned along the way…everything you need to know about relationships, you'll learn on a canoe trip.

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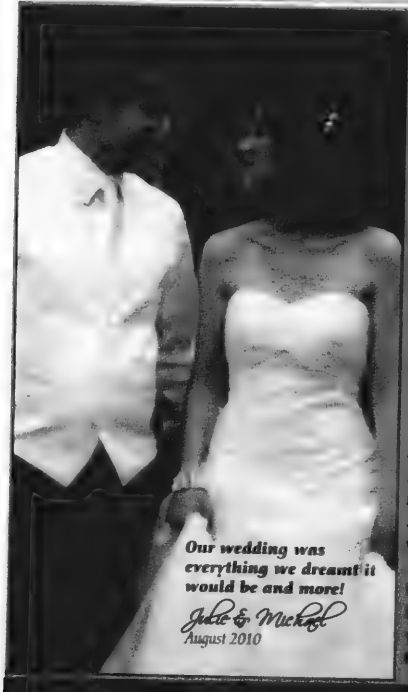

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Brides

Gifts from grandma's day reminders of way we were

By ELAINE COHEN
Supplements co-ordinator

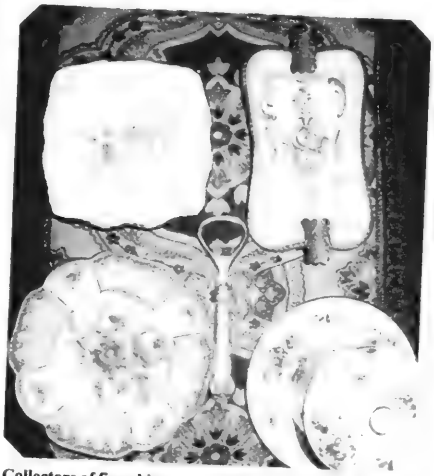
For many of us, when we're invited to prenuptial parties, showers or wedding receptions, one of our first thoughts is of what gift to bring or send. While this act of giving has long been traditional, many of the presents considered popular a generation ago are regarded as relics in 2010.

Until recently, ashtrays, cigarette trays, silver engraved match box containers, table lighters and decorative soda bottle openers served as popular gifts for prenuptials and wedding receptions.

True, people still smoke and drink soda, but unlike in prior decades, lighting up is discouraged in private homes and in venues such as synagogues, hotels and halls. Conversely, until the end of the 20th century, nonsmokers felt compelled to respect smokers' rights. Dignitaries, stage stars and media personalities were invariably photographed smoking. For years, celebrated American broadcaster Edward R. Murrow smoked his way through his highly rated nationally televised interviews.

How things have changed! Now, everyone knows that smoking is a health hazard and secondhand smoke is equally harmful.

Ashtrays, cigarette holders and lighters therefore lack the cachet of bygone years. A high proportion of North American newlyweds have no use for these decorative items. For earlier generations, these items were put to good use and added to the décor. Even non-smokers made it their business to have ashtrays visibly placed for guests. After dinner, hosts invited their guests to the parlour or den to smoke. Today, guests are politely ushered outdoors to smoke.



Collectors of fine china and decorative pieces still admire these beautifully crafted items that are reminders of an earlier era. *[Elaine Cohen photo]*

With regard to wedding gifts, this modern health-conscious trend may rule out a whole category of gifts that once suited the budgets of young guests invited to a bridal shower or to join the sweet table and dancing after the wedding dinner. The same goes for acquaintances or distant relatives not invited to the wedding, but eager to send a modest keepsake.

The bottle opener is another item that has lost its former stature. In fact, most of the traditional sterling or Sheffield silver cutlery sets included bottle openers. Brides and grooms usually received one or two as gifts. The pretty patterns on the handles matched or complemented the other pieces in the set. People used openers to pry caps off soft drink bottles. Once technology improved, the openers lay dormant in flatware chests.

However, collectors still value their beautifully crafted ashtrays, cigarette holders, lighters and bottle openers, and many stunning pieces have been handed down to younger generations. Now, these handsome ashtrays have a dual use as collectibles and pretty pin or trinket dishes.

Fortunately, numerous other traditional items are still in vogue. Picture frames are available at most gift boutiques, and whether they grace a wall, cabinet or end table, the frames enhance the decor. The photographs or artwork are conversation pieces and give people pleasure. Picture frames are crafted in silver, pewter, gold, ceramic and numerous other materials. The shapes, sizes and designs vary and so do the prices, making them affordable for any budget.

Vases, coasters, bar accessories, barbecue utensils, napkin rings and holders, corkscrews, bonbon dishes, placemats, salt and pepper shakers, butter dishes, sugar and creamer sets, salad bowls and servers, cake forks, pie knives, challah trays and covers, photo albums, fruit bowls, condiment dishes, candles and candlesticks, schnapps glasses, mezuzot and Judaica are just a sampling of treasured items that are available in gift shops and boutiques. Since prices vary according to the quality of merchandise, intricacy of design and craftsmanship, consumers can be as frugal or generous as their pocketbooks will allow.

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Brides

Shower parties "shower" the bride with gifts

By FRANCES GOODMAN PELLATT
Special to The CJN

Once the engagement ring is on her finger, a bride's thoughts may quickly turn to parties and special events organized in her honour. Thus the bridal shower has become an innate part of the wedding plans and proceedings.

The tradition originated in the 1800s in the Netherlands and may correspond to the ancient custom of the bride's dowry or trousseau, ensuring that the young couple would have everything they needed to set up their home. A trousseau or hope chest was usually started at the moment of a daughter's birth, and as she grew to womanhood, her parents would set aside items she would need in her own home.

Showers for brides have become a common component of the excitement and frivolity before the actual wedding. The earliest use of this expression may be found in the *Grand Rapids Michigan Evening Press* of June 4, 1904: "The shower parties... may derive from the custom in Victorian times for the presents to be put inside a parasol, which when opened would "shower" the bride-to-be with gifts."

There are many ideas to make bridal showers original and fun. For example, at one event, guests were invited to share their favourite recipes with the young bride and brought gifts associated with these recipes, such as how to make shortbread cookies along with a cookie sheet and all the ingredients. An idea for another bride was "rooms." On each guest's invitation the name of a different room in the home is printed for which the guest could buy a gift. If your invitation reads the bathroom, your gift could be towels, a shower curtain, bath mats or soap dishes, or perhaps a basket filled with the bride's favourite shampoo, bath salts and lotions. If the invitation indicates you have the bedroom, the gifts could be linens, pillows or lamps; and for the dining room, glasses, dishes, place mats, or table cloths.

As the mother of the bride, Franceen Besner Goffman wanted to give her daughter something unique and special for her bridal shower. Goffman remembered the saying "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue," and decided to make her gift based on this quote.

"Something old was my sterling cutlery, and something new was a diamond watch," she explains.

"Something borrowed was a gold wedding band, passed down from my maternal grandmother," continues Goffman who is the keeper of this wedding band that has been worn by three generations of brides at their marriage ceremonies: her grandmother, her mother, her sister and herself.

"The next to wear the ring were my nieces and my daughter," says Goffman, who hopes the tradition will continue down the line from generation to generation.

The last gift to complete the saying was more whimsical: a blue garter along with a cone shaped cellophane bag filled with every shade of blue jelly beans Goffman could find. The explanation for the gifts was in the wrapping. Goffman cut out heart shapes that she then attached to wires and wrote the words "old, new, borrowed, blue" on them, and then wrapped these around each respective gift.

The ritual of the bridal shower was originally to indoctrinate the young bride into her new traditional role as a homemaker: baking, cooking, and cleaning. However, with the changing roles of society today, historian Elisabeth Pleck notes that the thought behind the bridal shower is "more of an homage to the mothers and grandmothers than a reflection of how the bride-to-be will actually behave in the marriage."

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Infinity wows celebrants with simchahs in Israel

Israel offers a spiritual experience for family simchahs. *[Photo courtesy of Infinity Events]*

By ELAINE COHEN
Supplements Co-ordinator

Among the greatest joys in life are celebrating a wedding, bar or bat mitzvah, reunion or special event with family and friends. Although many magnificent global venues exist, few can compete with Israel.

Whether watching the sunrise atop Masada, praying at the Western Wall, exploring an ancient fortress, dining and dancing at an elegant hotel or combing the sandy beaches of Tel Aviv, Israel sparkles as a source of enlightenment and entertainment. Jews of all ages benefit from the memorable spiritual experience.

To make the most of the expedition and festivities, clients seek savvy event planners. The planner must have knowledge of the habitat, languages, religious practices, places of worship, historic sites, hotel and hospitality industry, laws, licences and much more. Moreover, the planner must be creative, reliable and efficient.

Blessed with talent and business acumen, Tamar Yarosky secured her niche as co-partner of Infinity Events, a Dankner Productions company in Israel. A native Montrealer, Yarosky was 12 when her family made aliyah. She attended high school, served in the army, received a master's degree in communication and a law degree in Israel and later returned to Montreal for several years. Subsequently, Yarosky, her Israeli husband, Oded Tal, and their two children left here to settle in their beloved Ramat Hasharon. Two years ago, Yarosky teamed up with corporate events planner and marketing guru Amir Dankner.

"Amir [who is Israeli] and my husband have been friends since childhood," Yarosky said. "Amir has been in the business for 15 years and is highly regarded for planning significant global corporate events. Throughout the years, he would constantly receive requests to arrange his clients' private simchahs. Fortunately, through our partnership, now we can fill that need."

Infinity Events, a Dankner Productions company, proved the perfect niche for Yarosky and Dankner. Dankner has served high-profile clients in Israel such as Intel, IBM, Coca-Cola, HP and Texas Instruments, and produced events in Thailand, India, Cyprus, Spain and other countries. For example, last summer, Dankner staged an event for 40,000 in Romania.

Infinity Events partner Tamar Yarosky *[Elaine Cohen photo]*

Yarosky's area of concentration is the private sector. She excels in planning awesome events in Israel for out-of-towners as well as Israelis. Last winter, the principals from Infinity Events spent a week in Israel with a family from Mexico City planning a bar mitzvah. The family returned home without finalizing the venue and plans. However, they felt comfortable with Yarosky and Dankner and entrusted Infinity Events with arrangements.

Besides the host's guests from Mexico, they received 30 others from elsewhere. Everyone was delighted with Infinity Events' arrangements.

"The Mexican entourage flew to Israel and toured for 10 days," Yarosky said in an interview when she was in Montreal recently. "They chose to hold the bar mitzvah ceremony at Davidson Center in Jerusalem in the late afternoon. Guests were then bused to the American Colony boutique hotel for cocktails followed by dinner. Although the hotel hosts many events on its spectacular property, it is not a typical venue for bar mitzvahs. That's where we look outside of the box. We always choose venues and amenities that reflect our clients' vision. This family wanted something elegant but not over the top. The American Colony Hotel unites people from different cultures. The hotel has long been host to dignitaries and celebrities, who call it their home away from home."

After the ceremony, the party headed for cocktails on the hotel's Pasha Terrace. Infinity Events also surprised the guests with a belly dancer. The celebrations continued the next day with visits to Masada and the Kfar Hanokdim Bedouin Village. Camels awaited anyone who wanted to go for a ride. After dinner, everyone joined in a drumming circle.

This group appreciated the Middle Eastern component, but Yarosky said every client is different, and whether it's a wedding or family reunion, everything must be tailored to the client's budget and tastes.

Yarosky knows the Israeli psyche and way of doing things, and has empathy for visitors from outside the country. Infinity clients benefit from her in-depth knowledge of both worlds.

"We work with trusted vendors and oversee everything from catering to candles. Infinity books hotels, tours, buses, cars and, of course, we find a rabbi suitable to each family for a wedding or bar mitzvah. Planning a simchah that takes place thousands of miles from home is a tricky task. To do the legwork, it's important to be aware of laws and customs, and insist on being treated right.

"I retain close ties with family and friends in Canada and I'm able to identify with the North American mindset," Yarosky said. "We conceptualize a vision and attend to details. Thanks to technology, it's easy to send photos, videos and communicate."

For more information, e-mail Tamar Yarosky (tamar@infev.com) or Amir Dankner (amir@infev.com) or visit the website at www.infev.com.

Out-of-towners can opt for healthy meals

By ELAINE COHEN
Supplements co-ordinator

When you travel out-of-town to attend a simchah, it's tempting to stray from your usual diet regimen. Between the aroma of steaming delectables and the sight of luscious-looking treats, it's easy to over-indulge in snacks and fattening meals.

And whether it's Shabbat dinner at a relative's home, a pre-nuptial gala, a bar mitzvah party or a wedding reception, the refreshments are often laden with calories, but it's hard to refuse second helpings. Fortunately, though, in big cities like Montreal and Toronto, there are many strictly kosher, healthy choices.

If the simchah is held on a long holiday weekend – or even if it's not – guests may take advantage of an extra day or two to visit sites in the city where the celebration takes place. Then, whether they are staying in a hotel with a kitchenette or restaurant, or at someone's home, they will find different foods available. Aware of this, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada and Canada's Food Guide offer wise choices and sensible tips that can be applied when on the road.

When at the simchah, it's often difficult to make the right selection; however, if you're out on the town, eating in your hotel or ordering in, it's possible to make healthy choices.

At a coffee shop or breakfast stop, opt for a low-fat, whole grain muffin instead of a Danish or doughnuts. Bagel-lovers can still have their bagel. But instead of a bagel loaded with cream cheese, go for a whole grain bagel with a small amount of light cream cheese, peanut butter or lower-fat cheese. Poached eggs or plain omelettes with unbuttered whole grain toast are tasty and healthy, so shun fried eggs and omelets with hash browns. Opt for coffee or tea with milk instead of cream.

Even the deli or sandwich counter need not be threatening. Choose a whole grain bread or bun, rather than white bread or a rich croissant. Specify lean chicken, turkey or roast beef and nix higher fat options such as salami or smoked meat. Salads may be healthy, but forgo rich dressings. For example, opt for green salad, fruit salad or bean salad instead of Caesar, potato or macaroni salad. Before reaching for a glass of fruit juice or milk, check to see if the beverage is unsweetened and the milk is low-fat.

Whether you step out for kosher pizza or have it delivered to your hotel door, check the menu. Do you have a choice of whole wheat or another type of whole grain crust? If so, it's preferable to the white crust. In addition, a vegetarian pizza is healthier than pizza with the works.

People with a yen for Asian food can order steamed dumplings grilled, steamed or stir-fried veggies instead of deep-fried items.

At a chicken eatery, pick barbecued, baked, grilled or stir-fried chicken with the skin removed.

At a burger place, choose plain or child-sized hamburgers that are grilled and placed on whole grain buns.

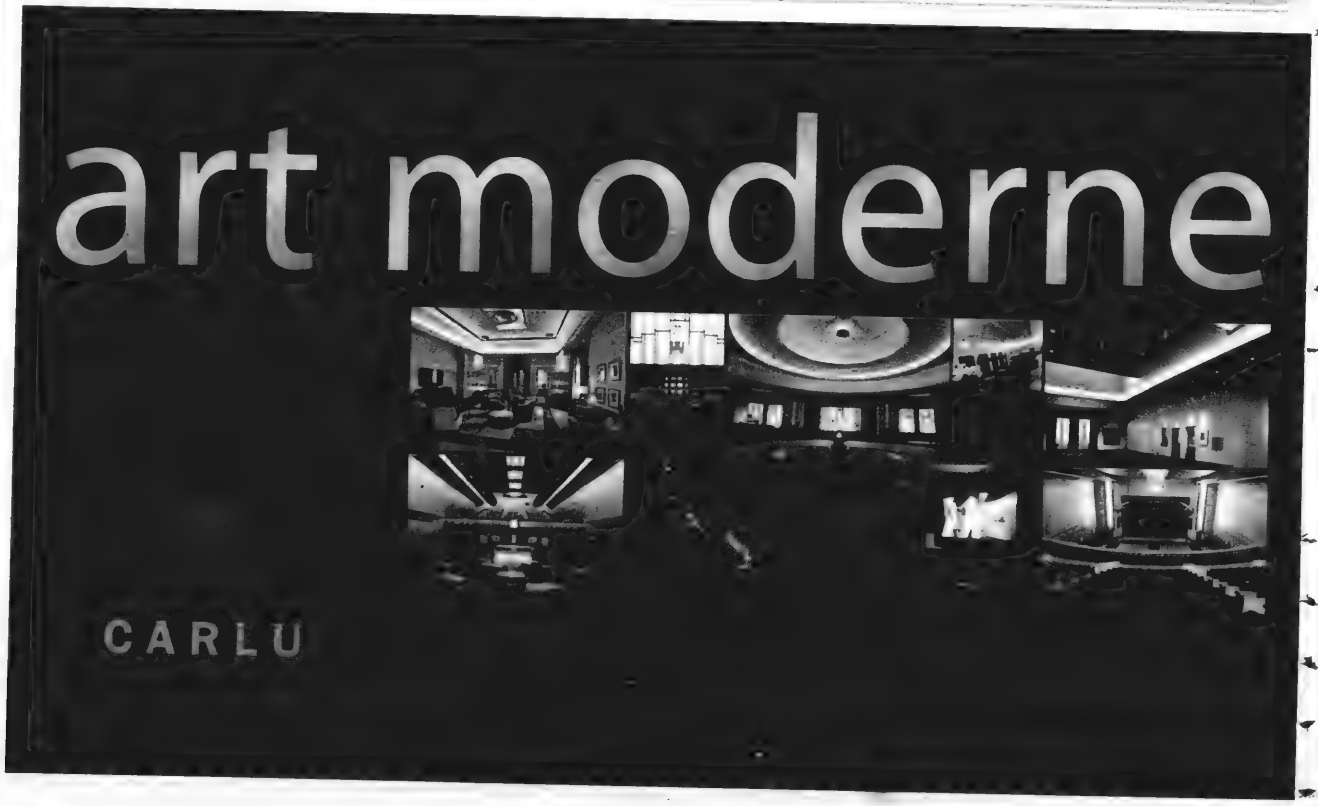
Italian food aficionados should opt for broiled, baked, grilled or poached fish, chicken or veal. As for pasta, it's preferable to choose pasta with vegetables in tomato sauce sprinkled with Parmesan cheese rather than pasta baked in a rich, fattening sauce. Fresh fruit is healthy, naturally sweet and delicious – and it will result in fewer guilt trips than decadent desserts.

Dietitians note that a steady diet of fast foods may result in your getting too little fibre and fewer vitamins A, C, D and folic acid than advisable. Fortunately, many eateries now include lighter and lower-fat options directly on their menus.

How does a typical fast food meal add up? The average adult needs about 2,000 calories, no more than 65 g of fat and no more than 2,400 mg of sodium daily. Seek choices with fewer calories, fat and sodium.

Watch for portion sizes and don't feel obligated to clean the plate. Enormous portions are common and there is no harm in leaving a little over or asking for someone to serve less food.

Balance out the meal. Meals eaten away from home may be low in vegetables, fruit and dairy products. Nutritionists offer these suggestions. Think about food choices for the entire day. If eating out for one meal, then plan to eat plenty of whole grains, vegetables, fruit and lower-fat dairy products the rest of the day. Stay away from soft drinks. Drink water instead of colas or other sugary beverages.



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'Status quo not an option,' Livni says

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israel should pursue peace talks with the Palestinian Authority (PA) so that its future as a Jewish democratic state can be assured, Israeli Opposition leader Tzipi Livni said in Toronto last week.

"This process must be continued," declared Livni, who as deputy prime minister and foreign minister in Israel's previous government, led talks with the Palestinian side for nine months until they collapsed after Israel's invasion of the Gaza Strip in January 2009.

"The status quo is not an option," she added in an implicit critique of Israel's current government, led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

A peaceful resolution of Israel's conflict with the Palestinians is in Israel's national self-interest, said Livni, the head of the centrist Kadima party and a member of Netanyahu's governing Likud party until a few years ago.

Only peace can ensure that Israel will remain Jewish as well as democratic, she said, addressing a large audience at a United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto function at the Events on the Park.

Kadima party leader Tzipi Livni

Livni, who left the Likud party in 2005 along with her boss, former prime minister Ariel Sharon, pledged to give Netanyahu political support if he takes the "right steps" toward peace.

"Time is of the essence," she noted. "We have to make tough decisions."

On a speaking tour in the United States prior to her visit to Toronto, Livni urged Netanyahu to make "the necessary decisions" required to keep talks with the Palestinians going, and warned that a "blow up" of negotiations would have grave consequences for Israel.

The PA suspended its participation in the talks, pending an Arab League summit in Libya on Oct. 8, after Netanyahu refused to extend the 10-month partial moratorium on settlement construction in the West Bank, claimed by Israel and the Palestinians.

Continued on page 8

Newly appointed Canadian ambassador to Israel, Paul Hunt, left, presented his credentials to Israeli President Shimon Peres last week in Jerusalem. Hunt succeeds Jon Allen. *The CJN* will publish an interview with Hunt in the coming weeks. *[IGPO photo]*

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Changes proposed for Western Wall plaza – please see page 41

The News in Brief

Canada

Graffiti Found

HALIFAX — Graffiti targeting Jews and blacks were found carved into a wooden play structure in a Halifax-area park on Sept. 30. The playground in suburban Hammonds Plains had been hit with racist graffiti earlier the same week, and the Sept. 30 find was the fifth such incident in the area in 10 days, the *Halifax Chronicle Herald* reported. Police said last week it's too early to tell if the graffiti is the work of bored kids or something more serious.

Premier Visits Israel

WINNIPEG — Manitoba NDP Premier Greg Selinger is in Israel this week on a mission led by the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg. Selinger is being accompanied by Water Stewardship Minister Christine Melnick and Innovation, Energy and Mines Minister Dave Chomiak. Before leaving, Selinger said he plans to sign partnership agreements in agriculture and water quality research, as well as examine Israel's work in developing electric vehicles.

World

Wagner Cancels Trip

JERUSALEM — Composer Richard Wagner's great-granddaughter cancelled a visit to Israel after the leaked trip prompted criticism over her anti-Semitic ancestor. Katharina Wagner was scheduled to visit Israel this week to formally invite the Israel Chamber Orchestra to open next summer's Wagner Festival in Bayreuth, Germany. Her visit, which had been kept secret for a year, was leaked to the Israeli media to mixed reactions in Israel and abroad. Wagner's works are generally not performed in Israel, where he is reviled as a vocal anti-Semite whose work was adored by Adolf Hitler. Wagner subsequently retracted the orchestra's invitation to play at the festival. It will perform in the town, but not at the festival itself.

Ex-Anchor Apologizes

NEW YORK — Fired CNN anchor Rick Sanchez apologized to comedian Jon Stewart for calling him a bigot and implying that Jews control the media. In an Oct. 6 statement, Sanchez said he called the star of Comedy Central's and CTV's *The Daily Show* and that the two had a "very good" conversation. "As Jon was kind enough to note in his show [Oct. 4], I am very much opposed to hate and intolerance, in any form, and I have frequently spoken out against prejudice. Despite what my tired and mangled words may have implied, they were never intended to suggest any sort of narrow-mindedness and should never have been made," Sanchez said. During a freewheeling exchange with Latino radio host Pete Dominick, Sanchez, a native of Cuba, alleged that Stewart singled him out for ridicule because of white bigotry, and he implied that CNN and other networks were run by "people like Stewart."

Art Sale Record

HONG KONG — The sale of an oil painting by Jewish artist Marc Chagall set an Asian record for western art. The 1969 painting *Bestiaire et Musique* was auctioned Oct. 4 in Hong Kong to an unidentified Asian buyer for $4.18 million (US). Modern western art typically sells for more in Europe and the United States than in Asia.

Paper Backs Off Gay Nuptials Ad Apology

NEW YORK — After expressing regret for printing a gay wedding announcement, the *New Jersey Jewish Standard* says it now regrets the hasty apology.

The Jewish weekly's Sept. 24 publication of a gay couple's announcement sparked outrage among some local Orthodox rabbis, prompting the Teaneck-based paper to apologize a week later and pledge not to run another such item in the future. But after a backlash online and from other community members for the hasty backtracking on the gay issue, the *Jewish Standard* reversed course again.

"We ran the wedding announcement because we felt, as a community newspaper, that it was our job to serve the entire community – something we have been doing for 80 years," publisher James Janoff said in a statement in last week's paper. "We did not expect the heated response we got, and – in truth – we believe now that we may have acted too quickly in issuing the followup statement, responding only to one segment of the community."

Janoff said the paper is meeting with other local rabbis and community leaders and that it would publish many of the letters prompted by the controversy. He didn't say definitively whether the paper would publish gay wedding announcements in the future.

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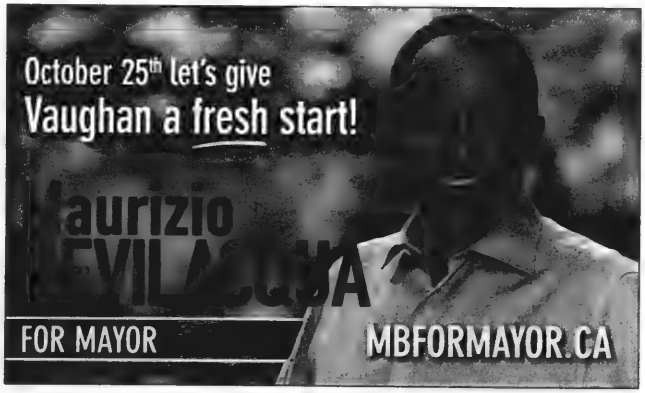

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Mayoral candidates address Jewish concerns

With less than two weeks to go before election day on Oct. 25, The CJN presents it's coverage of the four main mayoral candidates, all of whom have taken time over the course of the campaign to address issues of concern to the city's Jewish community.

The following is derived from recent interviews, as well as debates organized by Jewish groups, namely an Aug. 19 event held by the Association of Jewish Seniors and the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee, and an Oct. 5 debate convened by the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies (FSWC).

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF and RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

The four remaining front-running Toronto mayoral candidates may have major policy differences in their platforms, but they all share the belief that the Jewish community and Israel should not be demonized by any groups in publicly funded events.

Speaking about last July's gay Pride parade, in which the group Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA) was allowed to participate – despite protests from the Jewish community and initial assurances by Pride organizers that it would nota be allowed to take part – all the candidates told *The CJN* they would not allow a repeat of the event.

"Hate has no place at Pride, and hate has no place in any event that the public is asked to subsidize," Rocco Rossi said. "We need to tighten up the [city's non-discrimination policy] language, and as mayor, I will not financially support any [hate] group at any event with public dollars. Next year, no funding if [QuAIA] is there."

George Smitherman took a more nuanced stance on this issue, saying that despite QuAIA's presence in the parade this past summer, "the Jewish community needs to know there is a plurality of people in the [gay] community who recognize Israel is advanced with respect to rights for the LGBT community. I will continue to oppose QuAIA."

The former provincial health minister said that as a gay man, he understands what it means to be persecuted and has empathy for the Jewish community as a result.

If elected, Rob Ford said he will refuse to fund Pride next year if QuAIA is allowed to march again.

"I think it's straightforward. Zero tolerance," the Etobicoke councillor said. "I'm not going to give them a dime. We can't stop [QuAIA] from marching, but we can stop writing that cheque."

Current Deputy Mayor Joe Pantalone said that if elected, he would sit down with the Pride committee to discuss the issue.

"What I want to do after the election is get together, sit down with the members of Pride Toronto and also members of whatever community is concerned about it, particularly the Jewish community, and figure out what it is we need to do," he said in a recent phone interview.

Pantalone added that Pride Toronto must decide whether or not they want to politicize an event that celebrates gay rights.

"What's the purpose [of the parade]? A political dialogue? A celebration? And if this debate needs to be undertaken, what is the proper forum for this?" he said, adding that, next year, grants will be given only after the actual parade.

"It's a balance we're trying to strike between people's rights and [discrimination]," Pantalone said at the FSWC debate. "Israel's right to exist is fundamental and shouldn't be put into question. Let's have the conversation."

Continued on page 17

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Fed up with constant hypocrisy

From the editor's desk...

Last week the *Globe and Mail* published a 23-word excerpt from a statement Faisal Shahzad made in a New York courtroom after he was sentenced for having attempted to detonate a car bomb in downtown New York City.

"Brace yourselves," Shahzad warned, "because the war with Muslims has just begun. Consider me the first droplet of the blood that will flow."

Of course, the man was intent on further blustering widely his malevolent bombast as part of the program of slaughtering and terrorizing innocents that he some time ago set as the high purpose of his religious life.

Nor was it a histrionic charade on his part. He believed deeply in the message.

The same week, various western governments issued travel alerts warning their citizens against heading to Europe due to the possibility of terrorist actions at key tourist sites there. Media outlets of all technologies and nationalities carried news of the alerts non-stop.

It was against this backdrop of obscenely florid anti-western imagery and heightened travel anxiety that the Rosh Hashanah sermon of Rabbi Shalom Lewis of Congregation Etz Chaim in Marietta, Ga., zipped instantaneously through the invisible ether into countless e-mail accounts around the world.

The sermon was titled *Ehr Kumt*, ("He Is Coming," in Yiddish). The title is taken from a speech given in 1938 by the firebrand visionary of the Revisionist Zionists, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, to a gathering of Jews in the Choral Synagogue in Kovno (Kaunas), Lithuania.

Jabotinsky pleaded with his coreligionists to stir from their complacency, to rise from their inertia, to overcome their fears and leave their homes immediately before it was too late, that is, before the Nazis arrived. Hitler was marching toward them, Jabotinsky warned, as inexorably as the rising tides during a deluge. Hitler was coming, he warned.

Rabbi Lewis poignantly used the reference, explaining it in the context of a conversation he had with an elderly family friend who had actually been in the Choral Synagogue those many years earlier when Jabotinsky spoke.

Rabbi Lewis had two purposes in mind in invoking the Choral Synagogue sermon: specifically to draw a historic parallel between the situation then and the situation today; but more generally, to call our attention to the important need for us to pay more attention to the lessons of history.

He was not being an alarmist. He was forceful, yet thoughtful. The sermon was well-written, well-constructed and well-reasoned.

"We are not in Lithuania," Rabbi Lewis emphasized. "It is not the 1930s. There is no Luftwaffe overhead. No U-boats off the coast of long Island. No Panzer divisions on our borders. But make no mistake; we are under attack our values, our tolerance, our freedom, our virtue, our land."

Aware that he might indeed be sounding like an alarmist to some congregants, Rabbi Lewis also took great pains time and again to let his congregants know that he was not.

"Now before some folks roll their eyes and glance at their watches, let me state emphatically, unmistakably, I have no pathology of hate, nor am I a manic Paul Revere, galloping through the countryside. I am not a pessimist, nor prone to panic attacks. I am a lover of humanity, all humanity."

Rabbi Lewis is an experienced congregational leader. He has been with Etz Chaim for more than three decades, since 1977. In conversation with *The CJN* last week, Rabbi Lewis said that he had received only one note of criticism from the more than 2,500 people who heard the sermon.

Since the sermon appeared on the Internet, he has been swamped with e-mails "from all over." Perhaps a dozen, he said, have been disparaging.

It was "the constant hypocrisy of our times, especially after the Gaza flotilla incident" that convinced him to speak on the subject.

Rabbi Lewis had no qualms in identifying the enemy of our values and our freedom.

"Today, the enemy is radical Islam... Let me state that the overwhelming number of Muslims are good Muslims, fine human beings who want nothing more than a Jeep Cherokee in their driveway, a flat-screen TV on their wall and a good education for their children, but these good Muslims have an obligation to destiny, to decency that thus far for the most part they have avoided."

For those of us who doubt or question Rabbi Lewis' conclusions, he urged us to be guided by history.

"Did anyone imagine in the 1920s what Europe would look like in the 1940s? Did anyone presume to know in the coffee houses of Berlin or in the opera halls of Vienna that genocide would soon become the celebrated culture?

"We must be diligent students of history and not sit in ash cloth at the waters of Babylon weeping... We cannot be lulled into inaction for fear of offending the offenders."

The full text of Rabbi Lewis' Rosh Hashanah sermon can be found at the synagogue's website, www.etzchaim.net.

It warrants being read.

– *MBD*

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The Reena Foundation's Race Night for Reena at Woodbine Racetrack generated approximately $38,000 for outreach, respite and enrichment programs. From left are event attendees Samantha Rubens, *The CJN* promotions manager David Collin, Jennifer Israel and Heather Popliger.

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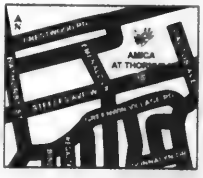

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Former Shin Bet head issues dire warning

Terrorism will increase if peace talks fail

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israel will face an upsurge of terrorism and further international criticism and isolation if current peace talks with the Palestinian Authority collapse, warns Ami Ayalon, the former director of the Shin Bet, Israel's domestic intelligence service.

The negotiations, launched early last month in a ceremony in Washington, D.C., under the sponsorship of the United States, were thrown into doubt after the partial 10-month-old construction moratorium in the West Bank expired, prompting the Palestinians to suspend their participation in the process.

In an interview in Toronto last week, conducted before Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu convened his cabinet to discuss the possibility of extending the partial moratorium in exchange for U.S. security guarantees, Ayalon said that if the Palestinians pull out of the talks, Israel should expect severe long-term consequences.

Ami Ayalon
[S. Kirshner photo]

"Security will deteriorate and there will be more terror," said Ayalon, who headed the Shin Bet from 1996 to 2000 and served as minister without portfolio in the Israeli cabinet from 2007 onward. He currently runs AKIM, an organization that assists Israelis with intellectual disabilities.

The chaos following a breakdown of talks might well create a situation in which Hamas eventually seizes control of the West Bank through elections or violence, noted Ayalon, a former naval commando who commanded the Israeli Navy from 1992 to 1996.

The suspension of talks would further radicalize Israeli Arabs, isolate Israel internationally and embolden Iran to lead the Muslim world, added Ayalon, who came in second to Ehud Barak in a Labor party leadership race three years ago.

Ayalon said that if the two-state option fades away and Palestinians in the West Bank are denied equal rights by the Israeli government, international opinion could well downplay Israel's struggle for security and brand Israel as an apartheid state.

An agreement between Israel and the Palestinians should be based on the People's Voice peace initiative, he said.

Jointly launched in 2003 by Ayalon and Sari Nusseibeh, a Palestinian peace activist and university professor, the initiative is based on a negotiated two-state solution.

Under the initiative, Israel would be the state of the Jewish people, while Palestine would be the state of the Palestinians. The Palestinian state would be demilitarized

Permanent borders would be drawn on the basis of the June 4, 1967, lines, and border modifications would be based on an equal 1:1 land swap taking into account security, territorial contiguity and demographic considerations.

If the initiative is implemented, Ayalon observed, Israel would retain from two to four per cent of the West Bank hugging the old Green Line.

After the establishment of agreed borders, Jewish settlers would leave the Palestinian state, which will be composed of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. He estimates that upward of 90,000 Jewish settlers would return to their former homes in Israel.

Jerusalem would be the capital of the two states, with freedom of religion and full access to holy sites guaranteed to Israelis and Palestinians. Neither side would exercise control over the holy places, but Israel would be the guardian of the Western Wall and the Palestinians would be the guardian of the Temple Mount.

Arab and Jewish neighbourhoods in Jerusalem would, respectively, come under Palestinian and Israeli sovereignty.

Palestinian refugees would return to a Palestinian state rather than Israel, and an international fund would compensate them for their suffering.

The conflict would be terminated and all claims from both sides would end.

Ayalon said the goal of the initiative was to canvas support for its broad principles by collecting Israeli and Palestinian signatures. According to Ayalon, 450,000 signatures, of whom 190,000 are Palestinian, have been collected.

Ayalon and his Palestinian partner have not actively worked on their plan in recent years.

"According to polls, most Israelis and Palestinians are ready to accept our ideas," Ayalon said.

The initiative has been endorsed by leaders on both sides, he said, citing Ehud Olmert, Israel's former prime minister, and Tzipi Livni, Israel's former foreign minister and current leader of the opposition Kadimah party.

"People around [Mahmoud] Abbas – the president of the Palestinian Authority – and in Jordan and Egypt have told me that the parameters of an agreement will be based on our initiative."

Netanyahu has not endorsed the initiative. But several years ago, Netanyahu's current national security adviser, Uzi Arad, told Ayalon he had urged him to embrace it.

Ayalon expressed confidence that the principles of his initiative will be reflected in a peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinians.

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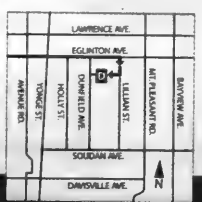

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Livni says Israel should be Jewish and democratic

Continued from page 1

Livni said two diametrically opposing "visions" of Israel's future are in play in Israel today.

The first envisages Jews living in the entire Land of Israel, including the West Bank, while the second envisages Israel as a Jewish and a democratic state.

"These are two different visions," she said, defining the debate that has raged in Israel since the Six Day War. "We have to decide what vision we want."

The Jewish people have a right to the whole Land of Israel, the place where their forefathers dwelled and the place she loves, Livni said.

"In my vision, Israel should be a Jewish and a democratic state," she asserted, suggesting that an absence of peace would transform Israel into a bi-national state, the worst-case scenario.

Country must respect Jewish life outside Israel

Fleshing out her definition of a Jewish state, Livni said it should hew to Jewish values, traditions, symbols and holidays without becoming a theocracy, respect differences, uphold the importance of diversity and make it possible for non-Jews to become part of the Jewish People through conversion to Judaism.

In an apparent dig at the Orthodox rabbinic establishment in Israel, which takes a dim view of Reform and Conservative Judaism, Livni said, "Israel has to respect Jewish life outside Israel."

She added that the Orthodox in Israel, "unfortunately," are unwilling to respect "the diversity of the Jewish world."

By the same token, she noted, secular Israeli Jews are under the illusion they can be Jews merely by speaking Hebrew and serving in the armed forces.

She lamented that Orthodox and secular Jews are worlds apart in Israel. As she put it, "There is no common denominator between them."

Saying she came to Toronto as "a Jew" and "a Jewish mother" rather than as a politician, Livni thanked Jews in Canada for supporting Israel during these "difficult times."

She explained that her reason for entering politics, which she admitted she hates, was to leave her children the legacy of a secure Israel with democratic values living at peace with its Arab neighbours.

Surveying the current political landscape, she said a "huge gap" has opened up between Israel and its image abroad, a gap that must be closed.

Livni said Israel is being subjected to "a process of delegitimization," a phenomenon that affected her directly more than a year ago, when she was forced to cancel a trip to Britain or face the prospect of being arrested as an alleged war criminal.

Saying that Israel must confront this challenge to its existence, Livni warned that delegitimization affects its ability to defend itself.

In a reference to an incident last May during which Israeli commandos killed nine Turkish activists aboard a Turkish ship trying to break Israel's siege of the Gaza Strip, Livni claimed they were acting in self-defence.

Israel does not deliberately target civilians, she said.

Reiterating a plea she made to Ban Ki-moon, the secretary general of the United Nations, Livni said that Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, should no longer be permitted to address the UN.

Cantorial concert planned

Israel Guide Dog Centre to benefit from concert.

The Toronto Council of Hazzanim will hold a gala cantorial concert at Beth David Synagogue at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 18.

Eight Toronto cantors will be accompanied by the David Warrack Trio as they perform songs of Israel and Broadway.

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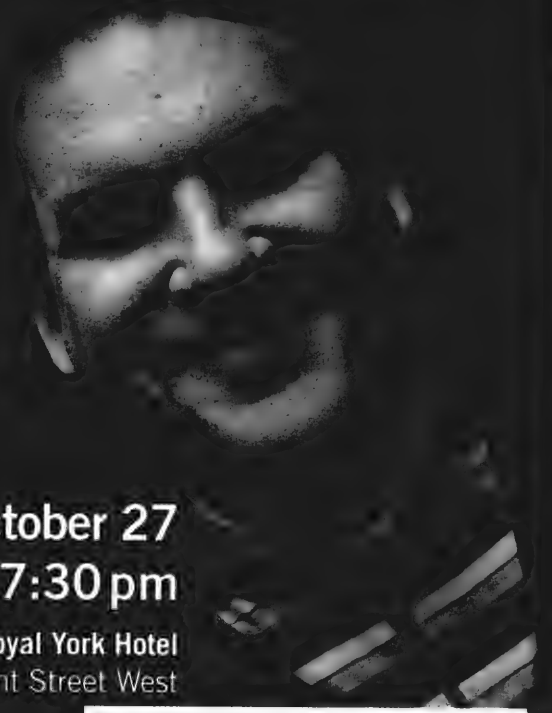

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Sacrificing Lebanon on Iran's altar?

Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was scheduled to visit Lebanon this week. His itinerary was to take him southward merely kilometres from the Israeli border to the Hezbollah villages of Bint Jbeil and Maroun al-Ras. As reported in *The CJN* last week, the Iranian leader was interested in reaching even up to the border itself in order to hurl stones at Israeli soldiers on the other side, much like late professor of literature at Columbia University, Edward Said, did some years ago.

Israel, of course, is justifiably upset and worried that Ahmadinejad's visit will provoke unforeseen reactions that could lead to violent confrontation. It has sent messages to Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri and President Michel Suleiman through the United Nations, the United States and France urging them to prevent the Iranian leader from reaching the border. As of this writing, the government of Lebanon had not responded to the messages.

Ahmadinejad's purpose however is far grander than merely posing for the cameras as he heroically casts stones at the "Zionist entity." He is, in fact, running cover for his Hezbollah surrogates.

The release of the report of the UN's Special Tribunal for Lebanon into the murder of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri is imminent. Pundits speculate that the report will point the finger of responsibility at Hezbollah.

But Hezbollah has made it quite clear that dire consequences will result for Lebanon if its government accepts the UN's conclusions.

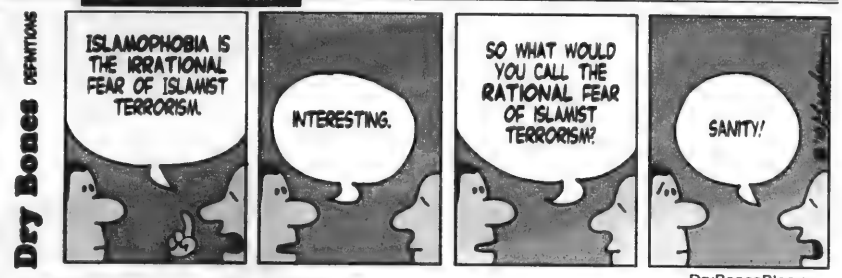
As reported in the *Jerusalem Post*, Nawwaf al-Moussawi, a Hezbollah MP in the Lebanese parliament, warned that any Lebanese who accepted the tribunal's findings of blame for Hezbollah would be killed as a "collaborator" with Israel and the United States. In addition, Hezbollah fighters have been reportedly deployed in several "sensitive" locations throughout the country. The Iranian-controlled puppet party of Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah is determined to cause as much internal Lebanese instability as possible. Some observers charge that Hezbollah is actually preparing for the overthrow of the Lebanese government.

In both causes, Ahmadinejad would be a willing participant. Hezbollah has no independent existence today absent the largesse and the directives from Tehran. He would delight in wresting control of Lebanon away from the Lebanese and into the blood-stained hands of his Shia proxies. He would also delight in deflecting international attention away from his nuclear ambitions.

If Iran manages successfully to steal the reins of power in Lebanon for Hezbollah, it would mean victory for the Iranian leader's fellow travellers: Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood, Islamic Jihad and Al Qaeda. It would also mean the end of Lebanon, a place that might have once emerged into a fine country had it not been sacrificed to Iran by timid and craven powers on the altar of Iran's malevolent intentions. But it is not likely that Israel would stand idly by.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Four Palestinian terrorists who hijacked the Italian cruise liner Achille Lauro in the Mediterranean Sea surrendered to Egyptian authorities after a two-day standoff during which they killed disabled 69-year-old American Jew, Leon Klinghoffer.


Dry Bones
ISLAMOPHOBIA IS THE IRRATIONAL FEAR OF ISLAMIST TERRORISM.
INTERESTING.
SO WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THE RATIONAL FEAR OF ISLAMIST TERRORISM?
SANITY!
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Journalist espouses extreme left views

On Sept. 20 at McGill University in Montreal, under the auspices of Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East, Israeli journalist Gideon Levy was invited to speak about his new book, *The Punishment of Gaza*. Levy, known for espousing views typically on the margins of the Israeli political left, lived up to his reputation.

In his lecture, Levy downplayed the threats facing Israel on the front lines, fuelling the tangibly anti-Israel sentiment prevalent in the crowd. Levy, who himself acknowledges the freedom bestowed upon him as a journalist and as an Israeli citizen, still seized the opportunity to challenge the fundamentals of Israeli democracy. When speaking of the March of the Living, the annual high school student educational experience in Poland, Levy dared to say, "When Israeli students visit Auschwitz, they come back very nationalistic, if not racist." That picture he paints of Israelis is one I cannot identify with. Israeli students who visit Auschwitz return more sympathetic to the pains of the world, and with a stronger connection to their Jewish history.

Levy's final message was one of utter pessimism. He does not have hope in the renewed peace talks. He does not view them as positive nor productive, and offers a diagnosis with no prescription for a solution.

Despite Levy, Israel will still pursue peace, despite its partners and dissidents, and continue to thrive as the Middle East's only democracy.

Mitch Sohmer
Montreal

* * *

Artscroll has accomplished wonders

Prof. Martin Lockshin, in the article "The Artscroll revolution," (Sept. 16), criticized Artscroll publishers, especially for writing classical Hebrew works into English. It hurt me to read this, as I personally have witnessed the wonders that Artscroll has been able to accomplish.

Many years ago, when one had to take a ferry to get to Prince Edward Island, my family and I decided to vacation there. Knowing that there are no shuls or Jewish community centres in P.E.I., we asked the shul in Moncton, N.B., if they knew of any Jews living on the island. They gave us the name and address of a farmer whom we visited. We drove to his home on the eastern part of the island. He was very friendly and told us about the few Jews who live in P.E.I. As we were talking, another man who had been informed we were coming entered, holding a briefcase. He told the farmer that he had brought the book the farmer had been asking for. The farmer was elated. The first man opened his briefcase and, incredibly, took out an Artscroll Talmud in English! The two men told us that they live on opposite sides of the island and learn Talmud on the telephone two to three times a week! We were astounded to say the least.

Thanks to Artscroll, Jews in the farthest-flung parts of the world are learning God's Torah. What was once only comprehensible for those who had a yeshiva background is now available to all. Would Lockshin prefer that Jews remain ignorant of their heritage? (Much of the Talmud is written in Aramaic and is difficult even for those fluent in Hebrew.) Anything that facilitates the return of our brethren to their heritage should be commended by all. Especially when it comes to studying Talmud, for "there is no greater measure than this!" (Bava Metzia 33).

Mordechai Bulua
Montreal

LET THEM GO...
Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1573
The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

* * *

CJC offers 'sensible' correction

I was much relieved when the Canadian Jewish Congress offered an informed and sensible correction to the declarations from B'nai Brith in Montreal regarding the cartoonist who drew an image of Parliament Hill with the Peace Tower in the background and what appeared to be a Star of David in the centre of its clock face ("CJC comes to defence of *Le Droit* cartoonist," Sept. 29).

Moshe Herscovici
Montreal

* * *

Romanian sefer Torah's origins

Did you live in Romania before World War II? If so, we need your help! The Toronto Heschel School is privileged to own a Romanian sefer Torah that survived the Holocaust and is looking for background history about it.

The sefer Torah first belonged to Rabbi Zalman Laifer of Temeshvar (Timisoara), Romania. It was written by sofer Pinchas Breuer around 1930. Rabbi Laifer (and the Torah) moved to Boro Park, N.Y., after World War II.

Our goal is continuity. We hope to uncover more background information to not only teach and inspire our students, but also to preserve our Jewish history for future generation. If you lived in Temeshvar before the war, knew Rabbi Laifer or Pinchas Breuer, we would love to talk to you.

Please contact the school at 416-635-1876, ext. 613, or e-mail torah@torontoheschel.org, or write the Toronto Heschel School, 819 Sheppard Ave. W. Toronto M3H 2T3.

Linda Wolfond
Sefer Torah Committee
Toronto Heschel School

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Perspectives

Israel and U.S. negotiate

By LESLIE SUSSER

Following reports of an unprecedented U.S. offer of a host of assurances in return for a 60-day extension of the freeze on building in West Bank settlements, some political analysts are wondering why Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has not grabbed the deal with both hands.

According to the reports, U.S. President Barack Obama is offering Netanyahu pledges that the United States will:

- Not ask for additional extensions on the partial ban on settlement building, which expired Sept. 26;
- Commit to using the U.S. veto to prevent UN recognition of a unilaterally declared Palestinian state, if Israeli-Palestinian negotiations fail to bear fruit;
- "Accept the legitimacy" of Israel's security needs as defined by the Netanyahu government – understood as referring to Netanyahu's demand for a long-term Israeli military presence in the Jordan Valley, in the eastern West Bank;
- Broker talks with neighbouring Arab states on a "regional security structure" – a nod to Netanyahu's desire for co-operation on confronting Iran;
- Enhance Israel's security through the sale of a second squadron of state-of-the-art stealth F-35 fighters and space co-operation, including access to U.S. satellite early warning systems.

The price: Israel must agree to extend for 60 days the recently expired West Bank building freeze.

If Netanyahu spurns the offer, Israel not only would lose out on all the above, but the Americans would come out publicly in support of the 1967 borders as the basis for all future territorial negotiations with the Palestinians.

On its face, the deal would seem like a no-brainer for Netanyahu to take. So why hasn't he?

For one thing, it's not only up to Netanyahu. He needs the approval of a settlement freeze extension from his 29-member cabinet or at least his 15-member Security Cabinet, and he doesn't have enough votes yet in those bodies. While by most accounts Netanyahu is inclined to take the deal and is pushing for cabinet members to approve it, the United States first might have to sweeten the pot.

The U.S. offer followed intensive negotiations in Washington between Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak and an American team led by veteran Middle East adviser Dennis Ross. The idea was to affirm the U.S. commitments in a presidential letter to Netanyahu to persuade him and pro-settlement members of his government to go along with a new temporary freeze – and in so doing keep alive the direct Israeli-Palestinian peace talks launched in early September. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has pledged to quit the talks if the freeze is not extended.

For now, the Israeli prime minister is being pressed by cabinet hardliners not to accept the American package as is. They warn that it is all very general and that much of it will not stand up in practice.

The hardliners are suspicious, too, of Barak's motives. They believe Barak is behind the American offer because he fears that if the peace talks with the Palestinians break down, his Labor Party would be forced to withdraw from the government. Such a move would cost Barak the post of defence minister and, in all likelihood, his political future.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in a less diplomatically tense moment last month in Washington. ***[IGPO photo]***

As things stand, Netanyahu does not have the votes for the deal.

In the full 29-member cabinet, 14 ministers are for extending the freeze and 15 are against. In the 15-member security cabinet, the count is seven for and eight against, and in the unofficial forum of seven top advisers, three are for extending the freeze and four are against.

In Netanyahu's governing coalition, without the support of Yisrael Beiteinu, Shas, Torah Judaism, Habayit Hayehudi and Likud hardliners, the prime minister would have the support of fewer than 40 members of the 120-member Knesset.

Netanyahu's greatest political fear is of a repeat of 1999, when after making concessions to Palestinians at Wye Plantation, he lost his right-wing political support base and was roundly defeated by Barak in the ensuing election. This time, the scenario that Netanyahu wants to avoid is accepting an American package, going ahead with the peacemaking and then losing the next election to Kadima's Tzipi Livni.

Even if Netanyahu could jettison the pro-settler parties from his coalition and bring in Kadima – changing the balance of power in the government and the Knesset in favour of pro-negotiation parties, and accepting the U.S. package – it could cost him the premiership.

Netanyahu therefore is being extra careful about making any moves that could lose him large swaths of what he sees as his natural constituency.

The Israeli prime minister also has a major strategic concern. According to confidants, he fears that as soon as any new 60-day freeze ends, the Americans will put a "take it or leave it peace plan" of their own on the table. With the U.S. midterm elections over, Obama might feel able to publicly present parameters for a peace deal that Netanyahu would find impossible to accept.

Israel might then find itself totally isolated and under intolerable international pressure. That is a scenario Netanyahu hopes the current negotiations with the Americans will help him avoid.

So far, Netanyahu has spoken of ongoing "delicate" negotiations with the Americans and implied that much of what has been reported in the press is inaccurate.

As so often in the past, Netanyahu is caught between the U.S. administration and his right-leaning coalition. If he chooses his coalition, he risks losing the support of the current administration. If he chooses America, he fears he could lose his coalition and, with it, the premiership.

What Labor and Likud moderates reportedly are telling him is that it is not 1999, and that now he can have his cake and eat it, too: If he goes with the Americans and the peace process, he will win the next election hands down.

Oren: U.S. offered Israel incentives for settlement freeze extension

By BARAK RAVID
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — The United States offered Israel "incentives" geared toward encouraging Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet to extend the recently expired moratorium on settlement building, Israel's U.S. ambassador Michael Oren said in an Oct. 6 interview with the *Washington Post*.

"No letter was sent to the prime minister. We are not going to comment on sensitive diplomatic matters," said Benjamin Chang, deputy spokesperson for the White House National Security Council.

Late last month, a White House official denied reports that U.S. President Barack Obama had sent Netanyahu a letter proposing a set of U.S. guarantees to Israel in exchange for Israel extending a freeze on settlement construction.

However, in the first such confirmation by an Israeli official of the existence of a U.S. offer of the kind, Oren told the *Post* that the U.S. "administration has come back to Israel with a number of suggestions – incentives if you would – that would enable the government to maybe pass a limited extension of two or three months."

"They are talking to the Palestinians as well as trying to keep them at the table and talking to the Arab League so that it would give the Palestinians another green light to continue at the table," Oren said, adding that the result, if any, of such attempts will be received "in the next 48 hours."

The comments by Israel's envoy to the United States came as a top Palestinian negotiator said Oct. 7 that the Palestinians have accepted a U.S. proposal calling on Israel to extend a West Bank settlement slowdown for another two months.

Nabil Shaath says the Palestinians accept such a limited extension, provided the two sides can reach agreement on the borders between Israel and a future Palestine in those two months.

If there's no deal at that time, Shaath said, the settlement freeze would have to be extended further.

Shaath said that in principle, "We will not accept anything less than stopping settlement activity in total, period."

Referring to the existence of an alleged deal based on an offer by the Obama administration, Shaath said that U.S. special envoy to the Middle East, George Mitchell, denied Obama made such an offer to Netanyahu.

In an interview on Nazareth's A-Shams radio station, Shaath said Mitchell made the denial during a meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah last month.

Shaath reiterated the Palestinians insistence that they would not return to the negotiating table unless Israel extends a freeze on settlement construction in the West Bank and that the Arab League would support that position at its meeting this week.

During a visit to the city of Lod, Netanyahu referred to recent stalls in peace talks with the Palestinians, saying that Israel had "pledged before the international community and the United States to start peace talks."

"The Palestinians waited… 10 months, and set a precondition right off the bat, even though they committed to no preconditions," the prime minister said, adding that the Israeli government's decision "was executed swiftly. We lived up to our obligations"

Netanyahu also said he hoped the PA would "stay at the negotiations table, and I think that the important thing is that we try to advance toward an agreement that would end the conflict between us."

"But today the Palestinians are the ones who should be asked: 'Why are you walking out of the negotiations? Don't turn your back on peace,'" Netanyahu said.

Opinions

Mama's candles

Lighting candles Friday night is difficult for me. When I got married, I followed my mother's custom: light the candles, cover the eyes, circle the flames three times, and recite the blessing. This moment in time is precious to many women, as it brings with it a sense of holiness – a tie to both God, represented as the Sabbath Queen, and real women, those who have gone before us and those who have yet to be born. Lighting candles brings this sacred realm into the home. So candle-lighting is worthy of serious deliberation and action. And I'm troubled by my own actions.

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

There are two ways to light candles. I began my life one way. But after I married, and my husband and I entered the rich world of Sephardi Judaism, I changed. There I learned a different custom of lighting. In Jewish law, there are two ways to light. (The difference depends on the law of what initiates the beginning of the Sabbath.) The Sephardi pattern follows the customary blessing pattern: one makes a blessing then does the deed. For example, we make a blessing called Kiddush and then drink the wine, or we bless the bread and then eat it, not vice versa. So for many Sephardim, the proper way to light candles is to make the blessing and then light the candles.

Seeing this practice and studying the laws of candlelighting convinced me to change my custom.

But I abandoned my mother's custom, and we're commanded to keep the custom of our ancestors – *minhag avoteinu b'yadeinu.*

I didn't worry about losing Ashkenazi customs. They're strong and getting stronger. I worry more about Sephardi customs being lost.

Regrettably, many Jews from non-Ashkenazi backgrounds have allowed themselves to be overwhelmed by Ashkenazi ritual patterns. They've abandoned the patterns of their ancestors under the guise of becoming more religious. But Ashkenazi ritual piety is not more religious than Sephardi ritual piety.

So after practising both ways for many years, I long to settle my candle bi-polarity. I respect my mother and wish to honour her. She taught me a great deal, especially about the commandment to honour your father and mother. I want to follow her example, especially in this moment of quiet reflection, of sacred space when I invite the Sabbath into my home to rekindle the lights of creativity, revelation and redemption.

My choice now isn't about ritual piety or legal rationality. It's about family, custom and lighting with women the world over. In this column, I found my answer. Thanks.

A way to make giving more meaningful

The holidays are barely over, and we sink back into routine. What can we carry with us into the new year?

Over the holidays, our congregation joins other synagogues in the Vancouver area in Project Isaiah. Congregants fill bags specific for this purpose and return them filled with goods for the Jewish food bank. The response is enormous.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

After all, what does the Haftorah for Yom Kippur teach? "This is my chosen fast… share your bread with the hungry… do not turn away from people in need. Then cleansing light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wounds shall soon be healed… Then you shall call and the Lord will answer; you shall cry out and he will say, 'Here I am.'"

Certainly, fellow Jews in other cities will be equally challenged to contribute to their local food banks, thus adding to the "cleansing light" in all our communities.

For our synagogue, this is the culmination of a year in which members supported the local Jewish food bank. It was part of our year-long Mitzvah Initiative, which asked all members to make a weekly trip to the grocery store and bring food to the shul, where it would be picked up and taken to the Jewish food bank for distribution.

The initiative grew out of a decision to not just study the mitzvot demanded by Isaiah, but to put one of them into practice. The results were overwhelming, with thousands of items donated.

Now we've embarked on a second year. On Yom Kippur, special cloth bags were placed on seats in the two services that we hold to accommodate our members and their friends and families over the holidays. "Let's bag it for hunger" they proclaim. Congregants are urged to take the bags with them on their weekly shopping trips and bring the food to the synagogue, where it's placed in a special receptacle and picked up regularly in advance of the food bank days.

We don't ask for cheques. It's very easy for us to write a cheque once or twice a year for a charity, but making the mitzvah a physical act has a completely different impact.

Let me cite an example. Many years ago, we had a JNF blue box in our home, and we put money in it regularly. Once a year (at least), the boxes would be picked up and emptied by volunteers. One year, I recall that the canvasser who came to our door was surprised to receive change – and cash – from the box. No one, it seemed, was actually putting money aside on a regular basis. When he would arrive, they would sit down and write a cheque.

Now I, too, write a cheque, since no one has asked us for years to fill up a box. Why? Volunteers are in short supply, and yearly campaigns may raise much more than the volunteer-intensive methods of long ago.

Still, I miss that little box. It's really easy to write a cheque, but it's harder to remember the blue "Let's bag it for hunger" bag hanging in my hall.

This year, I will remember. The physicality of the act reminds us that there are people in our Jewish community for whom this food is indeed life. Without it, they and their households would suffer actual, physical hunger. That this can happen in a country in which grocery shelves groan with enough products to feed a Third World country – daily – should be a call to action to us all.

Isaiah's admonition resolves into one of the most beautiful passages in the Bible.

"You shall be like a watered garden, like a never-failing spring. And you shall rebuild ancient ruins, restoring old foundations. You shall be known as the rebuilder of broken walls, the restorer of dwelling places."

In a land such as Israel, where water is literally a matter of life and death, these words resonate. Where cities often were reduced to rubble and had to be rebuilt, what a promise it is of the restoration of life.

Combating hatred

It's a sad fact that some people harbour hateful attitudes toward others based upon irrational criteria such as race, religion, colour, gender, sexual orientation and other attributes. Common terms that we use to describe such discrimination include "racism," "anti-Semitism," 'Islamophobia" (hatred or fear of Muslims), "homophobia" (hatred of those with alternative sexual lifestyles) and "xenophobia" (hatred of foreigners or strangers).

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

Three of the terms include the suffix "phobia," meaning a fear of harm from the targeted group. However, the notion of fear is essentially a rationalization for pure hate.

Discrimination can become a generalized mindset or even a lifestyle, whereby hatred is directed at a multitude of intended victims. For example, it is not unusual to encounter an individual who is anti-Semitic as well as intolerant toward gays and people of colour. And it is unlikely that such a person would demonstrate sensitivity toward aboriginal aspirations or feel an empathy toward the daily hardships faced by disabled individuals.

What is the origin of this destructive mindset? People hate for many reasons, but most commonly, it raises the self-esteem of the bigot by putting down and marginalizing others. Attitudes toward other people in society are often learned from the example set in the home or through peer influence. Although we often look to education as the best way to counteract hatred, in the notorious case of James Keegstra, anti-Jewish propaganda was disseminated in the classroom by an influential and effective teacher who passed on his own twisted attitudes to his captive audience of students.

Essentially, hate crimes are "message crimes" designed to instil fear into the very heart of communities. History has taught us that the unbridled dissemination of hate can lead to intimidation and violence toward a targeted group.

What can we do to combat hatred? Widespread enlightened education is one answer. Another tool is to bring to justice those who cause harm to others through their prejudiced attitudes and actions. To accomplish this, we have relied upon the sparingly used hate propaganda sections of the Criminal Code, as well as the "hate speech" provisions in federal and provincial anti-discrimination legislation. Hopefully, such legal actions serve as a deterrent to others.

The City of Edmonton is engaged in a program designated Racism Free Edmonton, a collaborative effort that seeks to build a racism-free inclusive community. However, an ambitious, new initiative is currently unfolding in Alberta. Some time ago, the province informally established the Alberta Hate Crime Committee, a partnership of the Solicitor General of Alberta, the hate-crimes units of the police departments of Calgary, Edmonton and Lethbridge, the RCMP and officials of the federal and provincial government. Now, the existing structure may become formalized through a new program, the Comprehensive and Inclusive Strategies to Combating Hate Crimes: A Youth, Community and Institutional Based Action Project.

To meet the goals of this project, a new hate crimes office will be established under the auspices of the provincial solicitor general and a provincial advisory committee representing affected communities will be created. As well, community liaison committees (based on the existing Edmonton model) will be established in Calgary, Lethbridge, Fort McMurray and Red Deer.

This exciting project is integrally tied to Canada's new multicultural objectives that include the promotion of intercultural understanding and Canadian values through community initiatives, the facilitation of programs such as mentorship, voluntarism, leadership and civic education among at-risk ethno-racial youth and the support of the economic, social and cultural integration of new Canadians and ethno-cultural communities.

The need for this initiative is pressing, given that throughout Canada hate and bias crimes continue to permeate communities. For example, in 2006, 892 hate-motivated incidents were reported to police, a figure that reflects only 10 per cent of the number of incidents that occurred. It is hoped that the new Alberta project will benefit religious and racial communities that have been victimized by hate and bias crimes

There is no magic pill to end hatred, but each new ambitious initiative will contribute to that objective. Equally important, each new venture reflects the positive will of responsible officials and citizens to end the blight of hatred. That alone is a reason for optimism.

The Kirshner File

Feature film reconstructs Carlos' bloody career

A foe of colonialism who committed himself body and soul to the Palestinian cause, he was a Marxist and freelance terrorist who fought for the "oppressed" of the earth, worked for "progressive" Arab regimes such as Hafez Assad's Syria and Saddam Hussein's Iraq, and extorted a king's ransom from Saudi Arabia in a notorious hostage-taking incident in Vienna. He was Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, popularly known as Carlos the Jackal.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

In a blood-splattered career spanning two decades, Carlos – a nom de guerre given to him by an official of the Palestine Liberation Organization – left an indelible mark across a wide swath of territory. But in an ignominious denouement, this mythical figure was betrayed by one of his supposed allies, Sudan, and handed over to France, which had charged him with the murders of two French counter-intelligence agents and a Lebanese representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine whom Carlos considered a rank traitor.

Sentenced to life imprisonment in 1997, three years after his abduction in Khartoum, Carlos has been consigned to a bleak existence of solitary confinement since then.

He will probably die in prison as a bitter old man, his days as a cold-blooded killer a distant memory.

A historical curiosity today, Carlos is the subject of a five-hour marathon feature film in three parts. Directed and co-written by Olivier Assayas, *Carlos*, originally conceived as a TV miniseries, is scheduled to open at the Bell Lightbox, the new headquarters of the Toronto International Film Festival, on Thursday, Oct. 21.

Although it unfolds as an action-packed reconstruction of Carlos' life as a terrorist and mercenary, disclaimers at the outset of each segment are cause for pause.

The film is basically presented as a work of fiction, his relationship with other characters has been fictionalized and "grey areas" have been omitted.

Carlos completely ignores his adolescence in Venezuela, where he was born and raised as the son of a Marxist lawyer who was an admirer of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and who named his other two sons Lenin and Vladimir. Nor are his years as a university student in London and Moscow mentioned, much less his pivotal decisions to offer his services to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and to join the PFLP as a combatant in Jordan's civil war in 1970 and 1971.

Nonetheless, *Carlos* covers substantial ground, picking up in Europe in 1973 when, in the opening scene, Mohammed Boudia, a PFLP member living in Paris, is killed by a car bomb allegedly planted by the Mossad. Carlos (played with aplomb by the Venezuelan actor Edgar Ramirez) meets Wadi Haddad (Ahmad Kaabour), co-founder of the PFLP, which in 1968 carried out the first hijacking of an El Al airliner.

Carlos believes that the Palestinian struggle should be taken to a global level. Haddad agrees, having previously called for its internationalization. The film glosses over Haddad's ideological quarrel with George Habash, who co-founded the PFLP and strongly believed that guerrilla warfare against Israel should be exclusively waged in Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Haddad places Carlos under the command of the PFLP representative in Paris, Michel Moukharbal (Fadi Abi Samra), a Lebanese Christian, and they plan a home invasion in retaliation for Boudia's assassination. The target in London, Joseph Edward Sieff, is a prominent Jewish businessman and vice-president of the British Zionist Federation.

Ilich Ramirez Sanchez

"Words get us nowhere," declares Carlos, calling for an international struggle uniting world revolutionaries. To this end, he enlists militants from the Japanese Red Army and the German Revolutionary Cells, both of whom play a role in future operations and one of whose acolytes he later weds.

Carlos plans his next two operations, a clownishly amateurish bombing of a Bank Hapoalim office in London and a more methodical attack on the French embassy in The Hague.

Portrayed as a supremely confident, narcissistic self-promoter and womanizer, Carlos is equally seen as a zealot, such as when he makes a passing casual reference to the "Zionist media."

Carlos' anti-Israel crusade culminates with two failed rocket-propelled grenade attacks on El Al planes in Paris' Orly Airport in 1975.

He disdains PLO leader Yasser Arafat's indirect peace gestures to Israel. In a now famous news clip, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization addresses the United Nations General Assembly, a gun holster on his hip, urging delegates not to let the "olive branch" of peace drop from his hand.

After shooting three French intelligence operatives, he goes into hiding in Yemen, joining Haddad there. Haddad hands him a plum assignment, entrusting Carlos with the mission of kidnapping and murdering the oil ministers of Saudi Arabia and Iran at an OPEC meeting in Austria.

Haddad claims they betrayed the Arab world by lifting the 1974 oil embargo against the United States and its allies.

Iraq appears to be implicitly involved in the plot. On the eve of the operation, an unsavoury Iraqi diplomat passes on a compliment to Carlos: Saddam Hussein considers him "a brave man."

Much of the second segment deals with the OPEC incident, which took place in the in December 1975 and resulted in the abduction of 60 hostages and the deaths of three people, including a member of the Libyan delegation.

Before this crisis ends, Carlos broadcasts a communique denouncing Israel – the "aggressive Zionist state" – and commandeers a plane bound for Libya. The Libyans order him out of the country, and every Arab state shuns him. Carlos learns a seminal lesson in Realpolitik, but he reportedly extorts $20 million from the Saudis.

Fleeing to Aden, Carlos is upbraided by Haddad for not having followed orders and killed the oil ministers of Saudi Arabia and Iran. Haddad expels his protege from the PFLP, and Carlos forms his own group, the Organization of Arab Armed Struggle, comprising Syrians, Lebanese and Germans.

The Venezuelan actor Edgar Ramirez portrays Carlos the Jackal.

The 1976 Entebbe hijacking, during which Jewish passengers were separated from non-Jewish ones on an Air France flight, is included in *Carlos*. It is far from certain, at least in the film, whether Carlos had a role to play in that hijacking. What is clear is that one of the German participants, Hans-Joachim Klein (Christoph Bach), who later renounced terrorism, was upset that Jews had been singled out on the hijacked aircraft, protesting that he was an anti-Zionist, not an anti-Semite.

Having broken with Haddad, Carlos is now a gun for hire. As part 2 ends, he finds himself in Damascus, conferring with the director of Syrian air force intelligence. He promises Carlos weapons, money and diplomatic cover in exchange for establishing bases in eastern Europe.

The last episode begins in Budapest as Hungarian secret service agents inform Carlos that he has become a liability. He is given the same bad news in East Berlin. World politics are changing, much to his detriment. Syria uses him to intimidate Lebanese opposed to its domination of Lebanon and to kill Muslim fundamentalist opponents. Eventually, the Syrians, as well as the Libyans, tire of Carlos.

Forced into exile in Khartoum, Carlos, now bloated and suffering from testicular cancer, is at the end of his rope. His deportation to France marks his demise as a player in international terrorism.

Carlos is lively and absorbing, several superfluous scenes notwithstanding. It is the story of a terrorist-cum-fugitive who outlived his usefulness and ultimately paid the price.

Every night I pray for Romspen's continued success.

After 31 years working at the TTC I retired in 1988 on pension and investment income.

My brother Stanley got me into Romspen 10 years ago. Today my Romspen investment has tripled in size. Combined with my TTC pension, I earn much more today than when I was working. Truth is, I would not be able to enjoy my independent lifestyle otherwise. Every night I say a prayer for the boys at Romspen to continue to be healthy and successful. My life would not be the same without them.

Marvin Feder

Introductory Seminar [illegible]

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Polish database agreement signed

Jewish records will be searchable online

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Poland's embassy in Ottawa was recently the scene of a pivotal event in the effort to augment an important database on Polish Jews.

In a ceremony on Oct. 2, the Canadian representative of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Peter Jassem, and the executive director of the Jewish Records Indexing –Poland (JRI-Poland), Stanley Diamond, signed an agreement of cooperation.

Launched in 1995, JRI-Poland is said to be the largest fully searchable database of Jewish vital records accessible online, helping Jews around the world to trace their ancestral roots.

By Jassem's estimate, JRI-Poland has indexed 4.5 million records.

Diamond said the accord links the websites of two organizations and aims to provide quick access to a broad range of information.

JRI-Poland was established by Diamond, a Montreal resident, in conjunction with Steven Zedeck of Nashua, New Hampshire, and Michael Tobias of Glasgow, Scotland.

Poland's ambassador to Canada, Zenon Kosiniak-Kamysz, centre, seen with Peter Jassem, right, and Stanley Diamond. *[Ela Kinowska photo]*

JRI-Poland is composed of index entries from birth, marriage and death certificates in Poland from the 19th and early 20th century.

Though not containing actual documents, the database is a searchable index of original records.

Apart from the indices of vital records, the database includes information relating to more than 500 towns in current and former areas of Poland, census records, army draft lists, burials in cemeteries, Polish passports, ghetto deaths and legal announcements.

The ceremony was attended by Poland's ambassador to Canada, Zenon Kosiniak-Kamysz, and his deputies, minister counsellor Jaroslaw Kurek and second secretary Maria Zdunowska.

In a speech, the ambassador promised to cultivate Polish-Jewish relations in Canada, promote better mutual understanding and foster knowledge about Polish Jews through cultural and educational events and exhibitions.

Also present were members of the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada, of which Jassem is the Toronto president, and representatives of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Ottawa and of Hillel, the Jewish students' organization.

Jassem said the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, set to be built in Warsaw, will open in 2012.

In terms of importance, it will be comparable to Yad Vashem and the Holocaust Museum in Washington, he said.

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Candidates differ on Israeli Apartheid Week response

Continued from page 3

Rossi, the former national director of the federal Liberal party, said he wants to review and clarify the city's non-discrimination policy, while Smitherman stated the city may not "have the wherewithal" to resolve this issue on its own.

Smitherman cautioned that there may only be one option for the Jewish community to get clarity on what constitutes discrimination at city events funded with public money: by taking the issue to the courts and the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

"There is no way to predict what the outcome of that would be," Smitherman cautioned at the FSWC debate last week.

During the debate, candidates were also asked what they would do to help Jewish students during Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) on university campuses, although many noted that this issue falls under provincial jurisdiction.

"The mayor of Toronto is not the mayor of everything," said Pantalone, explaining that the mayor should still be part of the discussion about IAW, along with the provincial government.

"But we can't say we're going to do it all," he said, adding that the mayor can't "become the human rights commissioner of Ontario… We have to be part of the conversation, but to say we'll resolve this problem is absurd."

Ford disagreed, repeating his zero tolerance policy.

"I don't like people who pass the buck [to] the provincial legislature… To say it's not our jurisdiction, that's a cop out," he said. "When I'm mayor, I assure you there won't be any of this nonsense."

For their part, both Rossi and Smitherman said they thought the mayor had an obligation to get involved on this issue.

"The mayor should champion this issue and create discussions with universities and with police to ensure [Jewish] students feel safe on campus," Rossi said.

And Smitherman acknowledged that while this issue may go beyond the legal scope of the city, a mayor sometimes needs to "go beyond" the legislative environment.

Rob Ford

Joe Pantalone

Rocco Rossi

George Smitherman

"A mayor has the power to broker a conversation and build dialogue," he said, adding that he never once heard outgoing Mayor David Miller speak "at all" about the QuAIA issue at Pride or on IAW during his term.

"The mayor needs to step up to the plate on this issue," he concluded.

Asked about their vision to help maintain Toronto as a multicultural centre, Rossi said that as the son of immigrants, he understands the value of multiculturalism and wants to be "an ambassador" for cultural communities if elected mayor.

Smitherman said that as mayor, he'd be determined to build bridges between cultural communities and turn the city's motto "Diversity Our Strength" into a "mission statement."

Update

Alexis Wronzberg – the 27-year-old with acute lymphoblastic leukemia whose family began an urgent fundraising campaign last week – has arrived in Israel, accompanied by her mother, Debra, for a potentially lifesaving treatment.

See cjnews.com for story.

Alexis Wronzberg

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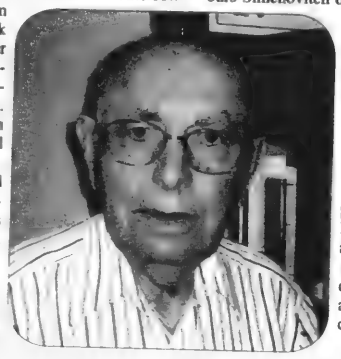
Book fair fetes award-winning Yiddish author

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Simcha Simchovitch's life could have turned out very differently.

The award-winning poet, author and translator – whose achievements will be honoured at an Oct. 24 Toronto Jewish Book Fair program – fled from Poland to Russia at the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, escaping the fate of his parents and all but one of his four siblings, who perished in Treblinka. He would spend seven years in Russia, finishing high school and working in a leather factory.



Simcha Simchovitch

Later, as a young husband and father working in a Montreal factory, sewing linings in women's pocketbooks, Simchovitch applied to the Jewish Teachers' Seminary, but he was discouraged from enrolling by its then principal.

His successor found Simchovitch's application by chance, sought him out, and arranged for him to receive a scholarship from Canadian Jewish Congress – "a miracle," Simchovitch says. After graduating from the seminary, where poet Irving Layton taught him English, Simchovitch worked as a Jewish school teacher in Montreal, and subsequently in Ottawa and Toronto.

But it was his parents' decision to transfer him at age 10 from a full-time cheder to a Polish school for Jewish children that had the greatest influence on his life's work. A young, leftist teacher sparked Simchovitch's interest in Yiddish literature, and he began to write poetry and prose as a teenager.

In conjunction with the book fair event, which also honours Simchovitch on his upcoming 90th birthday, he is establishing the Simcha and Freda Simchovitch Fund for Yiddish Education and Culture at the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto. The fund is named for him and his late wife, who died two years ago. They grew up together in Otwock, and were married for 69 years.

Simchovitch, who was born Jan. 15, 1921, grew up in Otwock, a resort town 28 kilometres south of Warsaw with a pre-war Jewish population of 12,000. He memorialized his childhood in an autobiographical novel, *Stepchild on the Vistula*. The book was published in Yiddish in 1990, in English four years later and in Polish by a Warsaw publishing company in 2005.

Simchovitch – who translated the work of Yiddish poet and songwriter Mordechai Gebirtig into English, in a book called *The Song That Never Died* – also translated his own novel into English. A friend of his translated it into Polish, which led to an invitation to return to Poland two years ago. There, he participated in a memorial to Jewish residents of Otwock who were murdered at a mass gravesite, and he spoke about the prewar Jewish history of the city.

"This was a great experience," Simchovitch said. It was his first visit to Poland since 1949.

His first book of Yiddish poetry was published in 1950, following his arrival in Montreal the previous year with his wife and young daughter. A second daughter was born in Canada.

Simchovitch's most recent poetry collection, a two-volume set called *The Fiery Mountain*, contains most of the poems he has written, in both Yiddish and English, 45 of which were set to music and published in 2006. Toronto singer Batsheva will perform some of them at the book fair event.

Over the years and as recently as this past summer, Simchovitch's articles and essays have appeared in the *Forverts* (the Yiddish *Forward*), as well as in Yiddish publications based in Israel and Poland.

Last year, Simchovitch – who has a BA in Yiddish and Hebrew literature from the University of Toronto, and a master's degree in Jewish history and Hebrew literature from the Jewish Theological Seminary – retired from part-time work at Beth Tzedec Congregation. Prior to working part-time, he served as librarian, and curator of the synagogue's Reuben and Helene Dennis Museum.

Simchovitch has written – always in longhand – about the Holocaust, Yiddish language and Yiddish writers, social issues from an anti-war perspective, Canada, and life in general, but his most important work is his memoir/novel about his early life, he said. "I'm so happy that it's translated in Poland… This is a monument."

"Simcha for Simcha" will take place Sun., Oct. 24 at 1:30 at Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue as part of the 34th annual Toronto Jewish Book Fair. Cost is $5 at the door.

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HEW's 30th anniversary dedicated to survivors

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

The 30th anniversary of the Holocaust Education Week (HEW) is being dedicated to the survivors who have established and programmed it.

Mira Goldfarb, the new executive director of the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, part of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, said that the majority of programs in the week-long event, running Nov. 1 through 9, will feature survivors' testimony.

"This is the first time we've established a singular comprehensive theme to the entire week," she said.

On the job for eight months, Goldfarb said that when she arrived, she immediately saw the opportunity to introduce a special theme to the annual program.

"We have to recognize survivors for their suffering and for their survival. They have become major contributors to society. That is a lesson for us, because it underscores how much loss of potential the Holocaust actually represents. How much more could have been contributed?"

Mira Goldfarb
[Michael Rajzman photo]

Goldfarb, a curator who began her career at the Jewish Museum in New York City, said that in 30 years, HEW has grown from a community-focused and generated event to a forum for international scholars and presenters. "It began 30 years ago with 30 programs, and by 1999 it featured 100 programs. Last year, about 30,000 people attended 140 programs.

"This year, we're expecting representatives from most of the major centres of excellence in Holocaust education in the world."

Goldfarb said that it was a "tremendous honour and privilege" for her to take on her job. "I embrace the role because I recognize that it is my generation that carries the torch.

"My children's generation will be the last to have direct encounters with Holocaust survivors. We have to instil in them the charge to preserve these legacies and make them relevant and inspiring to future generations."

The task goes beyond preserving memories, she said. "It is about ensuring that bearing witness translates into taking action, and being responsible for the cries of 'Never again' that have been cried out."

Fred Winegust, who was part of the original Holocaust education committee, said the idea was to have a week of education about six months after Yom Hashoah, "so there would be a commemoration every six months."

He was inspired to become involved in Holocaust remembrance after returning from the first gathering of Holocaust survivors in Jerusalem in 1981 as a reporter for a university newspaper.

"My father was a survivor, my mother was a hidden child in France, and my grandfather was a prisoner of war, so I am part of the 'second generation.'"

Eleanor Getzler, who has also been involved in HEW since the beginning, is also part of the second generation. "Growing up in Bathurst Manor, the Holocaust was a heavy part of my life."

Reading the book, *Children of the Holocaust*, however, "really opened my eyes," she said. "Reading the stories of these children was an awakening. We never discussed these things at home."

She said that that book planted a seed in her mind about seeing some programming that revolved around the Holocaust.

"I spoke to Rabbi Mark Shapiro, assistant rabbi of Holy Blossom Temple, and a committee was struck. We wanted to educate the public, because nothing like that had been done before."

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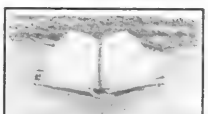
Jewish Life

God ain't so simple!

By RABBI YIRMIYA MILEVSKY



It would be an understatement to say that God plays a big role in people's lives. He is present in the human mind, referred to in countless conversations, and even makes an appearance on the legal tender of the United States (for Canadians, "real life was on the skating rink").

Although his prominence in the human psyche is undeniable, God is the most complex and profound entity to understand. King David notes several times in *Psalms* that God is good, yet wickedness makes a daily appearance in the news. How can we defend the belief that God is good and at the same time omnipotent, in view of the existence of evil in the world?

The issue of theodicy is not new. The Holocaust did not produce the dilemma, it only magnified it. The question has occupied the minds of many philosophers and theologians for centuries. Unfortunately, I am not able to offer answers. However, in my humble opinion, what must be avoided is the simplification of God.

In times of challenge, or when a person is in need, he turns to the Almighty in prayer. Prayer has enormous power. It gives the human being the ability to transcend the physical world and connect to the sublime. Homo sapiens can actually have a conversation with God!

Yet, although we tell ourselves and teach our children that we can converse with a Supernatural Being just as we chat with our neighbour, we must not simplify His essence. The neighbour we talk to is human, like we are. Thus, we expect reciprocity in the conversation. God, on the other hand, is not human. Although humanity has been granted the right, and indeed the privilege, to speak to him, we must remember the complex entity that is listening. Simplifying God and expecting a human response is a misunderstanding of prayer and in the long run can cause damage to the wonderful relationship that prayer creates.

Appreciating the complexity of God goes beyond prayer. A big part of Judaism is the concept of *emunah* – faith. For some, faith is a belief that everything that is going to occur will be good. However, we all know that, unfortunately, reality is not so. The years of World War II cannot be described as good, yet many holy Jews had a lot of *emunah* in the years leading up to the catastrophe.

Rabbi Avrohom Yeshaya Karelitz, popularly known by the name of his magnum opus, Chazon Ish, notes that faith is not the belief that all will be good, but rather, faith is the belief that nothing is a coincidence and that all that occurs is decreed by God. This explanation raises far more questions and makes *emunah* far more complex. Yet, what we avoid with this approach is the simplification of God.

There's an old saying regarding God: "If I would know Him, I would be Him." We cannot expect to have all the answers when discussing the most enigmatic entity. Nevertheless, we are privileged to have received a system of laws that bonds us to a Divine Being.

I personally am moved by people who journeyed through the nightmare of the Holocaust and nevertheless remained devoted to God. Questions, they have. Answers, they painfully lack. Yet they can walk into a house of worship and thank God for his kindness.

I thank the Holocaust generation for rebuilding their lives, after observing unimaginable destruction, for reconstructing Jewish institutions after experiencing the terror of Kristallnacht, and for inspiring a whole new generation to believe in an enigmatic being known to us as God.

Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky is spiritual leader of Congregation Bnai Torah in Toronto.

A tale of two cities

Money Matters

The daily economic news is a most confusing mix, with some reports indicating a steady, if slow, economic recovery, whereas others seem to justify fears of a double-dip recession.

Whether inflation or deflation poses a greater risk to the economy, or whether more or less government stimulus of the economy is needed are great unknowns. The uncertainty over the future direction of the economy is reflected in the wild swings of global stock markets and the anemic job recovery.

Yet while many fear for their job security and entire countries face economic collapse due to enormous debt problems, others are accumulating wealth at an astonishing pace. The most recent Forbes report on the world's billionaires shows an average increase in net worth of $500 million per billionaire, with a more than twenty per cent increase of those joining this exclusive club.

As has been widely reported, many successful corporations are hoarding cash at a remarkable rate. Apple Inc. has approximately $40 billion sitting in cash (or equivalents). To put that into perspective – if we possibly can – our own Canadian government revenues are approximately $240 billion a year. That one company has almost 20 per cent of that amount waiting to be put to use attests to the amazing wealth that continues to be created.

Alas, at the same time, the U.S. Census Bureau recently reported some startling statistics: close to 45 million Americans are living in poverty, and 2009 witnessed the greatest increase in the poverty rate on record. These are shocking, tragic numbers, and to some, they may be an indictment of American capitalistic excess. Companies and their executives (and at times shareholders), some of whom contributed to the deep recession, are getting obscenely wealthy while millions of Americans are getting poorer and poorer.

However this "tale of two cities" requires a more nuanced approach. Thankfully, poverty today does not mean what it once did. It's sad, even dehumanizing, and no doubt we must do much more to address the issue. Yet poverty does not, like it once did, mean death. The same census report notes that one in six Americans are being served by anti-poverty programs. In the western world, at least, no one has to go to bed hungry, if they are willing to seek aid.

As we collectively become wealthier, our definition of poverty gets "upgraded." While 150 years ago, having running water in one's home was considered a luxury, today, even the most run-down housing developments have such necessities. While the poor of today may be rich by the standards of yesteryear, such advances do not excuse us from raising those standards even more.

This idea is reflected in a well-established, if generally impractical law that one must, once other needs are met, restore a previously wealthy person to his former position. The fact that one's basic needs are being met does not alleviate the sense of loss that the formerly wealthy may feel.

While in today's corporate climate, it's well accepted for corporations to engage in charitable activities, it's far from clear that such charity is within a corporation's mandate. As an impersonal legal entity, there are no moral obligations on a corporation, and without shareholder authorization, a corporate executive may be overstepping his authority in spending money without a profit motive. Rather, those individuals who are enriched by corporate activity have a personal responsibility to share their wealth.

Having shareholders agree to donate some billions of the trillions in cash (if you list the cash on the books of the 500 top US companies) is a most worthy goal. Thankfully, many of these billionaire shareholders have pledged unprecedented amounts for philanthropic purposes.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

Jewish Life

Torah reading by women poses dilemma for Modern Orthodoxy

Many people think that the status of women in contemporary Orthodox Judaism has stayed the same as it always was. This is not true. True, the pace of change has been much slower than in society at large. But at least outside of haredi circles, contemporary Orthodox Judaism has accommodated women's rights in several ways.

The most significant change involves the study of Talmud and other classics of Halachah (Jewish law). In the past, women's access to these works was restricted or totally forbidden. But today, mainstream Orthodox institutions offer women advanced training in Jewish law. Some institutions even train and certify women as "halachic advisers," experts to whom religious Jews can turn for authoritative rulings on the law. (Those in the know understand that these "advisers" are, in practice, quietly serving as Orthodox rabbis.)

Martin Lockshin

Establishment Orthodox synagogues have also changed. In most modern and "centrist" Orthodox synagogues today, some of the following innovations exist: women recite the *Mourners' Kaddish*; a young girl's coming of age as a bat mitzvah is marked in the synagogue; women serve as the synagogue's president; women teach Torah classes to men; women dance with a Torah scroll on Simchat Torah, and women chant the *Book of Esther* on Purim.

None of these customs existed 100 years ago. None was introduced based on the agreement of *gedolei ha-dor*, the putative leading contemporary Torah scholars. They all arose through the efforts of laypeople working together with their local Orthodox rabbis. And they are all a result of the influence of feminism.

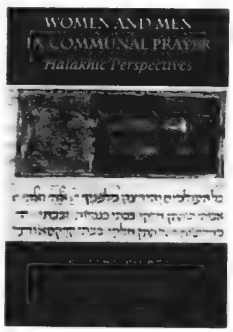
The Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance (JOFA) has recently published a book in English, *Women and Men in Communal Prayer: Halakhic Perspectives*, addressing one innovation that has generated controversy within Orthodoxy – women reading Torah at a service where men are also present. A short introduction by Prof. Tamar Ross precedes four lengthy essays – two by proponents of women reading Torah, rabbis Daniel Sperber and Mendel Shapiro, and two by opponents, Rabbi Shlomo Riskin and Prof. Eliav Shochetman. All five authors live in Israel, and all but one of them (Professor Shochetman) are native English speakers.

JOFA is to be congratulated for publishing a book that gives equal time to both viewpoints, even though JOFA's clear preference (like mine) is for the permissive position. I found the book fascinating, but I imagine that two groups of committed Jewish readers won't: (1) Jews who prefer old-fashioned sex role distinctions, from the days before women were doctors, mayors or synagogue presidents. These readers will not accept the book's implicit premise – that changes in the status of women in the last century have been good, and that, when it can, Halachah should adjust to these changes; (2) Jews who believe that egalitarianism always trumps Halachah, and that Halachah must step aside whenever it conflicts with gender equality. No one in this book makes a halachic argument for total egalitarianism (indeed such an argument would be difficult to make for someone who accepts halachic authority.)

An Orthodox service where men and women are present and share the reading of the Torah – generally referred to as a partnership minyan – is not an egalitarian service. But anyone who has prayed at such a service, for example at Shirah Hadashah in Jerusalem or at the Toronto Partnership Minyan, knows that partnership services have a very different feel than more standard Orthodox services, where women are onlookers, never active participants.

This book then speaks to a small audience: Jews who treat Halachah with reverence and who acknowledge that Halachah is a gendered system, but who nevertheless are in favour of Halachah expanding women's roles when possible.

All four essays offer detailed analysis of one very short text from the Babylonian Talmud (Megillah 23a): "Our rabbis taught: All may be included among the seven [called to the Torah on the Sabbath], even a minor and a woman, but the Sages said that a woman should not read the Torah because of the dignity of the congregation [*kevod hatzibur*]." The Talmud does not explain why a woman reading the Torah would compromise congregational dignity. But 1,800 years ago, when women played no public leadership roles – secular or religious – and when such discrimination was felt to be appropriate, a congregation might well have felt affronted if a woman read the Torah.



But what about today? Ten years ago, Rabbi Shapiro published the first serious halachic essay (reprinted in this book) arguing that "congregational dignity" is not a fixed, unchangeable concept, but rather a function of time, place and convention. Intuitively this seems obvious. In a synagogue in Toronto, a man leading services wearing dirty gym shorts would be an affront to congregational dignity. In a religious kibbutz in Israel – where the level of piety may be just as high as in Toronto – the same act would not be. A few generations ago, a beardless male prayer leader was an affront to congregational dignity, but not in 2010.

Rabbi Shapiro does not suggest that synagogues change their definition of congregational dignity. Instead, he advocates forming new congregations who define their own dignity to include women reading the Torah. He proves, to my satisfaction, that Halachah recognizes the right of a congregation to forgo aspects of what was historically its dignity.

Rabbi Sperber, one of the leading scholars of Jewish law today, takes the argument a step further, arguing that Jewish law considers an affront to "human dignity" (*kevod habriot*) worse than an affront to congregational dignity. He feels that today, excluding women from reading Torah is an insult to their human dignity.

Rabbi Riskin and Shochetman, on the other hand, argue that "congregational dignity" is not subject to waiving and that excluding women from reading Torah is not outdated misogyny, but is based on long-standing principles of Jewish law that still apply.

The book presents detailed halachic arguments as clearly as possible. Readers can judge for themselves the relative strength of the opposing positions.

Ross' intriguing introduction acknowledges the elephant in the room, pointing out that the dispute between the essays is not simply one of competing interpretations of classical texts. As she notes, many critics claim that those who support the liberal approach are not reading the texts dispassionately, but have a preferred inclusionary result that they wish to arrive at.

Ross points out, though, that all legal systems work that way. All legal arguments derive from careful text reading and interpretation, guided by values that are dear to the scholar. She notes that just as Rabbis Sperber and Shapiro were guided in their reading by a desire to include women, so Rabbi Riskin and Shochetman were guided by competing values, including a desire to preserve Orthodox unity and to differentiate Orthodox Judaism clearly from non-Orthodox denominations.

The dichotomy that she identifies is crucial. Modern Orthodoxy has to decide: is its most crucial goal preserving Orthodox unity by keeping synagogues close to the haredi model, or is it the creation of a halachic Judaism that might appeal to women and men who hold dear the principle that a woman can be a dentist, a judge, a university president or perhaps even a Torah reader?

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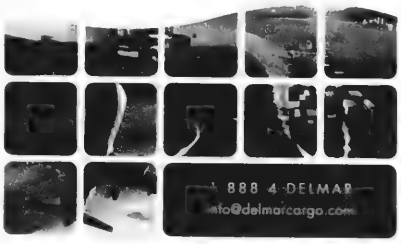

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Coast to Coast

Premier names special Manitoba rep to Israel

Reflects growing partnership with the province

BY RHONDA J. SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Mel Lazareck, a business and community leader and president of the Jewish National Fund, Prairie region, received an unprecedented appointment Oct. 5 when Premier Greg Selinger named him special representative for Manitoba to Israel for economic and community relations.

It's the first time such an appointment has been made in Manitoba, and possibly in Canada, and reflects the deepening and ongoing partnership between Manitoba and Israel, particularly in the area of water technology and agriculture.

Selinger gave Lazareck a certificate confirming his special appointment at a ceremony in the premier's office attended by Lazareck; his wife, Karen; Erez Rotem, JNF's emissary for Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, and a number of the premier's advisers.

"We are recognizing the outstanding work Mel has done to build a strong relationship between Manitoba and business and non-profit organizations in Israel," Selinger said in a statement. "This appointment will help us support those activities."

Premier Greg Selinger, left, appoints Mel Lazareck to the new position of special representative for Manitoba to Israel for economic and community relations.

He added: "Manitoba and Israel have common interests in clean energy, water quality and conservation. These interests provide the opportunities to share knowledge and strengthen our education and economic relationships and partnership."

Lazareck told *The CJN* that the "government is making a statement in trying to develop the mutually beneficial relationship between our province and Israel."

He noted that he's not an employee of the government and doesn't receive any funding.

"I'm doing this as a volunteer for the benefit of Manitoba and Israel... This is something for me that has been ongoing, in that there's common areas of interest in water technology and agriculture, and probably to some extent [that] could involve tourism as time goes forward."

Lazareck said that there are also partnerships between institutions in Manitoba and Israeli universities "such as Hebrew University and Ben-Gurion University [BGU] in the areas of science, health and exchange programs" and he'd like to see these continue to grow.

He also highlighted the dedicated work of Christine Melnick, Manitoba's minister of water stewardship, who's been at the forefront of developing Manitoba's burgeoning relationship with Israel.

"The [business] cards Mel received from the premier are even printed in English [on one side] and Hebrew [on the other side]," Karen Lazareck said.

Rotem said that he "cannot think of anyone more deserving to be given such a special designation. Not a lot of people know about the full breadth of contribution of Mel to this community and the relationship between Manitoba and Israel, and we at JNF are very fortunate to have him as our president."

The Lazarecks are currently leading a sold-out Jewish Federation of Winnipeg mission to Israel, from Oct. 10 to 15, which features the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Selinger, Melnick and Innovation, Energy and Mines Minister Dave Chomiak are also taking part.

In January 2010, Lazareck participated in the second Manitoba-Israel Water Symposium, hosted by JNF in Israel. The first symposium was hosted by the province in Winnipeg in August 2008.

YEHUDA SHAHAF
CANDIDATE FOR VAUGHAN CITY COUNCIL WARD 5 THORNHILL

Yehuda Shahaf has a vision to preserve the quality of life of our community and keeping neighbourhoods strong and vibrant.

Yehuda Shahaf was born and raised in Israel. He served for twenty-two years in the Israel Defence Force (IDF). His main duties as head logistics officer of the country's civil defense incorporated the planning and implementation of long-term objectives; management, maintenance and development of various civil defense initiatives with a budget in excess of $150 million.

In addition to his civil defense duties, Mr. Shahaf's responsibilities included the logistical support of approximately 50,000 soldiers and accompanying vehicles.

Mr. Shahaf has a degree in the Inter-Arm Command from the Staff College of the IDF. In addition, he graduated from Bar-Ilan University, majoring in Business Administration and Marketing.

Yehuda emigrated from Israel to Canada, with his wife and two children, in 1993 and has resided in Thornhill since their arrival. His business interests include property management, car rentals and transportation.

Yehuda is a strong candidate for Councilor in Ward 5, with a focus on resolving residents' municipal issues. He believes in promoting resolutions that address the quality of life in the area, the welfare and property of local residents. These include the implementation of strict By-laws that will prevent future developments from changing the appearance and traditional character of Thornhill, the limiting of the volume of the traffic to residential streets and immediate repair of Steeles Avenue between Dufferin and Yonge Streets. In addition, he feels strongly about reexamining the potential extension of the Yonge line subway to Steeles Avenue.

With the demographics of the neighbourhood changing as the population slowly ages, Yehuda feels that the future needs of Thornhill residents must be addressed, providing recreational facilities, home-based shuls for this segment of our community.

Yehuda Shahaf
Candidate for Vaughan City Council Ward 5

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March of the Living prepares to change more lives in 2011

Annual Jewish identity program supported by United Jewish Appeal Campaign

Participants of a recent March of the Living make the 3-kilometre march from Auschwitz to Birkenau.

March of the Living participants celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut in Israel.

By Daniel Horowitz

Rarely does one have the opportunity to not only learn about history, but to actually enter into it. However, for participants of the annual March of the Living, each of whom shares unforgettable memories while visiting Poland and Israel on this annual pilgrimage, that's precisely the case.

The March of the Living, which began in 1988, is funded through United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto's annual campaign.

UJA's 2011 Campaign, chaired by Sherry Firestone and Jeff Rosenthal, is committed to answering the challenges faced by Jews today, in light of the global movement which has emerged, attempting to rewrite history and delegitimize Israel as a Jewish state.

Campaign dollars will provide our next generation with the tools they need to successfully take on these challenges by helping them develop a strong sense of Jewish identity, including a connection to Israel, through education, community programming such as the March of the Living, and culture.

Year after year, the March of the Living, takes great strides in connecting the next generation with their Jewish roots, from the darkest chapter in our history – the Holocaust – and shows how, despite its horrors, the Jewish People refused to yield to despair, but rose up – against all odds – and established the state of Israel.

In fact, according to a long-term study of the program, 88 percent of participants reported there was an increase in their sense of Jewish identity after participating on the March, while 87 percent reported an increase in their desire to travel to Israel again in the future.

In Poland, the March of the Living takes place on Holocaust Remembrance Day, when thousands of students march together the 3-kilometre distance separating Auschwitz from Birkenau. Then, in Israel, participants will celebrate the 63rd anniversary of Israel on Yom Ha'atzmaut – Independence Day – together with young people from Israel and around the world.

Last year, Toronto sent the largest delegation internationally, with approximately 300 participants.

This year's March of the Living is chaired by siblings, Peter and Ruth Ekstein whose mother, Anita – a child survivor – has dedicated her life to Holocaust education and is a past National chair of the March. Anita will be accompanying the students for the 11th time.

"I am extremely lucky and proud to be involved in the March, because it is an absolutely vital program which teaches Jewish students about their past and their future, and ultimately, the kind of Jew they want to be," said Ruth. "Our truly amazing survivors take us back in time to a place where Jewish life once thrived, and then horrific Jewish death followed. History, previously read in a textbook, becomes personal and entrenched in the students' hearts and minds. Without exception, they fall in love with Israel, and understand how incredibly fortunate they are to have this wonderful country as their home. They return to Toronto filled with pride for what the Jewish people overcame and for the State of Israel."

"I have been involved in community and volunteer work for close to 30 years, including many years on the Board of UJA, and it is my opinion that this is without a doubt the jewel in our community's programs when it comes to Jewish education, Jewish identity and continuity," says Peter. "Being in the camps, the mass graves and then in Israel watching the kids and the survivors interact, was one of the most transformative events in my life, because I was given the gift of being able to watch my son and the other 225 students transform. They changed and grew in ways that I know will have a long term impact on not only their own lives, but on everyone they touch and the entire community."

"As a Jewish teenager attending a public high school before the March of the Living, I did not have the same daily connection to Jewish life as many of the others on the March of the Living," says 17-year-old Westmount Collegiate student, and a participant on the March last year, Jacob Klugsberg. "But six months following the March, I still feel its impact. The memories I have, the horrors I witnessed, and the conversations I shared, are still vivid to this day."

Each year, the March of the Living participants are joined by several Holocaust survivors, each of whom relate their personal memories and experiences during the Shoah.

Last year, one of those survivors was 82-year-old Hedy Bohm who, in June, 1944, was taken by the Nazis to Auschwitz where she was separated from her parents. It was the last time she would ever see them.

"I went, with the students, and my son, Ron, to the barracks of Auschwitz, where I was held when I was only 16," she says. "It was very hard, and I was becoming very emotional from the memories, when I looked out during a big ceremony we had at Birkenau, and saw ten-thousand youngsters from all over the world, the Chief Rabbi of Israel, and cantors singing beautifully. Through the loudspeakers suddenly came Hatikvah. I looked at my son and suddenly I didn't feel like crying any more. I looked at all of these beautiful young Jewish students and the future looked bright again. It was the first year I had been on the March, and I must tell you, you don't know what an incredible experience it is until you take part. I have a new faith in our future because of what these young people are taught on the March."

"If we want our children to bear witness and learn to be proud and knowledgeable Jews, to take responsibility and action to sustain Jewish life and Israel, then I really believe that the March of the Living is the best gift we can give them," says Ruth.

The March of the Living is open to Jewish students in grades 11 and 12. There is a Young adult and Adult Mission as well. Online Registration at www.marchofitheliving.org. Registration deadline for the 2011 High School March of the Living is Monday, November 1, 2010. For more information, contact Sherri Rotstein at 416.398.6931 ext. 5359 or via email at srotstein@ujafed.org

Students memorialize Holocaust a penny at a time

By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

MONCTON — Thousands of pennies are pouring into Karen Horsman's classroom at Riverview Junior High since a campaign called Power of the Penny started a couple of weeks ago to raise Holocaust awareness.

Early in this school term, Horsman's Grade 8 class responded to an assigned book, set in World War II Warsaw, and to a documentary called *Paper Clips* about a group of Tennessee students who collected six million clips to represent those who died in the Holocaust.

"The children are extremely interested in collecting six million pennies, one for each of the victims," said Horsman in a telephone interview. "We have really gotten the word out to the media and have been very successful so far."

She says they hope to have boxes they can distribute to businesses and workplaces around the community, but they also realize that to reach their goal they are going to have to reach out beyond Metro Moncton.

The English language arts teacher said she and the students spent one recent lunch hour rolling 8,500 pennies. "If we get that every day, it might take us three years," she laughed. "However, the students are committed. Even those who will be gone from this school by the time the project ends want to be part of it all the way through its completion."

Grade 8 students at Riverview Junior High, in a suburb of Moncton, are trying to collect six million pennies to memorialize the Jews lost in the Holocaust. *[Josee Durepos photo]*

The students have already collected more than 75,000 pennies. In addition to what they'll collect and have donated in their own community, they hope for contributions from pop superstars, such as Justin Bieber and Taylor Swift and others, to whom they have written letters seeking support. They'll display pennies from celebrities throughout the school.

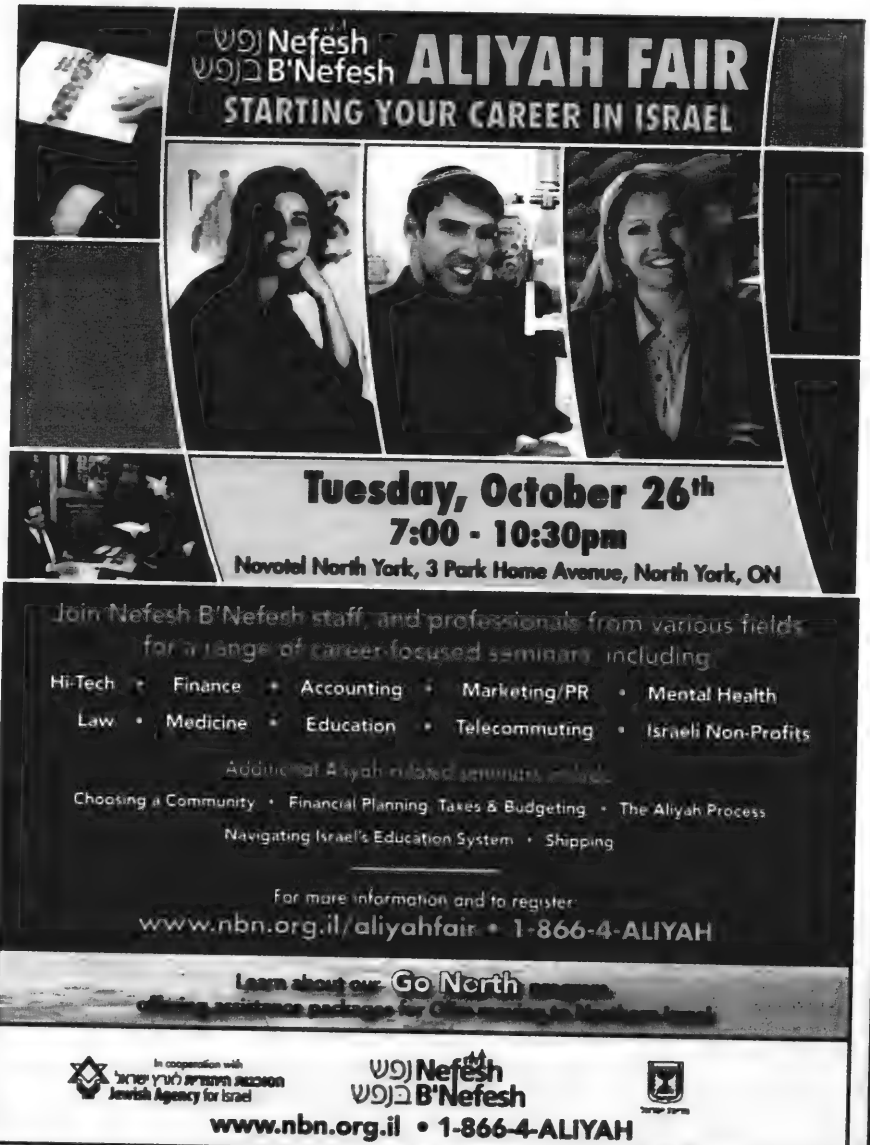
Horsman said the idea really came from the students after reading the story of the atrocities and of the paper clip project.

"They wanted to do something relevant," she said.

The goal is to raise $60,000, which would be used for a student trip to Poland to visit Holocaust sites. Horsman said they want to return from that trip and educate others about what happened.

"Most of them didn't know a lot about the Holocaust, and some still don't know very much, but this project is stressing empathy to them, and helping them understand history," she said.

"We've even turned it into a writing project, where the students studied the newspaper article about the paper clips [project in Tennesee] and analyzed how it was written, using the five Ws [who, what, when, why, where] of a news story. That even led to more conversation about the Holocaust. It's been an excellent project so far."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We need $300,000, this is what the JCAHO/TJC (Joint commission on accreditation of Healthcare Organizations) charges for international patients, without this money Alexis will not be able to go to Israel and get treated. Without this transplant I am afraid we will lose her. We have set up a trust account, please help us.

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2. Or you can, via internet banking use interact transfer – the email reference for the transfer is damw@rogers.com and you should send a separate email to damw@rogers.com with the security question and answer;
3. Beth David Synagogue is accepting cheques payable to Beth David, 55 Yeomans Road, Toronto, ON, with memo/reference "Alexis" and credit card payments [416-633-5500];

Thank you for your support, Debra Wronzberg

Ordinary Israelis know what the real problem is

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Pundits who fixate solely on settlements as the crux of the impasse in the peace process are providing a only a very partial account of what's at the root of the regional problem.

This is not to deny or distract from the seriousness of the settlement issue, as previous columns have noted. It is, however, to point out that a broad solution to this subject is well known to the parties and, indeed, according to several reliable reports, had been accepted during previous negotiations: about four to five per cent of the western part of the West Bank containing the major settlement blocs around Jerusalem and roughly 75 per cent of the settlers would be incorporated into Israel in exchange for a similar amount of territory being transferred to a Palestinian state. The remaining settlements deep in the West Bank would be either dismantled and their residents compensated or they could possibly remain under another sovereignty arrangement. Not easy for sure, but doable.

A recent opinion poll, however, from the Deaf Institute reveals that a small majority of Israeli Jews (54 per cent) favour continued building in existing settlements while only 39 per cent favour an extended moratorium. This is a shift from poll results just a couple of months ago indicating that a plurality of Israeli Jews favoured construction. Since other polls have consistently shown that about 65 to 70 per cent of Israeli Jews support a two-state solution, how can this apparent discrepancy be explained? The answer lies in understanding something that journalists in Israel rarely pay attention to – the attitude and concerns of ordinary Israelis. These are the pragmatic Israelis who supported the Oslo process but who saw then-Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat reject then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak's offer of Palestinian statehood at Camp David in 2000.

They're the Israelis who had to suffer through years of suicide bombings that Arafat subsequently unleashed, something confirmed by a Hamas official last month. They watched with growing disillusionment as rocket fire from Gaza only intensified after the 2005 withdrawal. Just two years ago, they watched current PA President Mahmoud Abbas walk away from then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert's proposal – Israel's second official offer – of Palestinian statehood which included even greater concessions than those Arafat had rejected.

Israelis know these facts, and they have come to believe that the problem is far deeper than just settlements: namely, the Palestinians' rejection of Jewish sovereign legitimacy and their refusal to indicate that peace means the end of the conflict once and for all. Unlike the late Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, who came to Jerusalem in 1977 and spoke in the Knesset promising "Peace, no more war," Abbas refuses to signal that any deal he might sign with Israel would amount to the same pledge. In fact, Israelis see no willingness from Abbas to make any concessions or compromises at all.

Rather, what they see is Abbas' disdain for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's call to recognize Israel as the nation state of the Jewish people (something consistent with Israel's being a democracy for its non-Jewish minorities, too). They believe that just as Netanyahu recognizes that the creation of a Palestinian state would make it the state of the Palestinian people, Abbas must be prepared to reciprocate: two states for two peoples.

Israelis see that Netanyahu took the unprecedented step of halting new construction for 10 months, but received nothing in return. They also see that international pressure just continued to mount on Israel to make more concessions, while nothing was expected from the "weaker" Palestinian side. And they understand that if all settlement activity were to stop tomorrow, there's little Abbas can do to compromise with Israel even if he had the will to do so. The Palestinians are more divided than ever between the PA in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza, and Abbas' continued rule is far from certain, even in the former.

At the same time, numerous Israeli analysts have argued that it would be wise to abide by a further 60-day moratorium if only to get the settlement issue out of the limelight and focus on the issues that have long stymied progress. Whether observers in the West would pay attention to these other issues, given the hold that the settlement storyline has in their minds, is an open question.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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What's New

Weather: Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
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• Visitors to Canada
• Trip Cancellation
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What's New deadline for Oct. 28 is Oct. 18. Deadline for Nov. 4 is Oct. 25. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Oct. 14

A HERO IN HEAVEN

Screening of the documentary *A Hero in Heaven*, the story of Michael Levin, a man from the U.S. who went to live in Israel when he was 16. Beth Tikvah. **Rabbi Jared Grover** will be in attendance. 2-4 p.m. $5, includes refreshments.

Saturday, Oct. 16

AT THE MOVIES

Join Temple Har Zion for an afternoon at the movies. 3 p.m. 7360 Bayview Ave. 905-889-2252.

SHABBAT SERVICE

B'nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel's monthly Shabbat service, 10 a.m. in Oakville. Conservative, egalitarian congregation. bnaishalom.ca, 905-901-9889.

Sunday, Oct. 17

BREAKFAST LECTURE

Beth David Brotherhood's lecture with **Murray Goldsmith**, motivational entertainer. 9:15 a.m. All welcome. $5. 416-633-5500. 55 Yeomans Dr.

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

5771 launch of the Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion, Beit Midrash Zichron Dov: 9 a.m. BAYT, 613 Clark Ave. W. Keynote speaker is **Rabbi Mordechai Willig** on "Minhag Yisrael Torah Hu: Tradition, Custom and Law." 416-781-1777.

ANAPHYLAXIS WALK

Walk to Axe Anaphylaxis. 11 a.m. Cedarvale Ravine. Funds to Canadian Asthma, Allergy and Immunology Foundation. www.walktoaxe.ca.

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Exhibition of tzedakah boxes by Pomegranate Guild in memory of **Beverley Colman Lokash**. Apotex Centre, Baycrest. Opening at 3:30 p.m.

EVENING FOR WOMEN

Chana Weisberg speaks on "Bringing Spirituality into the Material World." 8 p.m. Thornhill Community Shul, 949 Clark Ave. W. $2 suggested.

Monday, Oct. 18

GUSTAV MAHLER LECTURE

Temple Emanu-El's fall lecture series. Mondays, 2-4 p.m. **Rick Phillips**, former host of CBC Radio's *Sound Advice*, speaks on "Gustav Mahler – The Man and the Music." $10. 416-449-3880.

BOOK CHAT

Join Vaughan Public Libraries at North Thornhill Community Centre, 300 Pleasant Ridge Ave. to discuss *Small Island* by **Andrea Levy**. Book can be picked up at Dufferin Clark Library's check out desk.

NURSERY REGISTRATION

Registration is open for Temple Sinai members for Twinkle Tots, Kiddie Ko-Op, nursery and junior and senior kindergarten. 416-487-3281 for other registration dates.

INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS

Screening of the **Quentin Tarantino** directed Holocaust film. 7 p.m. Beth Tikvah. $5 at the door.

Tuesday, Oct. 19

'CHURCHILL AND THE JEWS'

Temple Har Zion presents **Gerald Zeidenberg**: "Churchill and the Jews." 12 p.m. Bring lunch, coffee, tea and cookies served. $3, guests $5. 905-889-2252.

'HEBREW ART SONG'

Cantor Benjamin Maissner gives a musical presentation of "The Hebrew Art Song: Hebrew Language Through Poetry and Songs." 12:15 p.m. RSVP: 416-221-3433.

HEALTHY BACK

Jennifer Salter, director of Personal Lifeline Training, on "Healthy Back, Happier Life." 1:30 p.m. Beth Tzedec library. Free, registration required. 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

Continued on page 29

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What: Cocktails + Dinner (Kashruth observed)
Featuring: **General Rick Hillier, CMM, MSC, OD, Former Chief of the Defense Staff of the Canadian Forces**
When: Thursday, November 18, 2010 at 7:00 pm
Where: Park Hyatt Toronto
Queen's Park Ballroom
4 Avenue Road, Toronto
Valet parking provided

For more information or to reserve your tickets call: 416-781-3584
e-mail: foundation@hospitalwithaheart.ca, web: www.hospitalwithaheart.ca

Funds raised from the evening will go to support the Dr. Jack Matloff Family Disaster & Emergency Response Center at the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem

Creative

Continued from page 28

INTERMARRIAGE

Beth Tikvah Men's Club hosts monthly meetings for family and friends of inter-dating or intermarried couples who want support or want to help those in similar circumstances. 8 p.m. **Moe**: 647-282-0277, mhorenf@idirect.com.

EYE CARE AND VISION LOSS

Learn the risk factors, precautions, treatment and research about retina diseases, macular degeneration and glaucoma. 7:30 p.m. Free. Council House, 4700 Bathurst St. 416-633-5100, info@ncjwc-ts.org.

Wednesday, Oct. 20

POMEGRANATE GUILD

"A History of Beadwork: 100,000 Years of Human Invention." An illustrated talk by **Simon Waegemaekers**. Shaarei Shomayim, 8 p.m. Guests welcome. $5

Other News

'ANCIENT WISDOM'

"Ancient Wisdom for Modern Living," with **Esther Friedman**. Oct. 18 and 25, Nov. 15 and 22. 7:30 p.m. $10 per lecture. Kehillat Shaarei Torah. 416-229-2600 ext. 3.

GERRY GALL SPEAKS

Temple Emanu-el presents law professor **Gerry Gall** on "Challenges to Modern Canadian Jewry: Social, Legal and Institutional." Oct. 22-24. RSVP: 416-449-3880, reception@emanuel.ca.

IMMIGRATION POLICY

Yachad branch, NCJWC Toronto section, program on Canada's immigration policy, with *Toronto Star* reporter **Nicholas Keung**. Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m. Council House. No charge but RSVP necessary. 416-633-5100.

SINGLES GAMES NIGHT

Who Wants to be a Millionaire, Rummicube, etc. $8. Refreshments and prizes. Early bird bingo 7:30-8 p.m. Oct. 24, Beth Torah Synagogue. mollie_rothman@yahoo.ca.

'ART OF ENTERTAINING'

Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro. "The Art of Entertaining," with **Fay Lewis**, author of *Be My Guest* and **Craig Gruzd** from Designing Trendz. Kosher tapas and desserts. Oct. 21, 7:30 p.m. Avenue Banquet Hall, 1600 Steeles Ave. W. 647-638-1959, cfobis@rogers.com.

AARON NUSSBAUM SPEAKS

University lecturer **Aaron Nussbaum** speaks on "The Jewish Enlightenment Movement: The Continuing Challenge." Oct. 21 and 28, 7:30 p.m. Beth David. 416-633-5500. Free, refreshments served.

'MEDITATING MONDAY'

Join Temple Har Zion to experience meditation in a Jewish context. Oct. 25, 8:15 p.m. 905-889-2252.

SUPPORT GROUP

Circle of Care support group for those whose spouses have dementia or Alzheimer's. Every Monday to Dec. 6, 10-11:30 a.m. 530 Wilson Ave. Register with **Joe**, 416-635-2900 ext. 472.

JEWISH THINKERS

New monthly series on the thought, worldview and influence of Medieval Jewish thinkers. Oct. 21, 8 p.m. 159 Almore Ave. Lecture on **Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi** by **Prof. Daniel Lasker**. torahinmotion.org.

DRIVERS NEEDED

Volunteer drivers needed for visually impaired seniors. Once a month, 7-10 p.m. 905-508-2892.

SINGERS WANTED

Toronto Jewish Folk Choir is looking for singers. Rehearsals every Wednesday, 7:30-10 p.m. 585 Cranbrooke Ave. 416-593-0750, tjfolkchoir@sympatico.ca.

YIDDISH FILM NIGHT

Unzere Kinder (Our Children) screening. $5 suggested. Oct. 23, 7:45 p.m. Kehillat Shaarei Torah.

CONVERSION BILL TALK

The conversion bill being debated in Israel will be discussed by **Howard English** at an Association of Jewish Seniors-sponsored meeting. Oct. 21, 10 a.m. Shaarei Shomayim. Members free, guests $2. Tammy, 416-635-2860.

FUNDRAISING CONCERT

Fundraiser for Beth Tikvah's choir. Safam performs. Oct. 31, 7:30 p.m. Dessert reception. For info: 416-221-3433.

KNITTERS WANTED

Jewish Women International of Canada is looking for knitters of all skill levels to provide mittens and hats for elementary school children in need. Donations of wool are also welcome. 416-630-9313.

JF&CS GROUPS

Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit jfandcs.com. Registration required.

Widow/widowers 65+ bereavement: For those who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Oct. 20, 1:30-3 p.m. Beth Tzedec. Also Nov. 2, 1-2:30 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Looking ahead: For newly separated or divorced individuals. Oct. 20, 7-9 p.m. 4600 Bathurst St.

The challenge of anger for women: For women to learn to express their anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Oct. 21, 7:30-9 p.m. 4600 Bathurst St.

Aspergers 101: For anyone wanting to know about Aspergers, with **Margot Nelles** from Aspergers et al. Oct. 21, 7-9 p.m. Lipa Green Centre, lower lobby, Room 9.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 31

What's New

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. Everyone welcome. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC. Harold Troper presents illustrated talk, "Jewish Toronto: Portrait of a Jewish Past." Oct. 28, 1:30 p.m.

Connecting the generations brings together students and seniors. Kosher lunches, guided visit to Royal Ontario Museum and more.

Beginner computer course. Six students, three instructors. 416-924-6211 ext. 155.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Nov. 17, departs 10 a.m. Sunday dance Oct. 24, 7-9 p.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Seniors annual general meeting Oct. 18, 12 p.m. all welcome. Kosher lunch provided. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Seniors woodworking – skilled craftsmen, 416-630-6487.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Arthritis self-management program. Oct. 26-Nov. 30. 1-3 p.m. $20 members, $35 guests. Ext. 657.

Lecture: "An Introduction to Yiddish Theatre Before 1880," Part 1, with **Myra Fooden**. Oct. 19, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

Festival of the arts, Oct. 20. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Bridle Bash Foundation and Prosserman JCC Fitness and Health present the Cycle for a Cause spin-a-thon. Live DJ, prizes, raffles and giveaways. Oct. 17, 9 a.m. bridlebashfoundation.com/spinathon

Beginner bridge classes. Nov. 3-Dec. 22, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. $45 members, $60 guests.

Floral arranging, Oct. 12-Nov. 9, 10-11:30 a.m. $70 members, $85 guests.

Current events with **Peter Diamant**. Thursdays, 12:45-2:15 p.m.

Movie Mondays. *Defiance*, Oct 18. 2:30 p.m.

A Sharp Intake of Breath, reviewed by **Sharoni Sibony**. Oct. 19. 1:30-3 p.m.

Join Kolel for an overview of Jewish faith, history and practice from a liberal perspective. With **Ira Schweitzer**. Oct. 14-18, 8-9:30 p.m. Members $130, students and seniors $80. Ext. 4235 to register.

Tic Tac Two program, 9-11:30 a.m. **Kailah**, ext. 4351.

Shabbat Party, Oct. 8-Dec. 10, 10-11 a.m. Birth to 4 years old. **Monique**, ext. 4012.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel services Sundays 8 a.m. and Thursdays 7:15 a.m. Kosher breakfast follows. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

"World Music for the Armchair Traveler," with **Barry Livingston**. Starts Oct. 14. Ext. 0.

Mother's Circle: free workshops for non-Jewish women raising Jewish children. Starts. Oct. 14, 7:30-9 p.m. 416-658-5261.

Tickets on sale for *Renee Barda: Life Begins Again!* Soprano **Renee Barda** takes the stage with **George Gershwin** and **Cole Porter**. Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Ext. 0.

Start your own business. Get ideas, get inspired. Three Friday workshops with **Debbi Arnold** of DA Consulting. 9:30-11:30 a.m. Starts Oct. 15. 416-762-7171.

"Joseph to Nasser: The Jews of Egypt," with **Diana Mingail**. Oct. 17, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. $9, light refreshments. Ext. 154.

The Cinema of Israel lectures with **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. Oct. 18: "Social Portraits of Israeli Society," 7-9 p.m. $12. Ext. 606.

Planet in Focus 11th Annual International Environmental Film & Video Festival. Oct. 13-17. Al Green Theatre. 416-531-4689.

Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space: *Polar Visions*, photo exhibit by **Mark Loren Freedman**. To Oct. 19.

imagineNATIVE Teen Night. Dinner followed by opening night film *Boy* at Toronto's International Native Film and Media Arts Festival. sarahbn@mnjcc.org.

imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival. Oct. 20-24. www.imaginenative.org.

KOFFLER CENTRE

Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.kofflerarts.org.

La'hit T.O. – Israeli dance troupe for dancers aged 15-19. Audition Oct. 17, 3-4 p.m. Room 211. **Teme**, ext. 4364.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Ijusim, Motlia	Sept. 19/10	1121 Steeles Ave. W
Morgenstern, Andrea	Sept. 20/10	4 Goldfinch Crt
Fishman, Hyman	Sept. 20/10	8 Cactus Ave
Pechen, Teddy	Sept. 20/10	10 Trench St
Zelewicz, Fay	Sept. 21/10	78 Acton Ave
Hoberman, Yetta	Sept. 20/10	
Galin, Murray	Sept. 21/10	3560 Bathurst St
Cappe, Lawrence	Sept. 22/10	Private
Kurchik, Genia	Sept. 22/10	Private
Avshaev, Boris	Sept. 23/10	Private
Nusinowitz, Jacob	Sept. 23/10	Private
Bafakirski, Anatoli	Sept. 24/10	Private
Rashkovsky, Leonid	Sept. 25/10	Private
Mocle, Josephine	Sept. 26/10	Private
Levin, Dr. Bert Jeremiah	Sept. 26/10	1925 Steeles Ave. E
Levy, Suzanne	Sept. 27/10	3636 Bathurst St
Zolty, Bertha	Sept. 27/10	
Levy, Michael	Sept. 28/10	866 Pape Ave
Romberg, Sam	Sept. 27/10	163 Faywood Blvd
Drabkin, Boris	Sept. 28/10	Private
Gerson, Abraham	Sept. 29/10	170 Red Maple Rd.
Kurlandski, Marika	Sept. 29/10	1085 Steeles Ave. W.
Galant, Icek Jake	Sept. 30/10	7440 Bathurst St.
Kopolovic, Sam	Oct. 2/10	429 Walmer Rd.
Slater, Freda	Oct. 2/10	18 Steeles Ave. E.
Bonder, Abraham	Oct. 2/10	205 Cummer Ave.
Salganov, Boris	Oct. 2/10	Private
Posner, Manuel	Oct. 3/10	7300 Yonge St.
Serfaty, Rica	Oct. 3/10	12 Rockford Rd.
Reynes, Etya	Oct. 3/10	Private
Kaufberg, Bluma	Oct. 3/10	7440 Bathurst St.
Trefler, Jerry	Oct. 3/10	1 Canyon Ave.
Yagadayev, Ilya	Oct. 3/10	Private
Weinstock, Israel	Oct. 4/10	343 Clark Ave. W.
Teich, Mary	Oct. 4/10	333 Clark Ave. W.
Jacob, Tryphosa	Oct. 4/10	53 Harrison Rd.
Lichtman, Joey	Oct. 5/10	109 Rockwood Cres.

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late

MORRIS SINGER ז"ל

will take place

Sunday, October 17th at 12:30 p.m.

Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park

Apter Section

Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late

HAROLD LOYD SILVERSTEIN ז"ל

will take place

Sunday, Oct. 17th at 11:00 a.m.

Mount Sinai Memorial Park

Pride of Israel Section

Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late

JACK RISENMAN ז"ל

will take place

Sunday, October 17th at 12:00 p.m.

Pardes Shalom Cemetery

Beth David Section

Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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וואָס האָט ער געוואָלט פֿון דער יידישער שפּראַך?

פֿון דזשערי קעין

הײַ יאָר פֿיַיערן מיר הונדערט יאָר זינט די ערשטע וועלטלעכע קינדער שולעס האָבן זיך נעגרינדעט אין ניו יאָרק, מאַנהעטאַן, טאָראָנטאָ, און חיניפּעג. די שולעס האָבן אָפּגעשפּיגלט די פֿאַרשידענע באַוועגונגען וואָס האָבן געבּרויזט אין די אַרבעטער פּלעצער, גאָסן און היימען פֿון די ניַי געקומענע עמיגראַנטן. זאָל זיין לינקע פּעולי ציון, רעכטע פּעולי ציון, בונדיסט, אָדער קאָמוניסט, אין אַלע די קינדער שולעס הוי יידיש האָט נעהערשט האָבן אויך נעהערשט די פּאָעמעס, לידער און מעשׂהלעך פֿון אַברהם רייזען.

רייזען, געבּאָרן אין קרעדנאָוו חיים רוסלאַנד, איז נעוווען אַ קינד פֿון אַ ליטוואַישער היים. דער טאַטע, זיין שוועסטער שׂרה און זיין ברודער זלמן, זיינען אַלע נעוווען שרײַבער. צו פֿערצן יאָר איז אַברהם נעוואָרן אַ לערער אין קרידנאָוו און צו דיבעצן אַ לערער אין מינסק. אין זיין יוגנט איז ער נעוואָרן אַן אַנהענגער פֿון דער משכּילישער באַוועגונג און פֿון דער סאָציאַליסטישער פּאָליטיק וואָס האָט פֿאַרכאַפּט אַזוי פיל פֿון דער יידישער יוגנט וואָס האָט געזוכט אַן אויסוועג פֿון די פֿרומע פֿאָרמען פֿון שטעטל לעבן און אַן אַרײַנפּיר צו דעם לעבן אין לערעם פֿון דער מאָדערנער וועלט. אין איינע פֿון זיינע ערשטע לידער האָט ער געשריבן:

זאָל יעדערער צוליגן פֿעסטער זיין האַנט,
מיר וועלן די הויכע, די פֿינצטערע וואַנט –
צעברעכן די וואַנט...

רייזען האָט דעביוטירט אין פֿרצעס די יידישע *כיבליאָטעק אין* 1891. ער האָט אויך געשריבן פֿאַר דער ערשטער יידישער צײַטונג אין רוסלאַנד, *דער פֿרײַנד*. ער איז אין גיכן באַקאַנט געוואָרן אין די שרײַבערשע קרײַזן און אויך דער יידישער גאָס. נאָך זיין דינסט אין דער רוסישער אַרמיי איז ער געוואָרן דער רעדאַקטאָר פֿון פּרצעס *יום-טוב בלעטלעך*. אָבער רייזען האָט געפֿונען דעם פֿאָרמאַט צו ענג אין האָט אַרויסגענבן אַן אַנטאָלאָגיע, *דאָס ייִדישׂע ליטעראַטור-פֿאָלק*, וווּ ער האָט נעקענט צוזאַמענברענגן די אַרבעטן פֿון פֿאַרשידענע יונגע שרײַבער אין פֿאַרשטעלן זייערע מיינונגען תּען די טעמעס אוּן פֿראַבלעמען וואָס זיינען נעוווען היכסיק פֿאַר יידן וואָס לעבן אין צוואַנציקסטן יאָרהונדערט. צוזיך די פֿראַבלעמען איז נעוווען די פֿראָגע תּען יידיש. איז עס אַ ליטעראַטור? איז עס אַ שפּראַך גלײַך מיט אַלע אַנדערע שפּראַכן? האָט יידיש דאָס זעלבע וערט וי העברעיש?

אַברהם רייזענס ענטפֿער איז נעוואָרן דער פֿונדאַמענט פֿון זיין ליטעראַרישן און קהילותדיק לעבן:

"יידיש איז ניט נאָר אַ מיטל צו בילדן די יידישע מאסן, טאָר אַ ציל פֿאַר זיך, אַז זי וועט דינען אויך דער יידישער אינטעליגענץ, אוּן וועט אויף אזא אופֿן אָפּשפּיגלען אַלע שטרעבונגען אוּן שטרעמונגען פֿון דער גרויסער וועלט, אַזוי אז דער יידישער אינטעלעגענט זאָל ניט דאַרפֿן אין העכערע פֿראָגן זיך ווענדן צו די ליטעראַטורן אין אַנדערע שפּראַכן וואָס פֿאַרפֿעמדט אים פֿון יידישן פֿאָלק." אָט די מיינונג האָט נעהילכט פֿון רייזענען בשעת זיין אָנטיַיל נעמען אין דער טשערנאָוויצער שפּראַך קאָנפֿרענץ.

רייזענס בײַטראָג צו אונדזער שפּראַך אוּן ליטעראַטור איז צו גרויס צו באַאַנטלען אין איין קאַפּיטל. איך פֿראָביר דאָ בלויז צו דערמאָנען וויי ער האָט אָנגעפֿאַנגען אוּן וואָס ער האָט נעמאַלט פֿון אונדזער מאַמע לשון. מיר וועלן צוריק קומען צו רייזענען אין אַ קומענדיקן קאַפּיטל. רייזען איז אָוועק פֿון אונדז אין 1953.

אויב איר האָט נעראַנקען וועגן אונדזער וויקל שרײַבט דורך פּאָסט אַדער בליץ- פּאָסט: info@thecjn.ca

Obituary

Longtime Legion chief combined 'heroism, humility'

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

A stalwart of the Royal Canadian Legion's General Wingate Branch 256, originally known as the Jewish Brigade, died recently in Toronto.

Sam Romberg, president of the Wingate branch for 20 years until 2009, succumbed to complications from diabetes on Sept. 27 at Baycrest Hospital. He was 87. Some 70 years ago, Romberg lied about his age to fight for the freedom of the world, Rabbi Philip Scheim said in a eulogy.

Sam Romberg

The rabbi, who knew Romberg as a congregant of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation, said he embodied both heroism and humility. He remembers him as an "unassuming guy… a very gentle, soft-spoken, kind, grandfatherly type," he told *The CJN*.

Romberg served in an armoured tank unit in the Canadian Army during World War II and received five campaign medals. In 2002, he received a Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, awarded to citizens who had made significant contributions over the previous 50 years. In August, Romberg was awarded the Palm Leaf, considered the Legion's highest honour.

A native of Toronto, Romberg was a tank operator for most of the war, serving in the United Kingdom, France, Belgium and Germany. He was injured by friendly fire from an air attack during the Battle of Normandy, suffering shrapnel wounds in his back.

Romberg's son, Wayne, who travelled with him and other veterans to Europe in 1990 for the 45th anniversary of the liberation of Holland, said his father was overseas for about five years. When he returned to Canada after the war, Romberg worked as a cab driver until his retirement at age 65.

His involvements with the Wingate branch included its annual poppy fundraising campaign, which he worked on with his wife, Aileen. He also served on the cemetery committee, and was instrumental in organizing programs such as Shabbat services and Passover seders for Jewish patients in the Sunnybrook Hospital Veterans' Wing.

As well, he used to visit schools and speak to students about being a veteran, his son, Barry, told *The CJN*. An award-winning jazz drummer, Barry recalls that his father got him his first gig at a Jewish organizational dinner when he was about 12 or 13.

"I started playing in little groups, and he'd always shlep us around," Barry told *The CJN*. As well, he added, his father would keep copies of his 1988 album in his trunk and sell them to customers. "He was a great guy," said Barry. "I don't think I ever heard him say anything bad about anyone. There's not too many people like that."

Romberg leaves Aileen, his wife of 58 years, sons Barry and Wayne, grandchildren Ashley and Max, and sister Lyla Puro. He was predeceased by his brother, Izzy.

The Board of Directors and the staff of the Ashkenaz Foundation would like to extend a sincere apology to Mr. Saul Berman and the Miriam Berman Fund for Yiddish Education at the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto for the error that occurred in Mr. Berman's greeting which appeared in the 2010 Ashkenaz Festival program book. A corrected greeting appears below.

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און א גוט יאָר

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The Miriam Berman Fund for Yiddish Education at the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto

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Feature

With luck and chutzpah

By BERNARD RUBIN

My family is probably one of the few Jewish families in the world who can say their grandparents were actually saved by the Nazis.

In honour of the approaching Holocaust Education Week, I would like to share some of my family's unusual experiences during World War II.

Before the war, my parents lived in Antwerp. The family legend is that my father was very smart because, knowing Adolf Hitler was going to invade Belgium, he left before the German invasion in 1940 by smuggling himself into New York – illegally, of course – on a cattle boat.

Some members of our family believed he was smart because he knew he should get out of Europe and into New York, and then help my mother get across the Atlantic.

The true story may be somewhat murkier. Some of my older relatives recall that my father immigrated to New York because he owed too much money and wanted to avoid debtors' prison – which meant, of course, that his illegal entry to America had nothing to do with the Nazis!

Which story is true?

All I know for sure is that he was in New York when Hitler invaded Belgium, and my mother was not with him. Rather, she was stuck in Antwerp under German occupation, with my sister, who was then five years old.

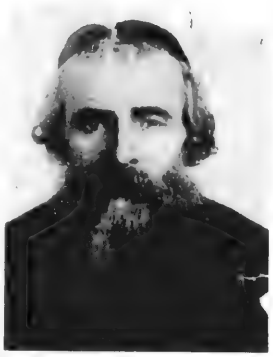
How did she get out of Europe?

The United States was neutral, but there was an embargo against dealing in diamonds with the Germans. (My father was a diamond dealer.) This was because the Germans would hoard their diamonds to hide their wealth, in case they lost the war.

A man named Von Klemm, German foreign minister Joachim Von Ribbentrop's brother-in-law, knew of my parents and used my mother as a "pony" – his vehicle to ship diamonds to the United States. He would send letters to my father in my mother's name postmarked "Berlin" to create the impression that my mother was sending diamonds to my father, when it was actually Von Klemm sending them.

My father then devised what he thought was a great plan to get my mother out of Europe. He sent his partner's wife to the State Department. There, she advised the officials: "I have a friend who is an illegal alien and thus cannot come forward because of his status. However, his wife appears to be sending him letters postmarked "Berlin," but she is really in Antwerp. It has something to do with diamonds. What should we do?"

This was before the days of computers, yet the story has



Bernard Rubin's grandfather and grandmother

it that the State Department employee responded: "You are Abraham Rubin's friend. We know he is in the States. Have him come forward. We will make him a citizen and we will get his wife, Frimet, (my mother) over here to testify against Von Klemm."

That's how my mother got a visa to the United States. But she still had to find a way to escape from Europe.

The family stories about her escape are legendary.

My mother was in Vichy, France, when the Nazis took her and my sister to the train station for their final deportation. She was told that everyone in the station was being repatriated to their country of origin: in my mother's case, Belgium. She noticed, however, that everyone at the train station was Jewish and concluded that something was amiss. So she bribed a German guard (with a diamond, of course) saying: "My daughter is ill and needs to be seen by her own doctor. I promise to return with her tomorrow."

How she got so lucky we'll never know, but the German guard took the diamond and let them go.

She then found her way to Marseille, then Casablanca, and ended up in Lisbon, Portugal, with boat tickets for her and my sister to safely journey through Cuba to New York to join my father. In New York, she would be required to testify against Von Klemm.

Continued on page 34

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MAZEL TOV
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Mother succeeded in retrieving her handmade rugs

Continued from page 32

My mother had a lot of chutzpah. When she was in Lisbon, she decided she wanted her handmade rugs from Belgium to be shipped to New York as well.

Even though Portugal was neutral during the war, all mail in and out of the country was screened by the Germans. Given that she could not use the mail, my mother asked a German Jew to come with her to the German Embassy to translate her request that her rugs be sent promptly to New York.

Although she had chutzpah, her powers of persuasion were not quite as effective. The man refused to go with her. "Are you crazy?" he asked her. "We are running away from Hitler and you want me to go into the German Embassy because of your rugs! I'm not going there. They could kill us."

Never one to back down, she went alone to the embassy, or maybe she took my six- year-old sister with her. The non-Jewish taxi driver was so afraid of the Germans that he did not pull up alongside the embassy, but dropped her off a block away and just pointed her in the right direction.

Inside the embassy, a polite, vice-ambassador, clicking his heels, addressed her by name. He took note of all the details of my mother's rugs and told her there would be no problem!

When my mother and sister were on a boat halfway across the Atlantic, she received a cablegram from the Nazis informing her exactly when and on what ship her rugs would arrive in New York. Believe it or not, the rugs eventually did arrive in New York, true to the German Embassy official's word.

The final part of my mother's odyssey concerns her parents. Her father was a Satmar Chassid with a long beard and *payot*, a haredi Jew. I had always been told that my grandparents were hidden in a gentile home for the aged in Antwerp. But the story did not make sense to me because I knew my grandfather refused to shave his beard and demanded to eat only kosher food. This behaviour would have endangered the lives of everybody in the home by drawing attention to the fact that Jewish people were being hidden there.

> ***'Are you crazy? We are running away from Hitler and you want me to go into the German Embassy!'***

Last year, my older cousins, who are in their 80s, told me this story was incorrect.

But the real story is just as bizarre. They said a Nazi general, Alexander Von Falkenhausen, an aristocrat related to the Queen of Belgium, was in charge of occupied Belgium and northern France. The queen summoned him and berated him, saying it was beneath his dignity as an aristocrat to round up and kill Jews. Not wishing to disappoint the queen, and as a way to save his own hide, he found a way to placate her as well as the international community.

He picked a hospital that he would put on display, and ordered that everyone in the hospital be protected and given full religious freedom.

As it happened, my grandparents were outpatients at this hospital, receiving insulin injections. In 1942-43, the International Red Cross periodically visited Antwerp and Von Falkenhausen would take them to "his hospital" and point at my grandfather to deny the Red Cross accusations about genocide. He would say to the visitors: "What are you talking about? Do you see that man over there with the big beard and the black outfit? Is he Jewish enough for you? Look. He is drinking his ceremonial wine on Friday night and reciting his Sabbath prayers."

Von Falkenhausen's Nazis allowed the Jews in that hospital to "be" Jewish without being harmed, and as a result, my maternal grandparents lived to almost the end of the war.

On Christmas Eve, 1944, however, there was a terrible – and sadly ironic – accident. My grandfather did to himself what the Nazis had failed to do. He was drinking tea in the kitchen and he fell asleep. The gas shut off, then came back on. There was no pilot light to ignite the gas, and it seeped quietly into the room. He was found dead at the window, trying to open it to get air. He had accidentally gassed himself.

A sad end to his story.

Bernard Rubin is a dentist who lives in Toronto.

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And now for something completely different: **HEEBONICS**

Author brings humour to solving the Mideast conflict

Gregory Levey, 32, is the author of *How to Make Peace in the Middle East in Six Months or Less Without Leaving Your Apartment.*

By Miriam Cross
Special to The CJN

Gregory Levey can't seem to escape the Middle East.

The bizarre events of his 20s, that saw him apply for an internship at the Israel Mission to the United Nations and end up in Jerusalem writing speeches for prime minister Ariel Sharon, are far behind him.

His 2008 memoir about his experiences, *Shut Up, I'm Talking: And Other Diplomacy Lessons I Learned in the Israeli Government*, was meant to be a lighthearted account of a job that saw him go from law student to quasi-diplomat during a tumultuous two years in the region's history.

But it also turned him into a sounding board for anyone with a view on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"Since I got back from Israel, with all the journalism I've done, most of it on the Middle East, and then with that book, I get so many people harassing me," he says in his office at Ryerson University in Toronto, where he now works as a professor in the school of professional communication.

"Everyone needs to give me their opinion on the Middle East, whether they're Jews, non-Jews, Arabs, political types, right wing, left wing. I get e-mails, phone calls – people have shown up here looking for me," he says, gesturing down the quiet hallways snaking past his office – the antithesis of the daily chaos he faced in the Israeli prime minister's compound.

Whatever it is that makes people so eager to talk about the conflict, Levey, 32, says he's sick of it, and has decided to take matters into his own hands the way he knows best: through humour and writing.

His new book, *How to Make Peace in the Middle East in Six Months or Less Without Leaving Your Apartment*, which was released on Sept. 7 by Free Press, is the result.

"The premise of the book is that fine, I'm going to escape this whole thing by just solving the conflict myself," he says. "And I don't mean writing about how it should be solved, I mean actually going out and trying to solve it."

That meant making approaches to the White House, diplomats, spies and alleged terrorists, trying to get the former adviser to ex-Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat and friends of the Israeli prime minister in the same room and spending weeks on the phone to Ramallah.

But it also meant going undercover as an evangelical Christian, partying with a mysterious figure who calls himself the Peaceman and recruiting his neighbourhood Palestinian grocer as his adviser, so clearly, Levey is having a bit of fun with his peace process.

His levity was partly an effort to keep his own sanity – the whole book is about a topic he is trying to escape, after all – and partly to offer a different perspective on the hostilities.

"There's enough tragedy, and it's serious enough, and I don't need to contribute to that," he says. "I just thought that I could bring a different voice we don't normally hear, which is a humorous voice, to the extent that's possible."

That isn't always easy to gauge, as Levey has discovered. *While Shut Up, I'm Talking* was reviewed largely positively, thanks to his flair for finding laughs in his fish-out-of-water experiences, a tongue-in-cheek article he wrote for *Newsweek* in 2009, where he suggested that President Barack Obama make George W. Bush his Middle East envoy, saw him deluged with angry letters and called "the stupidest person on earth" by a former Bill Clinton aide. The incident still makes him roll his eyes when I bring it up.

For his second book, balancing the "super-funny, goofy parts" with more substantive material was harder. "I had to craft the narrative," he explains.

In contrast to his laugh-out-loud style of prose, Levey is quiet and unassuming in person, friendly but reserved during our interview. He grew up in Toronto and attended Hebrew day school, but his interest in religion waned and he's now a firm atheist. After composing speeches for world leaders (and just scraping through his law degree at Fordham University), Levey secured a job at Ryerson in 2006 and is now finishing his PhD in creative writing at St. Andrew's University in Scotland.

With closely cropped black curls that he occasionally lets grow into long spirals and a slim, wiry frame, Levey looks (and is) closer in age to his students at Ryerson than his colleagues. But after two years of "complete insanity," as he describes his tenure with the Israeli government, this didn't faze him. "Really, it would have been hard to find something that would have been too strange after that," he says.

Levey rarely misses his old world, though speechwriting did have one unexpected benefit: it helped give him a voice.

"I think that really taught me how I wanted to write, which is a much more conversational, sharp, to-the-point kind of writing," he says.

He applied the same concepts to a screenplay that is currently being shopped around by a Hollywood producer. According to the observations of Susan Cody, former chair of his department, he also follows that sensibility in his day-to-day work life.

"He speaks, I think, only when he can make a distinct contribution," she says. "He knows what he can bring to a problem-solving meeting and brings that, but does not talk to add quantity, to make an impression or to socialize."

What contribution, then, will his new book make? He's up-front about its contrivances and that its primary purpose is simply to entertain. So does he think *How to Make Peace* can actually make a difference?

"Well, you don't know if I made peace or not yet," he asserts with a smile, and the way he says it, you almost wonder.

"Leaving that aside, no, nothing ever makes a difference. But maybe people will see the opposing sides as a little more human – which is sort of the point."

Correction

The Heebonics story "Brandeis graduate new camp director at Kadimah" (Sept. 22) contained incorrect information. Eve Rudin is the director of camp excellence and advancement at the Foundation for Jewish Camp. We apologize for the error.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel tov Dov & Genia Brykman on your 60th wedding anniversary!! Love from your children Manny and Esther, and the entire Brykman and Milstein families.

Sol & Belle Zulauf will celebrate their 60th anniversary on Oct. 21. Love, Debra, Randi, Leslie, Erwin, Ron, Sandra, Lindsay, Daniel, Matthew, Nicole, Jonah, Kaley and Jessica!

We happily announce the engagement of our children Brenda & Michael. Mazel tov from Carol & Glenn Bowman and Nancy & Marvin Budd.

Mazel tov on the engagement of Simone and Micha. With lots of love from the Chitiz, Milner, Blankstein, Rajsky, and Barber families.

Happy fourth birthday to our very special big boy! We love you, Judah, and we are so proud of you! Love always, Mommy & Daddy.

Rebekah, you turned 12 on Oct. 11. You are turning into a young lady. We are proud of your accomplishments. Mom, Dad & Josh.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **WWW.CJNEWS.COM** and click the **Family Moments button!**

Class Acts

SHARING THE HARVEST: Showing their commitment to tikkun olam and the environment, Grade 1 students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin Education Centre in Thornhill tend to the school's very own vegetable garden, whose produce is given to the Kavanah Garden at the Lebovic JCC in Vaughan. In addition to donating fresh vegetables, students from all grades will also begin collecting food items for donation to Kavanah's upcoming food drive.

POGO RUN

Students at Leo Baeck Day School's Thornhill campus participated in the annual Leo Baeck-POGO (Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario) Run, in which students raised funds for families with children who have been diagnosed with cancer. Pictured, from left, are Jakob Brooker, Ethan Luepana, Brandon Tessler, Jake Rakusin, Benji Saltz and Lauren Walter.

TERRY FOX RUN: Robbins Hebrew Academy middle school students – from left, Courtney Marks, Alison Shapiro and Brianna Allice – prepare banners for the school's annual Terry Fox Walk. Celebrations at the school focused on tikkun olam and involved all students. This year, in addition to the walk, older students heard from cancer survivors who shared their stories, and younger students watched a Charlie Brown video about a young student's struggle with, and recovery from, leukemia.

Harbord grads hold 60th anniversary reunion

BY CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

The 1950 graduating class of Harbord Collegiate Institute will mark its 60th anniversary at a reunion brunch at the Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue on Sunday, Oct. 17.

Harbord was once the hub of Jewish teens in Toronto – from the late 1920s to the mid-1950s, 90 per cent of the school's student population was Jewish, mainly with roots in eastern Europe.

"After we celebrated our 50th anniversary in 2000, a group of classmates decided that we would enjoy each other's company every few months at lunch," says Helen Klingman, a Harbord graduate and a retired principal who compiled a historical overview of the school in an essay titled *Memories of Harbord Collegiate*.

Klingman says the driving force for the 60th reunion came from the lunch group, and various members of the group are participating in planning and organizing the reunion.

"It's their support and enthusiasm that has carried us through the years to this 60th reunion milestone," she says.

"Over the last 10 years, we've lost some of our classmates, but that has made it all the more important to enjoy each other and to recall our memorable time at Harbord."

"Our speakers at the brunch will be leading us down Harbord's memory lane," she adds.

Graduate Howard Warner, a chartered accountant, will give the welcoming speech. The MC for the evening will be Lawrence Naiman, a retired pediatric hematologist from California who also graduated from Harbord.

Many graduates of the class of 1950 are prominent names in medicine, law, business, science, architecture and other disciplines.

Among the speakers at the reunion will be dentist Josh Fedder; Bernard Langer, professor emeritus of surgery at University of Toronto; retired pharmacist Murray Rubin; and Mildred (Tameanko) Steinberg, head of the Jewish Book Fair.

Speaking of their years at Harbord, Klingman says, "The five years we were at Harbord were very meaningful and memorable. Israel was declared a state and many families had to deal with the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, with some survivors attending Harbord."

She adds that although it was an intense historical period, "we had an opportunity to learn, to laugh, to enjoy a unique camaraderie and to make lifelong friends."

For more information on the reunion, call Howard Warner at 416-649-7728.

Shopping for souvenirs for the Harbord Collegiate's 60th reunion are, from left, Murray Lazer, Helen Klingman, Howard Warner and Deanie (Hoffman) Rumack.

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Panel offers blunt assessment of drug use

By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN

The program lived up to its billing: "Let's Be Blunt."

Speakers and panelists at a Sept. 28 community forum on teenage drug use were refreshingly candid, offering glimpses into loved ones' or their own horrific experiences with illicit drugs, their return from the brink, and the many tools available to addicts and parents.

And though no one was blunt about this, the implication was clear: Jewish teens are not immune from drug abuse.

Presented by Jewish Family & Child (JF&CS) and Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Toronto (JIAS) at the Vaughan City Playhouse, the event, a year in the planning, drew more than 200 interested parties to hear, among other things, first-hand accounts of drug use and its impact on families.

Moderator Joe Rich, a social worker, noted that a generation ago, some drugs were seen as part of hippie culture. Today, he said, they are rightly associated with gangs and violence.

Ryan, an earnest 20-something former teen drug user, said he was bullied and beaten in high school as a visible minority. With few friends and a learning disability, "I wished I was different. I was a hateful and angry kid."

He found solace in hashish and marijuana that he grew in his own room at age 14.

His world came crashing down when his mother was killed in a car accident. Though a tragic event, "it changed my life. I got that smack in the face and it certainly woke me up," and forced him to rethink his drug use.

Today, Ryan studies sociology at university and talks to kids through Youth Speak, which provides young speakers to address youth about drugs, alcohol, bullying, body image, crime and violence.

He advised parents not to delay getting treatment for their children. "The tipping point is right when [drug use] starts."

A harrowing story came from Michael, a kippah-wearing parent whose teenage daughter battled and recovered from alcohol and drug addiction.

He tallied the warning signs his daughter displayed: temper tantrums, decline in academic performance, sleep disorders, stealing and disappearances.

Panelists agreed these are common signs of drug abuse, and that parents must keep a vigilant watch for them.

"Addiction is not just a disease of the addict, but of whole families," Michael said, adding that many families "are in denial."

"You have to take the necessary steps or your child will die. You have to recognize that you didn't cause it. You also can't cure it."

Feeling shame is natural, he added.

The situation came to a head after a verbal brawl when his daughter announced she was leaving home. But when she wanted to return, the family refused until she sought help.

Michael's daughter has been in recovery for 22 months, is working and in school. "So there is hope."

Jay Pasternack, an addictions counsellor for JACS Toronto, a support group for Jewish addicts, said he is seeing many more episodes of drug-induced psychosis than he once did. "It's at least once a month," he said.

Sol Birenbaum, director of Camp Walden, spoke of peer pressure and how it steers many kids to drug use. He stressed "the value of trusting your instincts," even if that means losing friends.

Shivani Gupta of Addiction Services for York Region took the audience through the many phases of addiction, education and recovery. She noted that even high-performing teens from good homes use drugs just to fit in.

Michael Waxman, a school social worker at JF&CS, agreed parents must be assertive. While some might feel that it's all right for their children to smoke pot at home, where they can be watched, "if they're not comfortable with that, parents must say so. The best thing is open communications."

The forum also heard that:

- 23 per cent of Ontario students report they were offered, sold, or given a drug at school in the last year. That's about 219,000 students.
- 42 per cent of Ontario students surveyed have used an illicit substance in the last year.
- 83 per cent of Ontario students in Grade 12 drink alcohol. Nearly half of those admit to binge drinking.
- 60 per cent of illicit drug users in Canada are between the ages of 15 and 24.
- The top four substances used by Ontario students are alcohol (58 per cent); marijuana (25 per cent); prescription pain relievers, such as codeine, Percocet, or Demerol (17 per cent); and tobacco (11 per cent).

Advertising Feature

"GTA Investor Frustrated and Disgusted with 2% GIC's. Says She is a Victim Of Bank's Greed ... Free Report Reveals What TO Do!"

Toronto, ON - She was simply stunned to hear what her banker told her. "I'm really sorry Elizabeth, but I can't do any better than 3.25% on that GIC. If you want to tie it up for 11 years, I can get you a little over 4%, but that's it."

Lousy3% On GIC's! What's She Going To Do?

Elizabeth felt betrayed. After all, she had been putting her savings in this bank for 30 years. And now that Frank was no longer here, she had to take care of everything herself.

It frightened her to have to deal with taxes, and paying bills, and trying to figure out things like refinancing her house. All that was tough enough, but then watching her monthly income sink like a brick in the water, was the last straw.

"He didn't even care that we had been such loyal customers for 30 years.", thought Elizabeth.

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"I asked him why I was still paying 19% on my credit card balances, when he was only willing to pay me a little better than 3% on my savings. It made me real sad to hear him say that there was nothing he could do."

As she stepped into her home, she was reminded of Frank everywhere she looked. "What would he do?" she said to no one in particular.

She knows that her deposits are insured by CDIC, a Crown Corporation. She reads the paper and knows that Canadian Banks are some of the safest in the world.

Elizabeth then opened the mail, and saw the statement from her bank RSP. She was afraid to open it, because the market had been on such a roller coaster ride that she knew her accounts were likely to be down. Again.

Her RSP Accounts Went Down... Again!

Sure enough, when she saw the balance of her RSP and mutual fund accounts, she got a sick feeling in the pit of her stomach. Elizabeth had to sit down and gather herself, staring at the unbelievable amount of money her accounts had lost, even worse then before!

She started to cry. She said out loud to no one in particular, *"I've lost over 30% of my retirement money, and I'm too old to make it up. Why did I put money in this ridiculously risky market? I should have known better."* Then Elizabeth felt a chill go through her as if she had been pierced with an ice pick in her soul. *"Oh my God. What would Frank have said if he knew I had put so much cash, the money he had worked so hard for... into a casino like the stock market? He would be so mad...."* Elizabeth's mind trailed off, as she cried some more. How badly she felt for herself, and for Frank.

The Answer Revealed Itself To Her!

When Elizabeth sat down to read the paper, she saw an article that got her curious, and she sent for a report that was commented on in the article.

The article said there are alternatives to GIC's and mutual funds that most people didn't know about. Alternatives that were low risk, but had the benefit of a potential higher return,and tax benefits!

Elizabeth called the toll-free, recorded message and requested her copy of this free report. She was hoping this was the answer she had been seeking.

A couple of days later, when she opened the mail, she was excited to see the free report had arrived. Elizabeth made herself a cup of tea, and sat down at their kitchen table to take in all the information in the report.

When she finished reading, she felt comfortable for the first time since Frank passed away. She had finally learned the little known alternative to GIC's her banker and broker had never told her.

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Health & Lifestyles

Take the time to smell the roses

By FRANCES GOODMAN PELLATT
Special to The CJN

MONTREAL — There is good stress – such as the excitement of planning your wedding – and bad stress – losing your job, illness, dealing with aging parents. Either way, we all respond differently. Some people handle stress by becoming anxious, getting angry or experiencing sleep deprivation; others thrive on it and complete their tasks more easily.

According to the literature, there are three levels of stress: immediate – resulting in the body reacting with increased heart rate and breathing and a nervous stomach; continued – experiencing fatigue, anxiety; and ongoing – causing insomnia and personality changes. Stress is an automatic reaction to the body's inability to produce the energy it needs to function properly. The ongoing strain can cause dysfunction and breakdown and the ability to deal with everyday events.

There are many ways to help reduce stress. At work, setting priorities can alleviate the anxiety of meeting deadlines. Exercise, eating well, getting enough sleep or seeking professional help are other ways of dealing with tension and pressures in our lives, whether positive or negative. Everyone needs some way of de-stressing, of calming down in order to cope with what's happening in their lives. Smokers may light a cigarette to give themselves the time to relax before responding or taking action. Some individuals may turn to drugs, while others may find yoga and meditation helpful. Many people believe in the calming effects of rubbing a lucky charm or an amulet, such as crystals or sea-hearts (large pod-like seeds found on the beaches of Jamaica).

One method often overlooked is to turn to nature – seeking energy and strength from flora and fauna.

Robert Internoscia, author of *À chacun son arbre*, a wilderness survival guide for the soul and the heart, talks about our chakras: "energy centres along the spine, beginning at the base of the spinal column and moving upward to the top of the skull."

The literature explains that the word "chakra" comes from the Sanskrit word meaning "wheel" – and that this wheel of energy is continuously revolving and rotating. There are seven chakras: the root chakra (tailbone/pubic area); the sacral chakra (the belly), the solar plexus chakra (the navel area), the heart chakra, the throat chakra, the third-eye chakra (pineal gland, located in the forehead that secretes melatonin), and the crown chakra (the head/the centre of spirituality).

Internoscia, like many spiritualists and clairvoyants, believes that if the chakras are not aligned (balanced), then our basic life force will be slowed down. We will feel listless, tired, depressed, and we may even be affected physically and become ill. His book talks about "the energy that emerges from trees, the messages they transmit to us and the daily support they offer." He expands on the notion that the energy that comes from certain trees can affect the different chakras. He further explains that each of these centres (chakras) can be energized by specific trees.

The late Edgar Cayce, father of the modern holistic health movement believed "all healing comes from within. Our bodies have the inherent ability and inclination to be healthy. Therapeutic interventions work best by assisting the processes of innate healing."

According to Cayce, certain trees had healing powers for the human body. For example, touching or hugging a maple tree can help relieve the pain of arthritis; the poplar tree will help you let go of problems and situations; the spruce tree can help relieve smokers' sore throats; while the pine tree – the most powerful in our northern forests, Cayce says – is a perfect choice to help develop self confidence and make long-range plans.

George Washington Carver, who devoted his life to understanding nature and the many uses for the simplest of plants, said, "I love to think of nature as an unlimited broadcasting station through which God speaks to us every hour, if we will only tune in."

Osho, a religious guru, urges us to "Look at the trees, at the birds, at the clouds, at the stars… and if you have eyes you will be able to see that the whole existence is joyful. Everything is simply happy. Trees are happy, for no reason; they are not going to become prime minister or president. They are not going to become rich and never will have any bank balance. Look at the flowers – for no reason. It is simply unbelievable how happy flowers are."

Even if you do not believe in any of the above, next time you are in the Laurentians or in one of the beautiful natural parks in and around the city, take the time "to smell the roses." Take a moment to appreciate nature, the wonderment of growth and rebirth of the flowers and trees.

On cjnews.com

The complexities of life and people can be staggering. However, there are symbols of hope all around us.

Please go to cjnews.com to read feature by Masada Siegel.

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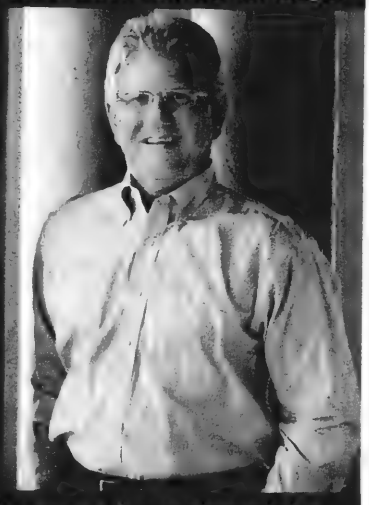
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On Campus

Students get insight into Mideast news coverage

By MICHELLE BITRAN
Special to The CJN

Speed trumps accuracy when it comes to reporting on the Middle East, said *Jerusalem Post* military correspondent and defence analyst Yaakov Katz at Ryerson University last week.

Katz's talk, titled "From the Frontlines: Covering the Arab-Israeli Conflict," was presented by Hillel and the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy.

"Media works under a tremendous handicap. That handicap is of time and space," Katz said, adding that with the Internet as the primary news source, reporting quickly is key. But it is not without its problems.

"Every [news organization] is trying to beat the other, and that comes at the expense of the content," he said.

Katz, 31, has worked at the *Jerusalem Post*, Israel's leading English-language daily newspaper, for about 10 years. He was the chief correspondent during the Gaza Strip disengagement in 2005, the Second Lebanon War in 2006 and Operation Cast Lead in 2009. Katz, who was born in Chicago and moved to Israel at 14, also worked as the Israel correspondent for *USA Today*.

Yaakov Katz

"When it comes to Israel, we have to remember that the news moves at an unprecedented pace," he said. "What happened half an hour ago is already old news."

Katz explained that with the pressure on foreign journalists to produce stories almost immediately upon arrival in Israel, they often report what may be a distorted first impression.

During his speech, the reporter brought forward the example of the Associated Press photo of a brutally beaten American Jew, Tuvia Grossman, pictured on the ground in front of an Israeli police officer wielding a club. The caption under the photo in the *New York Times* mistakenly identified Grossman as a Palestinian, depicting the policeman as his aggressor.

In fact, Grossman had been attacked by a mob of Palestinians and the police officer in the photo was trying to protect him. However, this correction only appeared in the paper days later, by which time Palestinian propagandists had already used the image of Grossman in order to showcase Israel's supposed cruelty toward the Palestinians.

Unfortunately, said Katz, once this damage is done, it's very difficult to undo. "Ten hours later, can you really change the story? The answer is no."

A similar issue emerged this past spring with the Gaza flotilla incident, said Katz. While major media outlets were reporting that the Israeli Defence Forces was attacking unarmed activists, the IDF took 5.5 hours to respond with footage proving their soldiers were acting in self-defence. By this time, it was too late to change public opinion, Katz explained.

He added that if Israel rushes to defend itself faster, and is then caught in a mistake, its credibility is destroyed. There is, however, a double standard, he said.

"Hamas can lie today, and we'll still report what they say tomorrow."

"In this theatre of operations," said Katz, referring to Hamas' military tactics of using civilian shields, thereby prompting sympathetic media coverage when the IDF fires back, "Israel actually has the underhand, not the upper hand."

When it comes to combating the issue of the international media and public perception, Katz has suggestions, but admits that there is "no clear solution."

He believes that Israel should be more open with the media, showing them ahead of time the difficult situations that their enemies create for them. Also, he added, it is the journalist's duty to thoroughly research the complexities of the Arab-Israeli conflict before reporting.

Putting effort into learning about the conflict separates good journalism from haphazard news reporting, he said.

"You have to sometimes take the extra step, the extra mile."

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Changes proposed for Western Wall plaza

JTA

JERUSALEM — A Jerusalem municipal planning committee has approved a plan to make sweeping changes to the Western Wall plaza.

The plan approved last week by the Jerusalem Planning and Building Committee would completely change the layout of the plaza, which was established in 1967. It was the first step in a long approvals process.

Under the plan, an underground plaza and tunnel would replace the main entrance at the Dung Gate. The plan also includes a visitors' centre and extra bathrooms, classrooms and an auditorium, as well as exhibition space for archeological artifacts found in the area.

Despite a plan for a movable mechitzah between the men's and women's sections, which would allow for the enlargement of the women's section as needed, women's groups have expressed concerns about the new configuration, believing they're being squeezed out.

The plan also is expected to anger the Muslim community, which has protested previous work on the plaza, such as the construction of a temporary bridge to the Mugrabi Gate entrance of the Temple Mount in 2007.

Eight million people visit the Western Wall each year, according to the municipality of Jerusalem, which expects the figure to double in the next 10 years. The Western Wall Heritage Foundation puts the number of annual visitors at 15 million, the *Jerusalem Post* reported.

A view of the Western Wall plaza, which is slated to be altered to accommodate more visitors. ***[Israel Sun photo]***

Hamas says IDF attempt to locate Schalit thwarted

© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — Hamas thwarted an Israeli attempt to locate abducted Israel Defence Forces soldier Gilad Schalit in the Gaza Strip, Channel 2 quoted Hamas officials as saying last week.

The Channel 2 report quoted Hamas officials as claiming they had uncovered an Israeli scheme to monitor calls of senior Hamas officials, hoping to place Schalit's location through bugged mobile phones provided by an Israeli agent three years ago.

A file photo of Gilad Schalit

According to the report, first published in the Egyptian newspaper *Al Ahram*, Hamas officials got rid of the wired phones as soon as they uncovered the scheme, but they were unable to arrest the agent involved, claiming he escaped across the border into Israel with assistance from Israeli forces.

Schalit was kidnapped by Palestinian militants during a cross-border raid on his army post near the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip in June 2006.

On Sunday, a senior Hamas official in the Gaza Strip denied that it had resumed prisoner swap negotiations with Israel for Schalit' release.

Egyptian sources told *Ha'aretz* last week that the talks, conducted by a new German mediator, are being held with Egyptian intelligence officers. No breakthrough was reported, but the efforts are ongoing, he said.

The Gaza-based Palestinian website Quds.net has reported significant progress in the talks, especially regarding the Palestinian prisoners whose release Hamas is demanding. According to the website, the talks have been undertaken in secret, under Egypt's aegis.

Israel is displaying more flexibility regarding the prisoners it's willing to release, Quds.net said. In the past, talks broke down over specific prisoners whom Israel was unwilling to free.

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Israel & the Jewish World

Holocaust museum juxtaposed with Rwandan genocide

By MOIRA SCHNEIDER
JTA

CAPE TOWN, South Africa – At a South African Holocaust museum that plans to open late next year in Johannesburg, the Holocaust will be featured beside a more local genocide: the Rwandan violence of 1994.

The inclusion of the African mass murder is not a mere gesture toward political correctness in what will be the third Holocaust museum in Africa. Rather, it will be an integral part of the planned Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre.

"The Rwandan section is a prominent part of the permanent exhibition, not an afterthought," said centre director Tali Nates. "It will be a shared museum."

The message the juxtaposition sends is stark: that the Holocaust, and remembrance of it, did not prevent another genocide from occurring. Even in Africa, it's not a message that naturally occurs to the Jews here, Nates said.

"I don't think that as South Africans and as Jewish South Africans we actually made the connection," Nates said. "You cannot look at the story without remembering that as a South African, you need to make the connection to Rwanda, to the continent of Africa and to the fact that genocide, sadly, did not stop after the Holocaust.

"So I could not, in 2010-11, establish a Holocaust exhibition within South Africa without looking at Africa," she said.

The museum will combine survivors' testimonies with documents, photographs, film, interactive exhibits, text and artifacts. The exhibition space will take visitors on a route starting with exhibits on racism in general to the South African experience during apartheid to survivor accounts. There will be a memorial courtyard, an exhibition on the Rwandan genocide and an area dedicated to issues facing South Africans today, such as xenophobia.

To include South African voices in the exhibition on the Holocaust, seven local Holocaust survivors and Pretoria resident Jaap van Proosdij, who saved dozens of Jews, have been interviewed.

For the Rwanda section, the centre is collaborating with museums and non-governmental organizations in Rwanda, Britain and the United States. The exhibit will tell the story not only of the killings, which took the lives of some 800,000 people, but little-known stories of those who rescued Tutsis from the violence.

The museum is receiving significant help from Proof, a U.S.-based organization that interviews rescuers in former hot spots such as Rwanda, Bosnia and Cambodia.

The Rwandan exhibit "will be a sizable exhibit with moving images, with colour, and we will use a lot of the voices of the victims, perpetrators, bystanders and rescuers," Nates said.

As the Holocaust exhibit covers the 12-year period from 1933 to 1945, compared to the less detailed 100 days of the Rwandan genocide, the Nazi exhibit will be larger.

"It's not a competition in size of story, it's not a competition in suffering," Nates said. "It is about the human connection between the 'Never again' that we said after the Holocaust and the 'Again and again' that sadly we experienced in the 20th century."

The Rwandan story resonates particularly in South Africa, which emerged from decades of apartheid just as the Rwandan genocide took place. Indeed, South Africa's experience with apartheid will form a substantial part of the introduction to the Rwandan exhibition.

South Africa is the only country in Africa where the teaching of the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide are part of the national curriculum. The centre is committed to assisting this education and has been doing so since its establishment in temporary premises in 2008.

Like the country's two other Holocaust centres, in Cape Town and Durban, the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre plans to bring in scholars and train educators.

"Our hope is that our education efforts will lead to growing awareness, intervention and prevention" of xenophobia within South Africa, Nates said.

Architect Lewis Levin is designing the museum. African stone, readily available in the Gauteng province, in which the museum will be located, will be incorporated with concrete and steel.

The visual effect will evoke not only wreckage and destruction but also trees in a forest. Levin says the imagery is deliberate.

"If you visit the death camps, the fragments of mangled steel that have remained and of forests surrounding the precincts are strong visual associations," he said.

The split-level, 9,000-square-foot centre will be made up of two buildings connected by a bridging structure and public areas. The first floor will house the permanent exhibition, while the second floor will include administration offices, a temporary exhibition space, a lecture hall and a resource centre.

At street level, the double-volume foyer will be dominated by a wall of clear glazing interspersed with illustrations drawn by children in the Theresienstadt ghetto during the Holocaust. There will be an area for reflection inside and outside in the form of the memorial garden to victims of the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide.

In the displays, the museum will include explanations in South Africa's indigenous languages, such as Zulu and Xhosa, in addition to Hebrew and English. At the entrance will be a memorial light with "*Z'chor*," the Hebrew word for "remember," alongside words for remembrance in other African languages, including Kinyarwanda, the language spoken in Rwanda.

Hezbollah militants training in Syria

By AVI SCHARF
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — The Syrian army has a Scud missile base near Damascus, according to recent satellite photos. The photos also suggest that Hezbollah activists are being trained in the Scuds' use at the base.

Reports that Syria may have given Hezbollah Scuds ratcheted up tensions between Jerusalem and Damascus about six months ago, according to foreign media.

The photos, taken on March 22, can be seen by any web surfer on Google Earth. They show extensive construction at several military bases throughout Syria, including at one of the country's three largest missile bases, located 25 kilometres northeast of Damascus, near the city of Adra.

The base is in a deep valley surrounded by 400-metre-high mountains. Concrete tunnels lead from the base into the mountains, where the Scuds are apparently stored.

The photos show five missiles at the Adra base. Three are on trucks in a parking lot. Two others are in a training area where 20 to 25 people can be made out along with about 20 vehicles. One of the two missiles appears to be mounted on a mobile launcher, and another is on the ground.

In April, the Kuwaiti newspaper *Al Rai* reported that Syrian President Bashar Assad was arming Hezbollah with Scuds. The paper did not mention the type of Scud, but the Scud C has a range of approximately 600 kilometres.

About a month later, Amos Harel reported in *Ha'aretz* that Damascus had given Hezbollah highly accurate and lethal M-600 rockets with a range of 300 kilometres.

In late May, the Sunday *Times* of London reported that shipments of weapons from the Adra base were going to Hezbollah, and that according to anonymous security sources, Iran was sending missiles and other weapons to that base via the nearby Damascus airport. It also said Hezbollah had been given a section of the base for barracks, warehouses and a fleet of trucks to transport weapons to the Lebanese border, 40 kilometres away.

Earlier that month, Brig.-Gen. Yossi Baidatz, the head of research for Military Intelligence, told the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee, "The long-range missiles Syria recently gave to Hezbollah are just the tip of the iceberg. Hezbollah already has thousands of rockets of all kinds and all ranges."

Due to the rising tensions at the time, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Saudi King Abdullah invited Assad to an urgent summit at Sharm al-Sheikh. Assad, however, cancelled at the last minute. A senior analyst told *Ha'aretz* at the time that while Assad was presenting himself to Europe as a peace-seeker, he continued to maintain his strategic alliance with Iran and Hezbollah.

Israel Briefs

Israel to buy stealth airplanes

Israel signed an agreement to buy 20 F-35 stealth fighter jets from the United States. The contract, valued at about $2.75 billion, was signed at a ceremony in New York. "The signing of this defence contract is an event of great strategic and historic significance," Michael Oren, Israel's ambassador to the United States, said in a statement after the signing. "The most advanced fighter jet in the world today, the F-35 will enhance Israel's ability to defend itself, by itself, against any threat or combination of threats, from anywhere within the Middle East."

Cabinet to vote on loyalty oath

The cabinet will take up a loyalty oath requiring new citizens to swear allegiance to "the State of Israel – a Jewish and democratic state." Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agreed to attach a statement of allegiance to Israel's Citizenship Law that would require the pledge. "Israel is the national state of the Jewish people," Netanyahu said in a statement. "This is a basic principle that guides the government in its policies, foreign and domestic. It is a cornerstone of Israeli legislation and is the expressed terminology of the Jewish, democratic state. This principle will appear in the declaration of loyalty for anyone who requests to become a citizen." If the pledge passes cabinet, as expected, it will advance to the Knesset's legislative committee and finally to the full Knesset.

Rocket fire and IAF retaliation

Israel's air force struck two Gaza targets in response to rocket fire on Israel, the Israeli army said. The overnight attack on Oct. 7 was in response to two rockets fired on southern Israel the previous day. No one was injured by the rocket fire. One of the targets hit by the air force was a Hamas terror training camp, according to reports citing Israeli and Hamas sources. Four Palestinians were injured, according to Hamas sources. More than 160 rockets and mortars have been fired at Israel from Gaza since the beginning of 2010, according to a statement the Israel Defence Forces.

With files from JTA

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Anti-Jewish measure changing views of Vichy head

By DEVORAH LAUTER
JTA

PARIS — Nearly 70 years to the day since the passage of a pivotal anti-Semitic law in Vichy-occupied France, new evidence about who drafted the law is transforming some historians' views of France's wartime head of state, Philippe Petain.

Until now the Oct. 3, 1940 law – dubbed the Statute of Jews and legislating anti-Jewish discrimination that went above and beyond the demands of France's Nazi occupiers – was believed widely to have been the brainchild of at least two French ministers and their collaborators.

But the discovery of an early draft of the law, donated anonymously to the Paris Holocaust Memorial, has shed some new light on the matter. The draft is a marked-up, undated five-page document with modifications to the law scribbled in red and black ink that call for more stringent measures against Jews than contained in the original, typed draft.

Historians do not contest the authenticity of the document, but experts disagree on who authored the edits.

Did Petain himself handwrite the corrections, providing unprecedented confirmation and new clues about the Vichy leader's personal anti-Semitic zeal? Or did technocrats simply jot down demands from one or several other leaders bent on toughening the text during a cabinet meeting devoted to the law two days before its enactment?

Serge Klarsfeld, a lawyer who brought former Nazis and collaborators to trial, as well as the president of an association for children of deported French Jews, maintains that the edits are in the hand of Petain.

Klarsfeld calls the finding a "historic" confirmation that Petain, then 84, was not a senile puppet of Nazi Germany, as some have argued, but an active promoter of Nazi ideology and anti-Semitism.

"The general defence of Petain makes him out as an aging man, dominated by his entourage, without possessing all his mental capacity," Klarsfeld told JTA. "Now we see very well that it was his desire to make these remarks."

Petain "aligns himself with Nazi, racial ideology because he esteems it's in the interest of France," Klarsfeld said. "And he himself is ultimately anti-Semitic."

Klarsfeld was charged with determining the authenticity of the document for the Paris Holocaust Memorial after its anonymous donation. He said each of the handwritten letters on the document were compared to other writings by Petain, and that handwriting experts would continue to examine the document.

Yet days after the announced discovery, other historians in France remain divided over the document's origins and significance.

"Even if it was the hand of Petain, we don't have information on the conditions in which he made these corrections to the statute," said Annette Wieviorka, a leading French historian on the era. "We don't know if he was alone, or if it's his own work."

Wieviorka said younger historians debating "the degree of the German influence on this statute" question whether Nazis pressured French leaders during the creation of the law, contradicting established views that Vichy leaders acted alone in formulating the anti-Jewish measure.

The handwritten edits on the newly discovered document expanded the category of jobs forbidden to Jews, ensuring that Jews no longer could be elected to public office or work in public education. The original draft only barred them from certain top level administrative and educational posts.

The changes also cross out with a series of quick strokes a loophole that would have exempted from the law "descendants of Jews born French or naturalized before 1860."

In the past, some have argued that Petain occasionally and passively tried to protect native-born French Jews. Mounting evidence, however, has changed the historical view of Petain.

Testimony from a cabinet minister from the period suggested that Petain played a particularly severe role in the making of the Statute of Jews, pushing in particular for Jews to be prevented from teaching in public schools.

He believed in "a traditional form of anti-Semitism in the sense that for him, the Jews are not really French," said Laurent Joly, associated with France's National Scientific Research Center and a French historian on the Vichy era.

Joly said it's not clear to him whether the edits on the document actually are in Petain's hand. The detailed corrections seem too focused on minutiae to have come from the nation's leader, Joly said, asserting that Petain likely would only have given "general directions."

Yet Joly said he believes that Petain helped make the law more anti-Jewish.

"The reality here seems to me that instructions by Petain were given and were written by a technocrat," he said, adding that "It doesn't matter whether it is his handwriting or not, we can see his state of mind."

In any case, Joly said, few French today defend Petain.

"The thesis of Petain as a scapegoat is out of style," he said. "Today the French feel that Petain was an evil for France."

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Economist finds silver lining in tough times

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It's hard to find a silver lining in a situation as grim as the current lackluster recovery, but economist Benjamin Tal may have found one for both the United States and Israel.

Unlike previous economic recoveries, which were fuelled largely by consumer spending, the current modest uptick in the United States is being led by exports and the manufacturing sector, which is booming.

That's good news for manufacturers, who are in the middle of "something close to a renaissance," said Tal, deputy chief economist at CIBC World Markets. Thanks to capital intensive investments in knowledge-based industries, they are becoming leaner and more able to compete in the world economy.

That's the silver lining. The bad news is that workers who once earned a living making things won't be needed as much in the new, machine-intensive environment. That means Americans can look forward to high unemployment as the new normal in their economic landscape.

In a wide-ranging interview in his downtown Toronto office, Tal noted that Israel is well positioned to take advantage of this emerging economic reality. That's the other silver lining.

"I see growing supply chain opportunities for Israel with U.S. high-tech companies," he said.

Israel, which is already cultivating markets in China and India, would do well to ride the Americans' coattails as it increases its export exposure around the world.

Israel's economy is based to a large extent on high-tech, IT, medical innovation and cutting-edge developments in green technology. Because of of Israel's free trade agreement with the United States, the extensive presence of major U.S. corporations in Israel and its reputation for advanced technology products, "Israel will be a big winner" as the United States' manufacturing sector makes inroads into emerging markets, he said.

Benjamin Tal

Israel's economy has performed relatively well in recent years, handily outstripping North American economies. (The Bank of Israel projects four per cent growth in 2010 and 3.8 per cent in 2011. CIBC predicts Canada's GDP will rise by only three per cent in 2010 and 1.9 per cent in 2011.)

But for every silver lining there seems to be a dark cloud: for Israel, economic growth is largely confined to three or four large cities, with the rest of the country not doing so well. Towns like "Dimona, Yerucham and Sderot are not sharing in that growth," Tal said.

Unlike Canada, Israel can't rely on natural resource extraction to produce wealth and jobs. Outside Israel's main cities, "there is no significant employer," he said.

The United States, meanwhile, has experienced a recovery unlike any other in the past 40 years, Tal continued. Coming out of a recession, rapid growth is generally followed by a levelling off, but there's been little growth in the current recovery, which has depended on low interest rates and unprecedented levels of government stimulus.

"The private sector is not spending." Banks are not lending, and consumers, whose buying accounts for 70 per cent of GDP, are not spending, he noted.

On the contrary, U.S. consumers are hunkering down and "deleveraging" – reducing the amount of debt they are carrying. The current savings rate stands at six per cent, one per cent higher than the long-term average. People are worried about their jobs and whether they can afford to borrow, Tal said.

Avery Shenfeld, chief economist at CIBC World Markets, said that "it's a recovery, but one that may be disappointing for the next year and a half."

Housing starts in the United States have paused and prices are cooling.

The U.S. recovery has seen government employment and infrastructure construction lead the way, but unemployment is high and people are unwilling to take on too much debt, even though interest rates are low. Governments, he said, "need to get deficits under control, but not so abruptly as to slow the recovery. We need a pause in interest rate hikes for a while."

Both Shenfeld and Tal forecast that the United States will retain at least some of the income, dividend and capital gain tax cuts implemented under President George Bush that are set to expire in January.

Assuming the Republicans take control of the Congress in the upcoming mid-term elections, Shenfeld expects "wheeling and dealing" on tax policy.

"We don't believe American legislators will pursue a suicidal policy by letting all taxes go up," he said.

Turning to Canada, Tal said we have weathered the downturn better than the United States, with consumer confidence north of the border stronger than in the south. As a result, Canadians are more likely to borrow at current low rates and that kind of spending adds to economic growth.

Nevertheless, Tal entered another note of caution: "The housing market has been overshooting," with prices above their fair market value (based on comparable rents, incomes and demographic considerations).

"The question is whether that leads to a crash."

Tal answered his own question by suggestion few mortgage loans in Canada were of the sub-prime variety that led to the collapse of the U.S. housing market. (He predicted prices there will continue to fall.)

With only 4.7 per cent of Canadian mortgages considered sub-prime compared to 33 per cent in the United States, and with interest rates likely remaining low for a year or two, he saw no danger of a housing collapse.

Still, he forecast a historically "slow" housing market with prices falling, "reflecting the fact the economy is slowing" and because many potential buyers leapt into the market earlier than they might have to avoid the HST.

The Bank of Canada will have to be cautious when hiking rates, he warned. The debt-to-income ratio has been rising for the last eight years and stands at 146 per cent.

"That means when interest rates go up, the surprise will be how little it will take to slow down the consumer. The Bank of Canada has to be careful not to raise rates now, and be careful in the future."

Minrav real estate looking to bring Wal-Mart to Israel

By RAZ SMOLSKY
& ADI DOVRAT-MESERITZ
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Real estate company Minrav Holdings is conducting initial talks with Wal-Mart as part of an effort to bring the American retail giant to Israel.

Minrav plans to build stores that would meet Wal-Mart's needs and then lease or sell them outright to the company. It's not seeking a franchise.

Minrav, which is controlled by Abraham Kuznitsky, approached Wal-Mart several months ago about entering the Israeli market. The Israeli firm has been seeking out appropriate sites to build a branch of the discount department store and is considering both land it already owns and land owned by other parties.

Wal-Mart representatives have not yet visited Israel to evaluate the offer.

Branches of the American retail chain can reach as large as 20,000 square metres in size.

Minrav declined to comment, while Wal-Mart stated, "We haven't published any announcements, and we don't respond to rumours."

In 2010, Forbes Global 2000, which ranks the world's 2,000 largest companies, named Wal-Mart the world's biggest public corporation by revenue. Founded by Sam Walton in 1962, Wal-Mart is the largest private employer in the United States. It also operates in Mexico, the United Kingdom, Argentina, Brazil and Canada. Wal-Mart pulled out of Germany and South Korea when ventures there were unsuccessful.

Minrav Holdings is involved in initiating, engineering and building real estate, infrastructure and industrial projects both in Israel and abroad. In recent years, the Minrav Group has been responsible for some of Israel's largest projects, including the new terminal at Ben-Gurion International Airport, the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, student dormitories at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the cultural hall in Rishon Lezion.

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Actress hooked on theatre and clowning

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

Amy Lee still remembers the first words she ever said on stage.

"I was seven for my first play and that was *Are You My Mother*. I played the cat, and I only had one line, which was 'meow.'"

But that's all it took.

Lee, who will be starring in the Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People's production of *The Invisible Girl*, has been hooked on theatre since she was around four years old.

"My brother was in acting… his class performed, I think it was something from *Charlie Brown*, and I decided that's what I wanted to do," she said.

Since her first performance, Lee, who is turning 27, has been in at least one play a year, every year. As a child, she never quite understood why she loved to be on stage.

"It was more of an instinctual thing. I don't know that I knew what it was I loved about it, but I knew I loved it," she said. "As I got older and went to theatre school, I analyzed more why I liked to do it with my adult brain. I love to tell stories, and I love for people to come to the theatre and laugh or cry or think in a way they've never thought before."

In Lee's Manitoba high school, it wasn't common for students to go into the arts.

"Not a lot of people, in my grade, at least, went into the arts. I took my sciences up until Grade 12 to keep my options open in case I decided I wanted to go to med school," Lee said.

But theatre eventually won out.

"I knew that theatre was what I loved to do and that I'd done it forever, but I thought, 'Can I really do this? Can I really make this my living? It's always been my passion, but can it be my job as well?'" she said.

"And then I decided that's what I wanted to do, that I wanted to make that happen."

This is what brought Lee to York University, where she pursued a bachelor's degree in theatre and psychology.

While in school, Lee and her friend Heather Marie Annis were approached by Byron Laviolette, a fellow student, to perform in a short skit about clowns in Playground, the university's student-run fringe festival. The play, a 10-minute sketch called *Reflections* about Morro and Jasp, two clowns, eventually turned into the creation of Up Your Nose And In Your Toes Productions in 2005, which produces various Morro and Jasp plays.

Amy Lee has the lead role in *The Invisible Girl*, at the Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People from Oct. 17 to 23.

"We hired a man named Pete Jarvis to do workshops with us in the style of Pachinko clown, so we did that for *Reflections*. Then we just continued to study with Pete and continued to create shows."

The production company's shows have been featured in the Toronto Fringe Festival, including *Morro and Jasp do puberty* and *Morro and Jasp go GREEN*, which follow the adventures of two sister clowns played by Annis (Morro) and Lee, who plays Jasp.

"I was excited to try something new," Lee said about clowning. "I find my clown work really influences everything else I do now… a lot of [clowning] is being really present, really truthful and just acknowledging what's happening in the moment with the audience."

Apart from her clowning, Lee also continues to perform in plays like the *Invisible Girl*, which opens on Oct. 17.

The play follows 10-year-old Ali, played by Lee, who used to be part of a popular clique in her Grade 5 class. When she makes a social mistake, her friends start to ignore her, which forces the character to learn the importance of real friendship.

For Lee, who prepared for the role by reading teen magazines and listening to Justin Bieber music, it wasn't hard to connect to her character.

"The character I play, Ali, she's on a journey. It takes her the whole play to figure out what true friendship is and what respect is. She makes mistakes and she learns from those mistakes, so it's her story that she's sharing. It's really on a kid's level, but it's also on a human level," Lee said.

Invisible Girl *will be running from Oct. 17 to 23. Tickets are $10 to $20. Call 416-862-2222 or visit lktyp.ca*

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

GUERNICA LAUNCH INCLUDES WORKS BY POETS KAREN SHENFELD AND BAILA ELLENBOGEN

Guernica Editions is hosting an afternoon of readings, live music and mingling as the publisher launches six new books of poetry and literary essays. They include *Footsteps on the Ceiling*, by poet **Baila Ellenbogen**, and *My Father's Hands Spoke in Yiddish*, by poet **Karen Shenfeld**, who "flies home from far-flung lands to explore the re-imagined terrain of Bathurst Manor, the Toronto suburb in which she was raised." Other authors are **Annika Hannan**, **M. Travis Lane**, **Robert G. May** and **Cristina Perissinotto**. Bar Italia, 582 College St. Sunday, Oct. 17, 2 to 4 p.m.

* * *

Chai Tea & A Movie: Avi Nesher's popular film *The Matchmaker* focuses on a teenage boy's navigation of love and sexuality during a time of profound cultural change in Israel in the summer of 1968. The Toronto Jewish Film Festival is screening the subtitled Hebrew film as its first Chai Tea & A Movie feature of the season. $15. Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Centre Cinemas, Sunday, Oct. 17, tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. TJFF is also screening the Slovakian film *Broken Promise* at SilverCity Richmond Hill on Nov. 21. www.tjff.com

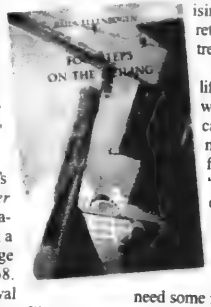
* * *

Internet Fiction Site: Jewishfiction.net launched its first issue of fictional delights on Sept. 29, with works by major Jewish writers opening on a page beside their various photographs. Contributors include **Elie Wiesel**, **Chava Rosenfarb**, **Nava Semel**, **Steve Stern**, **Thane Rosenbaum** and **Nora Gold**, the Toronto-based fiction writer and former professor who is editor of the web-based portal. The initiative, Gold writes, was "born of love for Jewish literature and a desire to bring readers and writers of Jewish fiction closer together." www.jewishfiction.net

* * *

Nikki Yanofsky

I Move Forward: Numerous Toronto dancers, choreographers, musicians and singers perform in *I Move Forward*, an evening inspired by **Marc Kemelman**, a Toronto-born dancer and choreographer forced to set aside a promising career in New York to return to Toronto for cancer treatment.



"Dance has always been a life source for me. Even now when I can't dance physically, I'm still creating in my head, and it makes me feel alive," Kimelman said. "I've learned through this experience that nobody is immune to life, so I brought my community together to support other artists, like me, who may need some inspiration, hope or help to move forward."

All proceeds from ticket sales, donations and sponsorship go to The Actors' Fund of Canada to benefit artists struggling with cancer. $70, $50, $25. St. Lawrence Centre, Jane Mallett Stage. Oct. 25, 8 p.m. 416-366-7723, www.imoveforward.ca

* * *

Names in the News: Acclaimed 16-year-old jazz singer **Nikki Yanofsky** of Montreal is the inaugural recipient of the Allan Slaight Award, a new $10,000 annual prize celebrating promising young Canadians. Yanofsky debuted at jazz festivals as a "preteen prodigy" and has been described as "a pint-sized incarnation of **Ella Fitzgerald**." She has since performed at major venues and jazz festivals in Toronto, New York and many other cities.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Planet Music – World Music for the Armchair Traveller is a series of six lectures presented by **Barry Livingston**. Musicians and non-musicians welcome. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, six Thursdays starting Oct. 14. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** discusses the cinema of Israel and shows film clips in a series of "Media Mondays," beginning with the lecture "Social Portraits of Israeli Society," Oct. 18, 7 to 9 p.m. Films discussed at this lecture include *Sallah*, *Broken Wings* and *James' Journey to Jerusalem*. $12. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Volume II of *Living Legacies: A Collection of Writing by Contemporary Canadian Jewish Women* features pieces by **Laya Crust**, **Ellen S. Jaffe**, **Carol Katz**, **Judy Librach**, **Anne Mandlsohn**, **Honey Novick**, **Lindi Rivers** and many others. The book is being launched at Israel's Judaica, 870 Eglinton Ave. W. with editor **Liz Pearl**, and the authors will attend. Thursday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m. Kosher refreshments, free admission. 416-256-1010.

* * *

At the Galleries

• Photographer **Neil Dankoff**'s majestic panoramic photographs of Jerusalem capture the viewer's sense of awe inspired by the landscape. *Shel Zahav*, an exhibition of Dankoff's work, is on view at Lonsdale Gallery, 410 Spadina Rd. until Nov. 7.

• An exhibition heralded by the *Guardian* as "the most important exhibition of **[Henry] Moore**'s work for a generation" is coming to the Art Gallery of Ontario. *The Shape of Anxiety: Henry Moore in the 1930s* reveals the darker side to Moore's work and is a dramatic reconsideration of the revered artist. On view from Oct. 23 to Feb. 6, 2011 in the AGO's Henry Moore Sculpture Centre.

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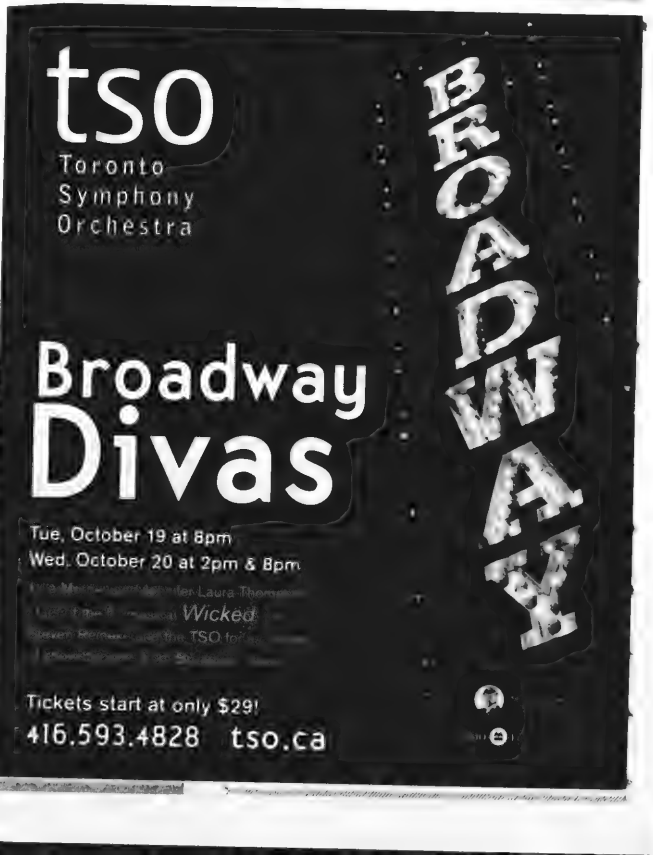

Israeli bassist's album a blend of several styles

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Seasoned Israeli jazz bassist Avishai Cohen is coming to Toronto to promote his latest album, *Aurora* (2010 EMI/Blue Note).

A veteran of the New York jazz scene, where he lived for many years, Cohen's talent caught the eye and ear of legendary jazz pianist Chick Corea, who recruited the bassist in 1996 to be part of his sextet, Origin.

Aurora is Cohen's 11th solo album, and it's infused with a brilliant combination of Middle Eastern, jazz and classical musical styles.

According to his website, this CD, recorded in Tel Aviv, "draws its source in the earth of [Cohen's] home country, at the crossroads of many cultures. Arab-Andalusian and Hebraic, it tells the story of Bedouins of the desert and speaks of life, love, youth and freedom."

Cohen, 40, grew up with musical parents. His mother would sing Ladino songs as she worked, while his father and grandfather would chant prayers and songs on Shabbat and holidays.

The new album, released in April, showcases Cohen's singing voice for the first time. He said he decided to sing on this album to experiment.

"It's very good practice for any [instrumentalist] to learn to sing. It's a beautiful practice in humility, an ongoing craft," Cohen told the All About Jazz website in a recent article.

One of the more stirring songs on the album is Cohen's re-imagining of Chaim Nachman Bialik's popular poem and folk-song *El Hatzipor*.

Cohen makes the poem his own by giving it a plaintive jazz arrangement on the piano and singing it with feeling.

His treatment of the traditional Ladino folk song *Morenika*, the album's opening number, is also a treat.

After an extended instrumental introduction, Cohen launches headlong into song, showcasing his Ladino musical influences and giving new expression to the song.

Other notable tracks on the album include *Leolam*, a jaunty piece featuring terrific oud-playing by Cohen's bandmate, Amos Hoffman; *Still*, a haunting piece with Cohen singing in *niggun*-like fashion and playing bow on his double-bass; and *Noches Noches/La Luz*, the album's final, entrancing track.

Cohen is scheduled to perform at the Koffler Centre of the Arts' Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St. W, on Oct. 19.

For ticket information, call 1-888-222-6608.

Avishai Cohen

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Sponsored by Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation (Synagogue), CJPAC-Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee, and the League for Human Rights of B'Nai Brith Canada

Author's stories blend Jewish history and fiction

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

Miriam Walfish has learned to see the world through a child's eyes.

But after working as a school librarian and writing 10 children's books, seven of which have been published, it's kind of hard not to.

Walfish's stories, which are aimed for children and young adults, blend Jewish history and fiction into a blur of fiery battles, lost orphans, starlit journeys and steam-powered ships.

"I have an academic background," said Walfish, who has a MA in Jewish history from McGill University and a master's of library science from the University of Toronto .

"I felt I was responding to a need. There's not a lot out there for historical fiction that deals with Jewish history for kids."

Walfish first started writing while working as a school librarian.

"Kids really didn't seem to know much about Jewish history," she said.

So she decided to change that. And she started in Victorian England.

The first book she wrote, which wasn't the first that was published, followed Penina, a privileged Sephardi Jew living in England in 1842. In the book, called *Penina's Plan*, which is aimed at kids aged seven to 11, Penina runs into eastern European immigrants living very different lives than her.

"I wanted to give readers a sense of what Jewish life was like in London. I wanted them to see the flip side of [Penina's lifestyle]," said Walfish. "Penina meets this young eastern European immigrant and is completely shocked. She meets this kid who only speaks Yiddish."

Miriam Walfish

After writing her first book, Walfish decided to create a series, called Jewish Girls Around the World, which follows the adventures of Jewish girls in different time periods.

Tova Bloom Solves the Riddle, the fourth book in the series, is set during the American Revolution, a time period that has always interested Walfish.

"I really wanted to do the American Revolution. I never learned about it in school," she said.

But the author didn't think she would be writing about the Holocaust. Until one of her kids asked her about stars.

"I didn't intend to write a Holocaust book. That's one area that has been explored a lot, but it sort of evolved," she said.

"One of my kids came home from school and asked me if stars died."

Walfish asked around and found out that, while they did die, their image remained in the sky for thousands of years.

"It reminded me of what happened when a parent died, the images of the parent remains with the kid," she said.

"I started to think about the imagery of stars in Jewish history. I was thinking about how to write a book and get that message to kids. The historical thing that came to mind was the Holocaust."

The result of this was *The Stars Will Guide You*, a book set in Rome during World War II. The novel, which is aimed at young adults, follows Rica and Lelio Levi on their quest to find their parents in war-torn Italy and Germany.

Walfish, whose books were published by Judaica Press, puts a lot of effort into shaping her characters.

"A lot of it is taken from things I know, things from my own kids," she said of her four children, aged 10 to 20. "It's just imagination and remembering to look at the world as a kid."

Walfish is currently working on a third girl in her Jewish Girls series, and may get started on a series for boys.

"I think people in the business, they understand that there's a need here," she said.

"I always say the best feedback is when a parent says, 'My kid hates to read but [he or she] read one of your books and loved it.' That's really gratifying."

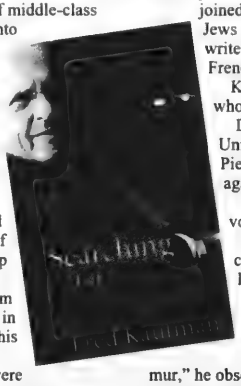
A life that's rich in achievement

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Fred Kaufman, a refugee from Nazi-occupied Austria, has had a distinguished career as a newspaper reporter, lawyer and judge.

Now, in his engaging memoirs, *Searching for Justice* (Key Porter), he recounts a life rigorous in purpose and rich in achievement.

Born in Vienna in 1924, he was the son of middle-class Jews whose very existence was called into question by Germany's annexation of Austria in 1938.



Sensing that things would never be the same again, they placed him in the Kindertransport program, which spirited away Jewish children from greater Germany.

Six weeks before the outbreak of World War II, Kaufman left Vienna, bound for a farm in Britain.

"I learned to milk cows, both with and without machines, and how to take care of cattle," he writes. "I even learned how to help a cow deliver a calf."

The Fells, his foster parents, treated him kindly. But Kaufman soon found himself in Sherbrooke, Que., the ward of a rabbi and his wife.

To Kaufman's jubilation, his parents were able to leave Austria via France, Spain and Portugal.

In 1946, he graduated from Bishop's University, majoring in math and physics. Having co-founded and edited the campus newspaper, he landed a job on the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, where he had worked the previous summer.

After three months, the *Montreal Star* came calling, having been impressed by a freelance article Kaufman had submitted.

As a cub reporter, he had to deal with four daily deadlines. In his eight years on staff, he covered a British royal visit, annual meetings, funerals, a dog and horse show, protest rallies and, occasionally, the legal beat.

"I loved being a reporter," he recalls. "It was wonderful training for my later careers."

While studying law, Kaufman worked summers and weekends on the *Montreal Star* and as a stringer for *Time* and *Life* magazines.

Finishing the bar admission exam in 1955, Kaufman joined a Jewish law firm. "The truth was that Jews were not wanted by the big firms," he writes in a reference to snotty English and French law offices.

Kaufman, in his first trial, defended a man who had been accused of dangerous driving.

During his early years as a lawyer, he met a Université de Montréal law professor named Pierre Elliott Trudeau whom he would meet again under very different circumstances.

In 18 years of practice, Kaufman was involved in 49 homicide cases.

Donna, his wife, as well as their two children, Leslie and David, also became lawyers.

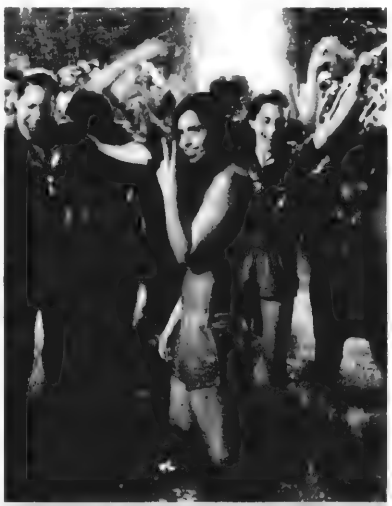
Trudeau, as Canada's prime minister, appointed Kaufman to the Court of Appeal. "I replaced a French-Canadian judge, and there was no discernible murmur," he observes.

Kaufman held the position for 18 years, hearing close to 3,000 appeals and 5,000 motions and writing more than 1,000 judgments.

Upon the invitation of a former law partner, he returned to private practice.

He ends *Searching for Justice* on a high note, saying he has been blessed by a "wonderful" family.

Kaufman, who easily could have been a victim of the Holocaust, has indeed come a long way.



TORONTO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL PRESENTS

THE MATCHMAKER

Direct from The Toronto International Film Festival comes celebrated Israeli filmmaker Avi Nesher's crowd-pleasing hit, The Matchmaker. Set in Israel during the summer of 1968, the film chronicles a teenaged boy's navigation of love and sexuality during a time of profound cultural change. Young Arik, a lover of detective novels, takes a job working for Yankele Bride, a mysterious Holocaust survivor and matchmaker. Under the guidance of his employer, Arik eventually gets to play the role of detective himself in this coming-of-age tale filled with unforgettable characters.

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Author explores the cougar lifestyle in new book

By RITA POLIAKOV
Staff Reporter

Myna Wallin isn't who I thought she would be.

After reading her new novel, *Confessions of a Reluctant Cougar*, I expected to meet the woman staring at me from the back cover. The one in a low-cut shirt, exaggerated make-up, a tight leopard print skirt and, to complete the look, cleavage. Lots of cleavage.

But that's not really who she is.

Wallin, an editor and poet, is the author of a book that covers everything from threesomes and orgasms to fetishes and sex toys. But more importantly, it's a story of a Jewish cougar – a woman who dates younger men.

So when I was asked to interview her, I expected the main character, Olivia, to be based, at least loosely, on the author. And she sort of is.

"I'm a cougar, as I say in my bio," says Wallin, who sipped her coffee in regular clothing. No cleavage. No leopard prints.

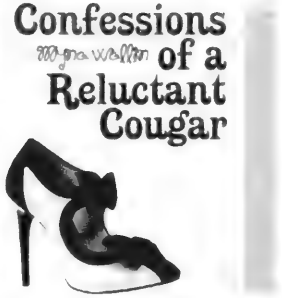
"I have dated many younger men in my life. [The book] is a composition of men I'd known. I took the neurosis of one guy and another guy and made it into the most neurotic [characters]."

This is how she created her main male character, William, a hypochondriac who refuses to have sex more than a few times a week.

The book, it seems, isn't quite autobiographical. But it isn't completely fictional, either.

If anything, Olivia is Wallin's alter ego, an extreme version of who she is.

Myna Wallin is the author of *Confessions of a Reluctant Cougar*.



"When I'm reading from this book, I put on my Olivia face. It's kind of like acting. This particular character is a persona I wear for this book," she said. "When I read from it, I dress up like her. There's this sort of outgoing and provocative nature I take on. But as my best friend says, you're not that person."

The only thing that really reminds me of Olivia is Wallin's refusal to reveal her age.

"I'm over 45," she said reluctantly. In the book, Olivia would never give away her age.

"She doesn't want to grow up," Wallin said.

Like her character, Wallin started off as an actor, performing in local plays and improv shows. Eventually, she ended up writing a play of her own, which ran in Toronto's Fringe Festival in the 1990s. She also enrolled in the University of Toronto's master's of English program. She got her first book, a collection of poetry called *A Thousand Profane Pieces*, published by Tightrope Books in 2006.

Apart from poetry, Wallin started writing short stories, which eventually turned into *Confessions of a Reluctant Cougar*.

"There are writers who do it all. I know a lot of writers who are just writing poetry. There is a bit of a divide," said Wallin about her switch to prose. "I guess I wanted to give myself a challenge."

And *Confessions of a Reluctant Cougar*, which was published by Tightrope Books this summer, was certainly a challenge, especially when deciding where to draw the line between sexy and raunchy.

"If there's too much sex, it goes over the line to pornographic. It's just something you sense. You don't want to be too coy, especially, with a book like this," she said.

And she isn't. In the book Olivia has her fair share of crazy nights, which include a three-way in a back alley during an arts show and sex with a foot fetishist.

But the book is more than just a sexual timeline. It's also got a touch of feminism to it.

"It's not a common thing to have a character over 50 who's single," she said.

"Olivia is just free. She's proud of her sexuality. Sometimes I'm a bit graphic, but sometimes I have to go there."

Wallin's book also explores the role of religion in dating. Olivia, who's Jewish, has a history of dating Christian boys, something Wallin equates to a Jew eating bacon. If you're told you can't have something, you want it more.

"[Olivia] defines herself by what she isn't. She knows she's not Christian, and yet she tries to be liberal-minded. I think she's secular. It's very much like me," Wallin said.

"I identify as a Jew. It's my upbringing, my culture. It's in every fibre of my genes, and yet it's not religious. It's not observant."

For Wallin, the book's title has significance. Olivia, it seems, isn't just a cougar, she's a reluctant one.

"For me, the reluctance is in the tension between what she acts out and what she thinks she might want," Wallin said.

"In these serial cougar relationships, there's a high probability it's not going to work out. She wants to have fun, to feel young, to feel free and to do what men do."

But there's a flip side to the character.

"In the back of her mind, she knows she wants to settle down."

For more information, visit www.mynawallin.com.

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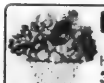

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Maccabi Toronto ends opening season with 'Soccerbration'

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Maccabi Toronto is celebrating its first season of developmental soccer programs for youngsters with a "Soccerbration" from 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 24, at the Toronto Heschel School.

The event will include a mini-tournament with prizes, the awarding of trophies and other fun soccer activities, said Maccabi Toronto spokesperson Martin Scott.

Since its kick-off in April, about 144 kids aged five to 12 have gone through the program, which focuses on skill development, conditioning, discipline and game action, he said.

A fun league that offers a Jewish environment for kids – they play at Heschel's field and are trained by members of the Toronto Maccabi soccer club – the "Academy" will also groom players for the JCC Maccabi Games and ultimately for the Maccabiah Games, held every four years in Israel, Scott said.

Although the relationship with the other Maccabi organizations has not yet been formalized, "I've sent more players to Israel since 1980 than any other system," Scott said.

Maccabi Toronto's senior club plays as the Hearts Azzuri in the premier division of the Ontario Soccer League (OSL), one of the best amateur soccer circuits in the province. "We coached it, managed it and populated it with our players," 70 per cent of whom are Jewish, Scott said.

Azzuri recently advanced to the finals of the Alf Beese Cup, losing 3-1 to GS United in the championship game.

After falling behind 2-0 to the favourites, Maccabi's David Guzman, a former Canadian national player, narrowed the margin to 2-1. United scored late to seal the deal.

"We had chances in the first 15 minutes, but we missed," Scott said.

Nevertheless, he rates the season a success. "We were the only team to beat the top two teams in the league," including a 2-1 playoff win over the Ulster Thistles, he said.

"We play a tenacious defense, we're opportunistic on the counter-attack and we use simple [short] passes. We play smart, like Spain. We keep the ball on the ground with a lot of quick passes," he added.

With the outdoor soccer season at an end, Maccabi Toronto will switch to the indoor game in November and offer lessons at North York and Thornhill schools until April, when the outdoor season resumes.

For more information, visit www.maccabitoronto.com, or e-mail Scott at martinemilscott@hotmail.com.

Boys and girls were schooled in soccer skills in Maccabi Toronto's developmental program.

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Film producer makes *Jews and Baseball*

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

"I was inspired from start to finish, and every day was like being at the seventh game of the World Series."

William Hechter was talking about his latest documentary, *Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story*, which started its run in Toronto and Montreal last week.

Hechter made the movie, directed by Peter Miller and narrated by Dustin Hoffman, for two compelling reasons.

"I love documentary films, and the potential to tell a story that can be seen around the world," explained the Winnipeg-born former lawyer who now manages an investment company in Toronto.

Jews and Baseball, purportedly the first major documentary to focus on Jewish players from the 19th century to the present, focuses on such stellar figures as Hank Greenberg, Al Rosen, Sandy Koufax and Shawn Green through the prism of immigration, assimilation and bigotry.

Hechter's role was to put together the film from start to finish, while working collaboratively with Miller and his team.

Asked how he persuaded Hoffman to come aboard, he replied, "I asked, and he said yes."

A graduate of Harvard University who practised criminal law until 1997, both as a prosecutor and defence counsel, Hechter has been a baseball fan since boyhood in Winnipeg.

"I always enjoyed playing baseball," he said in an interview. "My interest in the game started with playing baseball."

William Hechter

Hechter's favourite Jewish player was Al Rosen, the Hebrew Hammer who played with the Cleveland Indians during his 10-year career in the 1940s and 1950s.

"He was such a great player, and so proud of his heritage," said Hechter, whose favourite team was the Brooklyn Dodgers. "He is also one of the kindest and most intelligent persons one could meet."

Hechter founded and published the magazine, *Canadian Lawyer*, in 1977, and sold it some years later.

Jews and Baseball was made by Clear Lake Historical Productions, which Hechter, a film aficionado for many years, founded.

As a student, he ran an art house theatre in Winnipeg, Cinema 3.

He has also been a concert producer, having worked with performers like Paul Simon, Art Garfunkel and Neil Diamond.

Last rites and rituals

By MICHAEL GORDON

It was 1968 and I was a medical resident at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. The head nurse called me because one family was about to light a candle in their mother's room.

The nurse said: "He says it's part of the ritual of waiting for her to die, and the family is prepared to gather, to say prayers, sit a vigil and light a candle. I explained that he can't but he says, I cannot stop him. I am afraid of a violent outburst."

The Senior Side of Life

I responded to the call. I sat with the eldest son and his siblings and explained that if a candle were lit, the fire department would be called and they would come and extinguish and disrupt the important part of the dying process – the vigil. We together agreed to use an electric Jewish Sabbath candle as a symbolic replacement for the real candle. The woman died peacefully and the family could carry out their ritual.

An article in the Feb. 11 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* questioned whether it might be ethically acceptable to perform "futile" CPR on a child as a way to dealing with the parents' need to be certain "everything possible was done" and to help them deal with of their loss. The article ends with the following, "In a small number of cases, providing non-beneficial CPR can be an act of sincere caring and compassion. Futile CPR has a limited but legitimate place in the practice of medicine."

Many clinicians and ethicists might find such a suggestion anathema to ethical decision-making, as one might ask, "Why stop at CPR? What if the family wants other non-beneficial procedures undertaken and why stop at children – why not adults and elders?"

The core question seems to be: why is there a need to use modern medical technology as a means of satisfying the emotional needs of parents, siblings or children facing the imminent death of a loved one?

In the field of aging, it is increasingly common for elders to die in hospital settings connected to electronic monitoring devices and to receive interventions such as intravenous or subcutaneous fluids or antibiotics, or receive CPR, even when it's abundantly clear the benefit from the interventions will not change the comfort level or prognosis in a substantial way.

As a clinician-ethicist, I am often asked to discuss the reasons to forgo end-of-life CPR when a family member cries out to staff members, "I can't just let my mother die without doing everything possible to save her or bring her back to life." I have heard similar comments when artificial nutrition and hydration is explained. "I can't let my father starve to death," a family member may say. This is even when it's clear that the underlying illness isn't going to change its course by the provision of tube feeding.

I get a strong sense that the reason these interventions are asked for is that they are the modern substitute for the traditional rites and rituals that previously surrounded the dying process. Death rarely occurs at home, and the modern institutional setting is replete with technologies that appear to have no limits of perceived benefit – even when, in fact, they do not.

Prayers, chants, incense, candles and vigils have unfortunately been replaced by non-beneficial CPR, tube feeding, intravenous fluids and end-of-life antibiotics as the means we use to demonstrate our devotion to those we love who are leaving us forever.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents (Dundurn Press). His latest book, Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare, follows his previous book, Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey. All can be researched at his website: http://www.drmichaelgordon.com.

SWEET POTATOS W MAPLE SYRUP, WALNUTS, BRANDIED RAISINS

1/2 c brown raisins
1/2 c golden raisins
1/4 c brandy
5 lb. sweet potatoes, peeled, cut into 3/4" cubes
3/4 c pure maple syrup
1/2 c brown sugar
1/2 stick unsalted butter
1 1/2 c walnut pieces, toasted

Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine raisins and brandy in small bowl; toss to blend. Soak 30 min-to 1 hr. Cook sweet potatoes in large pot of boiling salted water until just barely tender, about 8 min. Transfer to baking sheet to cool. Bring maple syrup, brown sugar, butter to boil in heavy saucepan over medium heat, stirring until brown sugar dissolves. Boil 2 mins. Grease baking dish . Drain raisins and place in large bowl. Add cooked sweet potatoes, maple syrup mixture, toasted walnut pieces. Toss gently to coat. Transfer to baking dish uncovered until syrup is thick and bubbling, basting occasionally, about 55 min. Let stand 10 min and serve.

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I have often said that I cook because I have to, but I bake because I love to! This is true. I have also said that my dream would be to wake up every morning and bake something delicious and fresh, a coffee cake, biscotti, muffins or cookies, and eat that for breakfast.

About Nutrition
By LISA WEINBERG

I bet many of you are liking the sound of that and thinking that's a strange dream for a dietitian. But fresh, homemade baked goods are delicious and many avoid them because of the fat and calories they contain. Hence, most mornings my breakfast is high-fibre cereal, egg whites, yogurt or whole grain toast and nut butter. But back to my dream, there are ways to bake your favourite baked goods and make them healthier.

One of the problems with baked goods is the amount of fat – butter, oil, margarine or shortening – they contain. The good news is that fat can be substituted with a low-fat option in "soft" baked goods such as muffins, cakes and banana breads. You can replace all or some of the fat with yogurt, fat-free sour cream, buttermilk or applesauce. You would use an equal portion, so, for example, if your recipe calls for one cup of oil, you can use a cup of yogurt instead. Or you can use half the fat and half yogurt. Soft baked goods can also be made with less sugar or with artificial sweetener meant for baking.

Another way to make baked goods healthier is to add fibre, which also makes them more filling. For example, bake with whole wheat flour – use it in equal parts – or add ground flaxseed to recipes.

Use recipes that are "light," such as fat-free angel-food cake, high-fibre bran muffins, whole wheat banana bread or biscotti or mandelbroit. There are even some healthy, and trans fat free, baking mixes available now. Mixes can help you bake in a pinch or are great for little bakers who are learning to cook.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. You can also follow Weinberg at http://www.lisaweiberg.ca. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

School sucked. Does it still?

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

My little boy is growing up. He started junior kindergarten a few weeks ago, came home one day and said to his mom, "Bon appétit, now we can eat." So far, so good, right?

URBAN WRITER

A friend once told me parents believe their kids are brilliant, that is until they start school. I believe he meant we are enamoured by the treasures that pour out of our toddlers' mouths when they're educated by informal play time, but that changes when they begin formal education and their intellect is challenged by teachers and a structured curriculum. My thoughts, however, about my son in school are different. I do not expect great things from my son's school or most of his teachers. I think he will achieve something special despite the education system.

I was a very average student and ultimately became very disappointed in the education system and its professionals. I attended yeshiva in Toronto, where secular studies were not that important, for my high school years. Of course, this contributed to my disappointment, as well as the fact my rabbis were not trained to teach. You can imagine what that environment must have been like for a kid with some learning challenges, me, studying about an ox that gores one's neighbour, at nine in the morning.

Later I went to the University of Toronto, York University and Ryerson University, for journalism. I was so hoping I would be surrounded by passionate scholars and that typewriters would be flying through the air, clocking whomever with inspiring ideas and encouraging debate.

My very first class at university was taught by an erudite and colourful intellectual who brought life to the subject matter – "the oppressed in the Americas." I figured then and there my next few years would be a time of rocking academia like never before. That, however, was not the case.

I found instead that university stifled my curiosity and like yeshiva, taught one way of thinking, offering little room for challenging mainstream notions.

Since those days I have asked hundreds of people how many teachers influenced them in a significant way to ask questions, wonder about life and dive into ideas and thoughts. The number is anywhere from zero to three and usually closer to zero. While I appreciate there are students who love(d) school and their teachers, to me they are anomalies.

Curiously, I've asked dozens of teachers how their career was/is, and generally they respond in a positive way. I don't get it. Teachers seem to be enjoying the students, but not the other way around.

I've asked parents what I can expect from the school system, and once again, most of them tell me to anticipate a difficult ride with many pitfalls and disillusionment. More often than not I hear, "Your son will be lucky if he gets a good teacher, but don't expect it."

I dream about Noah becoming a critical thinker, with a thirst to know and understand our existence. I am hoping he will love Torah and secular ideas, and will be encouraged to ask questions and grow feverishly. But putting all of this together, I feel that it is almost entirely up to my boy's mom and me to help him discover and uncover his passion for Chumash, reading, writing, poetry, mathematics, sciences and studying in general.

A few weeks ago, my son started junior kindergarten, and while it is early on, I do not expect he will develop a fervent unbridled love of knowledge in school. I think that's up to us. Something is wrong with this picture.

School sucked then. Does it still now?

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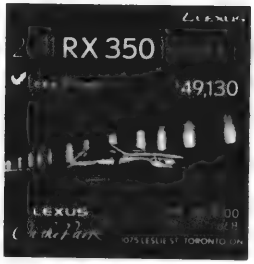

This Week

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Canada, Israel look to strengthen trade deal

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Canadian Minister of International Trade Peter Van Loan met with Israeli Minister of Industry, Trade and Labour Benjamin Ben-Eliezer during a two-day working visit to Israel last week.

The trip aimed to promote Canada-Israel trade relations, and an agreement was reached to conduct "exploratory talks" to amend and strengthen the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA).

Since CIFTA came into force in 1997, two-way merchandise trade between the countries has more than doubled, reaching $1.3 billion last year, making Israel Canada's sixth-largest merchandise export market in the Middle East.

"Canada's ties to Israel are very deep, and our friendship is important. Our government is building on these ties and looking at opportunities to expand our trade relationship. We are committed to creating new sources of jobs, growth and prosperity for both of our countries in the years ahead," Van Loan said in a statement from Israel.

Van Loan also met with representatives of Israel's pharmaceutical and science and technology sectors and laid a wreath at Yad Vashem's Hall of Remembrance.

Van Loan's office said the ministers also discussed a possible joint "innovations event" to be held in Canada later this year.

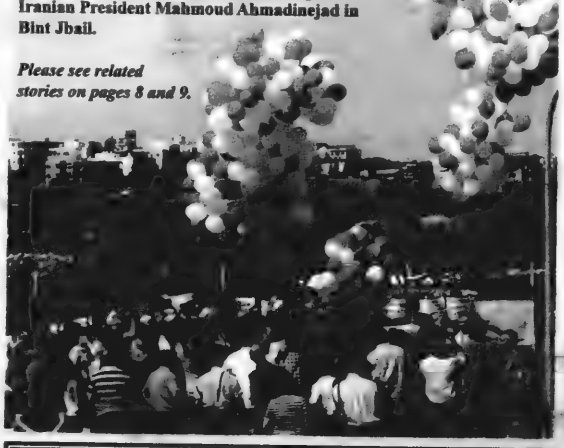
The CJN will publish an in-depth interview with Van Loan in a future issue.

Canadian Minister of International Trade Peter Van Loan lays a wreath at Yad Vashem last week. Newly appointed Canadian ambassador to Israel, Paul Hunt, centre, watches. [*Canadian government photo*]

Where hot air met hot air

Israelis launched blue-and-white balloons at the border with Lebanon last week to greet Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Bint Jbail.

Please see related stories on pages 8 and 9.



Philanthropist helps miners

JTA

LA COPIAPA, Chile — A Jewish Chilean mining executive has written cheques worth $10,000 (US) to each of the 33 miners who were rescued from a collapsed mine in Chile after being trapped for more than two months.

Leonardo Farkas reportedly gave the cheques in the miners' names to each of the families and set up a separate fund to collect donations, the Associated Press reported. The money is more than some of the miners earn in a year.

The miners were pulled from the San José gold and copper mine last week, where they had been trapped since its collapse on Aug. 5.

The Chilean miners reportedly have survived the longest of anyone buried underground.

Farkas is a well-known philanthropist in Chile who appears annually on a telethon run by the country's major television networks to raise funds to help children with developmental disabilities. In 2008, he donated about $1.5 million to the cause.

Farkas owns businesses in several industries, with mining comprising the most important of his holdings.

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Manitoba premier impressed by Israel – please see page 50

The News in Brief

Canada

Breast Cancer Gift

VANCOUVER — A $3-million gift from Gordon and Leslie Diamond to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and the B.C. Women's Hospital last week will fund the purchase of two digital mammography machines to improve detection of the disease in British Columbia. The machines allow three-dimensional, see-through imaging of breast tissue and will reduce false-positive results. The gift, the largest ever for both the foundation and the hospital, came in honour of Gordon's mother, Sadie, who died of breast cancer. Leslie Diamond also survived the illness.

World

Dylan Shul For Sale

MINNEAPOLIS — The shul where Bob Dylan marked his bar mitzvah is for sale. The former home of Agudath Achim Synagogue in Hibbing, Minn., where the former Bobby Zimmerman became a man in 1954, has belonged to Eric and Brenda Shafer-Pellinen since 2001. Their plan to make it a bed and breakfast failed, and it's listed for $119,000. Stop No. 8 on Hibbing's official Bob Dylan Walk still has its original stained-glass windows.

Jewish Support Drops

NEW YORK — Jewish approval of U.S. President Barack Obama has dropped, a new poll says. Some 49 per cent of U.S. Jews approve his handling of U.S.-Israel relations, a new American Jewish Committee survey found, and 45 per cent disapprove. An AJC poll last March gave Obama a 55 per cent approval rating to 37 per cent disapproval. Overall Jewish approval of him as president dropped to 51 per cent, from 57 per cent in March. He won 78 per cent of the Jewish vote in the 2008 election.

School Gets $15M

NEW YORK — A Solomon Schechter Conservative Jewish high school in New Jersey received a $15-million gift and will be renamed for one of its co-founders. Daniel Och, chair of the Birthright Israel Foundation, and his wife, Jane, gave the gift to the Solomon Schechter Day School of Essex and Union in West Orange to give tuition relief to middle-class families and for capital improvements. In honour of Daniel Och's mother, a co-founder of the school with her husband, Michael, and other families in 1965, it will be renamed the Golda Och Academy. Golda Och died in January.

Zuroff Tried For Libel

BUDAPEST — Nazi hunter Efraim Zuroff is fighting libel charges by an alleged war criminal in Hungary. The case, being heard in Budapest, began Oct. 8 and is slated to end Dec. 16. It's likely the first time a man accused of mass murder has sued his accusers, Zuroff said. Zuroff, who works for the Simon Wiesenthal Center, gave evidence to Hungarian authorities in 2006 that Sandor Kepiro, now 97, while serving in Hungary's gendarmerie, organized a massacre of 1,246 Jews, Serbs and Roma in Novi Sad in 1943. Kepiro, who was convicted of lesser charges in 1944 and escaped after a 1946 conviction, sued Zuroff in 2007, saying he made statements about the case as fact rather than opinion.

Rocker Changes Imagery After Outcry

NEW YORK — Pink Floyd bassist Roger Waters reportedly changed one of the videos he uses in his new "The Wall" tour after claims that it was anti-Semitic.

The ADL criticized him for using what it called anti-Semitic imagery in performances of *Goodbye Blue Sky*, which targets Israel's security fence. An animated scene showed planes dropping bombs shaped like Stars of David, dollar signs, crucifixes, hammers and sickles, crescents and stars, Mercedes logos and Shell Oil logos.

The ADL said that the juxtaposition of the Star of David and the dollar sign "could easily be misunderstood as a comment about Jews and money." But in an Oct. 6 show in New York, a Mercedes symbol followed the Jewish stars instead of dollar signs.

In an earlier letter to the *Independent* in Britain, Waters said that "there are no hidden meanings in the order or juxtaposition of these symbols. The point I am trying to make in the song is that the bombardment we are all subject to by conflicting religious, political and economic ideologies only encourages us to turn against one another, and I mourn the concomitant loss of life."

In response, ADL national director Abraham Foxman said that changing the order so that the dollar signs "appear elsewhere… would put this matter entirely to rest."

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Liberals would work harder for peace, Rae says

Bob Rae

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

A new Canadian government under Liberal party rule would work harder than the current Conservative administration to bring peace to the Middle East, Bob Rae, the party's foreign affairs critic, said last week.

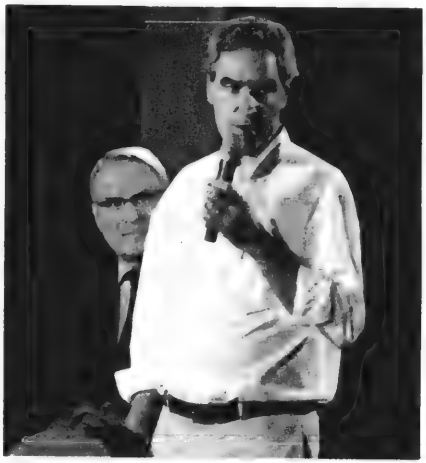
"We would be more active in working with all the nations of the Middle East to create the conditions for a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict," he pledged in an interview. "Supporting Israel doesn't mean you become indifferent to trying to find a way to peace."

Sounding an upbeat note, Rae – the MP for the ethnically diverse riding of Toronto Centre – said Israel's long-running dispute with the Palestinians can and should be settled by diplomatic means.

"It's a difficult conflict, but it's important to resolve it," said Rae, who is due to receive an honorary doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Haifa at a dinner in Toronto on Nov. 7 sponsored by Canadian Friends of Haifa University.

He added, "Many long-standing disputes have been resolved. While it may seem unattainable at times, history shows us that breakthroughs can happen."

Continued on page 25



"OPEN MIKE" NIGHT: Liberal Party leader Michael Ignatieff spoke at the Beth Emeth Synagogue last week as part of his "Open Mike" program. In the background is riding MP Ken Dryden. See page 26 for story. *[Cory Pike photo]*

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Poland's plea to Jews

From the editor's desk...

"We want the Jews of the world to see that Poland is more than a vast graveyard for their people."

That plea and countless variations of it were ceaselessly voiced by Polish officials as well as by Jews of Poland themselves last week, at a two-day conference in Warsaw.

Sponsored by the Polish government, the conference, titled "Public Diplomacy and Polish-Jewish Relations," was dedicated to the theme of what can be done to enable the Jews of the world to see Poland in a better, more modern, updated light.

The conference was closed to the general public. Attendance was by invitation of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Over the course of the two days, four different panels canvassed a variety of aspects of the topic.

The CJN was invited to participate in the panel that dealt ostensibly with the differences and similarities in attitudes (toward Poland) between the Jews of Israel and the Jews of the Diaspora.

"Judaism is a faith that canonizes, ritualizes and sanctifies memory," *The CJN* pointed out. "Thus, to the extent the Polish government does not hide or bury memory, it will be laying a foundation for mutually respectful and rewarding relations between this and subsequent generations of Jews and Poles.

"Deeds, not intentions or hopes, will determine the nature of subsequent relations between Poles and Jews. And that relationship will be measured over long interstices of time."

During the panel on present-day relations between Israel and Poland, Israel's ambassador to Poland, Zvi Rav-Ner, told the audience that Israel considers Poland to be one of its closest allies in the European Union.

Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesperson Yossi Levy suggested that the two countries "must do everything possible to change the stereotypes of the relationship between Jews and Poles [as being dominated by anti-Semitism].

"Whenever there is a problem with Europe, the Israeli Foreign Ministry phones the Polish government to intervene," Levy said.

But he also said there is an "obligation for both sides to speak the truth, and the Polish side should speak in Polish to the Polish public about the terrible past."

Speaking on the panel regarding Jewish Diaspora ties to Poland, renowned Israeli historian Shlomo Avineri placed the very holding of the conference itself into an historic framework. "Today is part of a process of trying to overcome a period of some 50 years of the absence of memory."

Avineri was referring to the near half-century rule of Poland after World War II by the Soviet Union. Soviet masters had no interest whatsoever in telling the entire 1,000-year tale of Polish-Jewish relations, let alone in trying to bring some understanding, if not quite reconciliation, between Poles and Jews.

The difficulty today in bringing about any form of reconciliation, Avineri said, is "ignorance on all possible levels between both sides.

"Neither Israeli Jews nor Diaspora Jews," Avineri pointed out, "know that Jews lived in Poland in a complex, changing reality for many many years."

Similarly, he suggested, Poles, too, must cast their own ignorance aside.

"There seems to be a nostalgia in Poland today for their 'exotic Jews,' the Jews of the shtetl captured on camera by Roman Vishniac, whom they recall and depict in a positive, photogenic way.

"But they must also be taught that Jews once comprised 10 per cent of the population, that they lived normal lives here. Of course, one must also teach the nasty aspects of the relationship too.

"It is not an easy task, for it requires a great deal of education."

Serge Cwajgenbaum, the secretary general of the European Jewish Congress, based in Paris, confirmed that the change in Polish-Jewish relations really began after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Pope John Paul II, he suggested, was the catalyst. The pope urged his fellow countrymen and his coreligionists "not to consider the Jews as a pariah people."

A number of speakers talked about the burgeoning revival of Jewish life in Poland. Shana Penn, executive director of the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life and Culture, told the conference of the many educational and cultural programs throughout the country underwritten by the foundation.

Most experts suggest that approximately 25,000 Jews live in Poland today. With the help of outside philanthropic organizations such as the Taube Foundation, they are indeed slowly planting seeds for new Jewish life in Poland.

My colleague Sheldon Kirshner wrote about the many sites and proofs of the evidence of the planting of those seeds in a marvellous multi-part series of articles in *The CJN* in the summer of 2009. Rabbi Dow Marmur, too, has recently written about "Poland's Jewish revival" in the general media. Notwithstanding that revival, notwithstanding this generation of Poles' sincere desire to heal the wounds between the two peoples, the memory of history cannot so quickly be set aside.

For an individual, 65 years is nearly a lifetime. For a people, however, especially the Jewish people, it is merely the blinking of an eye. In this case, a very tearful eye. Time will write this history. *–MBD*

BNOT MITZVAH

Shauna Pekar and her grandmother, Esther Kurtzman, become bnot mitzvah together Oct. 9 at Congregation Darchei Noam. The ceremony was the fulfillment of a lifelong dream for Kurtzman, who was not able to have a bat mitzvah ceremony as a young woman. It was Shauna's idea to share her bat mitzvah with her Bubbie.

[Jack Beker Photography photo]

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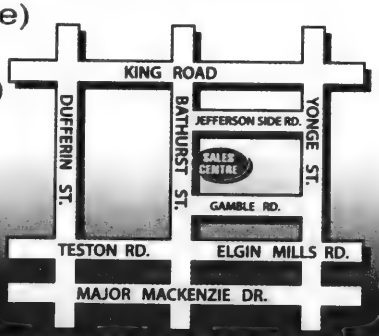

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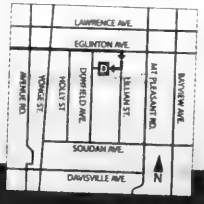

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Greater Toronto Area

Jewish groups examine Security Council snub

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Canada was unable to win a seat on the United Nations' powerful Security Council last week, and many Jewish groups blamed the defeat on member countries who don't share Prime Minister Stephen Harper's pro-Israel policies.

Canada decided to pull out of the race last Tuesday when officials determined they wouldn't be able to win enough votes from the UN's 192 member countries to beat either Germany or Portugal, its rivals for two soon-to-be vacant rotating seats on the council.

Until now, Canada had managed to obtain a seat on the Security Council in every decade since it first secured one in 1948, two years after the council's creation. It last held a seat on the Security Council from 1999 to 2000.

In statements last week, the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC), Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center (FSWC) and B'nai Brith Canada said anti-Israel agitation by certain groups in Canada and anti-Israel sentiment at the UN may have foiled Canada's attempt to win a seat.

"Although some have suggested that Canada's support for Israel is one of the reasons it was unsuccessful in its bid for a seat on the Security Council, Canadians should be proud of our principled support for Israel at the UN," the CIC said.

Avi Benlolo, president and CEO of FSWC, said it was "no secret" that at least one bloc of countries at the UN – the 57 nations comprising the Organization of the Islamic Conference – voted against Canada and "likely lobbied heavily" for other nations to join them.

B'nai Brith singled out the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) for circulating a Sept. 24 petition called "Don't Give Canada a Security Council Seat."

"It is utterly disappointing to know that an organization containing within its name 'Canada' campaigned to undermine Canadian efforts to obtain a seat on the council," said Frank Dimant, B'nai Brith's executive vice-president.

The CIC also criticized the CAF for its "shameful" behaviour.

The CAF petition called on "all Arab and Muslim missions to the UN" to deny Canada the seat, listing 15 reasons to do so, 10 of which involved Israel.

"Granting Canada a seat on the UN Security Council would be tantamount to rewarding Canada for discriminating against Arab and Muslim Canadians, and for its unconditional and blatant support for Israel's war crimes and violations of international law," CAF president Khaled Mouammar wrote.

The UN Security Council has five permanent members – China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States – and 10 non-permanent members, each serving two-year terms.

The five new non-permanent council members – South Africa, India, Colombia, Germany and Portugal – will replace Austria, Japan, Mexico, Turkey and Uganda, whose terms expire Dec. 31.

The other five members – Bosnia, Brazil, Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria – will remain on the council until the end of 2011.

In his Sept. 23 speech to the UN General Assembly, Harper lobbied hard for Canada's inclusion on the council.

"If we are elected, we will be ready to serve. And, if called upon to serve on the Security Council, Canada will be informed by… [the UN's] foundational beliefs in the sovereign equality of countries… of the obligation to settle disputes peacefully… and [upholding] the human rights of all people."

He added that, if elected, Canada would "strive to further" those ideals "just as we have striven to implement Security Council resolutions."

Most recently, the council passed sanctions against Iran to try to limit its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons.

Moshe Ronen, national chair of the CIC, praised Harper for his stance at the UN, irrespective of the government's inability to win a seat on the Security Council.

"It would have been easy for Prime Minister Harper to have adopted the politically expedient but regrettably popular behaviour at the UN of scapegoating and marginalizing Israel. Instead, the Conservative government stood by Israel when it was singled out for unfair treatment. Canada's actions in support of Israel at the UN were always based on what was the right thing to do, not what was politically fashionable, and for this, the government deserves the deepest praise," he said.

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Portraits side by side of darkness and light

Last week in the town of Bint Jbail, in the grassy, rock-strewn undulations of the hills of south Lebanon, a handful of kilometres from the border with Israel, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the president of Iran, spoke to an enraptured crowd of thousands of Hezbollah supporters.

"The entire world should know that the Zionists are destined to disappear from the world, while Bint Jbail will remain alive. And the sons of Bint Jbail will know how to defeat the Zionist enemy," Ahmadinejad said.

"You proved that your resistance is stronger than all dark swords in the hands of the Israeli enemy," he continued. "They have no way but surrender to the nations and *go back to their first homes. Be sure that Palestine will be liberated*" (our emphasis).

The man from Tehran was not subtle.

Once again, on message, an exemplar of the human conscience that coexists untroubled alongside the pursuit of politicide, genocide and the persecution and torture of his own people, Ahmadinejad preached his bilious hatred toward the Jewish state.

Mark Regev, spokesperson for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, aptly noted that "Iran has turned Lebanon into an Iranian satellite and a hub of regional terror and instability." The majority of Lebanese must surely know this to be true and must hang their heads in sorrow and regret for the country they have lost.

On that same day, several thousand kilometres away, in the far reaches of Chile, 33 miners were rescued from the San Jose mine in Copiapó. From all corners of the globe, people watched or listened to the painstakingly delicate rescue of the plucky, courageous miners.

They had been trapped in the mine for more than two months. It was only by dint of their courage, endurance and unflagging hopefulness that they remained alive long enough for their rescuers to reach safely and securely deep into the earth to bring them back to their loved ones on the surface. The rescue was a result of the mobilization of men and women in pursuit of the highest human value, namely, the saving of life. Companies and individuals from around the world, including Canadians, helped with the rescue by providing the broad range of equipment and expertise necessary to bring the miners back alive.

Though separated by an ocean and a continent, the two episodes happened side by side, as it were, on the same day. They offer poignant, contrasting portraits. Ahmadinejad assembled his audience to hear a message of murder. Chilean President Sebastian Pinera assembled his audience to hear and make resonant the message of life.

It is the miners now who bask in the open, in the glow of full sunlight and freedom. And it is Ahmadinejad, ironically, who dwells, perhaps forever, in a mine far below decency and civility, in the dark corners of his twisted heart where hatred reigns.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres ended two days of talks with Reagan administration officials and reiterated Israel's opposition to an international peace conference, as Jordan's King Hussein wanted. Instead, Peres urged the king to start direct talks with Israel, saying Israel opposed the Soviet Union's participation in the process because it lacked diplomatic relations with Israel.

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Acceptance of Israel as a Jewish state

Yair Lootsteen, in his column "Israel's Jewish character is indelible" (Oct. 7), states that Palestinian recognition of Israel as a Jewish state is "unnecessary and imprudent" and "induces uncertainty about it." Unfortunately, he misses the entire point. The reason that there is no peace today is that the Arab states accept two important Muslim beliefs – that a land that was once under Muslim domination must revert to that state, and that Jews are inherently inferior to Muslims and must not have control over any Muslims. Peace will only come once the Arabs reinterpret these beliefs. Acceptance of Israel as a Jewish state would signify that the Arabs have, in fact, taken this step, and then, and only then, will there be a possibility for peace. Until the Arabs recognize that Israel is the national homeland of the Jewish people, signing any "peace" agreement would, especially if it entailed concessions on the part of Israel, signal Israel's weakness, put Israel at risk, and increase the possibility of war.

Yehudit Shier Weisberg
Toronto

* * *

Drawing of Peace Tower clock (1)

I wonder if anyone from B'nai Brith Canada bothered to look at a picture of the Peace Tower clock before issuing their unfounded accusation of anti-Semitism ("CJC comes to defence of *Le Droit* cartoonist," Sept. 29). The Bado cartoon is a reasonably accurate drawing of the clock face, which does contain a symbol very similar to the Magen David. Perhaps B'nai Brith leaders will lobby Parliament to have the clock dismantled in order to avoid such incidents in the future. They might even insist that the Parliament Buildings be reconstructed to their specifications. I believe that B'nai Brith owes a profound apology to the cartoonist.

Edward Katz
Cote St-Luc, Que.

* * *

Drawing of Peace Tower clock (2)

I appreciate the work of the B'nai Brith Canada and think it offers a valuable service to the community. However, in the instance of the Bado cartoon with the "Star of David" in the middle of the clock, I would like to see its leaders admit that perhaps they reacted a little too quickly, did not research the matter as they should have and are, with good reason, a little thin-skinned ("CJC comes to defence of *Le Droit* cartoonist," Sept. 29). An apology for a mistake would not shame them and should not embarrass them. Man-up and say you're sorry and take a little more care next time.

Sheila Mediena
Montreal

* * *

Problematic headline

I was very surprised to see your Oct. 7 front-page headline, "Israel extends construction freeze," and the accompanying headline (on Page 40), "Israel extends construction freeze for 60 days." As you know, nothing has been settled as to the extension of the freeze, and it is so unlike your paper to print a story of this magnitude without confirmation.

Ian Franklin
Toronto

Editor's note: The reader is correct. The headline was insufficient. It should have included a reference to the report that attributed the statement.

* * *

Gives U.S. credit for being Israel's friend

Critics of Israel have always exaggerated the influence of the Israeli lobby in Washington. Conspiracy theories have suggested that Jews control everything from the media and the U.S. Congress to the global financial system. The reality is that most Americans identify with Israeli values and thus support American policies toward Israel.

Although not as visible as the Israeli lobby, there is considerable clout by the Arab lobby when one considers that its makeup goes well beyond a group of paid professional lobbyists. Influence on the Arab side now comes from defence contractors, former government officials employed by Arab states, corporations with business interests in the Middle East, NGOs, the United Nations, academics, Israel haters, a significant percentage of the media and cultural elite, non-evangelical Christian groups, European elites, hired guns, American Arabs and Muslims, and the leaders and diplomats from no fewer than 21 Arab governments.

In view of this remarkable numerical imbalance of influences, it is to the credit of the American government that it remains such a good friend of Israel.

Bert Raphael
Thornhill, Ont.

LET THEM GO...

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1580

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

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Perspectives

Did Ahmadinejad's visit help or hurt Hezbollah?

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By AVI ISSACHAROFF and AMOS HAREL

Despite the celebrations, the emotional speeches and the tens of thousands of people who came to see Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in the southern Lebanon town of Bint Jbail last Wednesday, it is far from clear whether his visit helped or hurt his Hezbollah proxy.

On the second day of his visit to Lebanon, Ahmadinejad came to within several kilometres of the Israeli border and once again called for the destruction of the "Zionist entity." But to some extent, he thereby violated the Lebanese status quo.

Everyone in the country knows that Hezbollah operates under Tehran's auspices and serves as the long arm of Iran against Israel, but the group had tried to hide this as much as possible and present itself as a patriotic Lebanese organization. Now, there is nothing left to hide: the Iranian president behaved as if he owned southern Lebanon, as well as Dahiya, a Hezbollah-dominated district of Beirut. And this caused all the Lebanese factions, Shiite and non-Shiite alike, considerable embarrassment.

In other words, the Iranian leader's crude statements may boomerang and undermine Hezbollah's standing among the Lebanese public. Ahmad Fatfat, a Lebanese member of parliament who belongs to the March 14 group, which opposes Syria and Hezbollah, said in an interview with the Lebanese media that Ahmadinejad's speech in Dahiya, where he applauded Hezbollah's opposition to Israel, reflects the depth of the Iranian presence in Lebanon.

It may be that at this stage, Hezbollah is no longer particularly concerned about its standing among Lebanon's other communities. But for years, the group has tried to win the trust of non-Shiite Lebanese. This visit will make it more difficult to achieve this goal.

In his speech yesterday at Bint Jbail, which became one of the symbols of the Second Lebanon War of 2006, Ahmadinejad repeated the same cliches he used in his Dahiya speech. "You are Lebanon's first line of defence, you are heroes, you are those who protect Lebanon's independence," he told the tens of thousands of Shiites who gathered at the same soccer stadium where Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah made his famous "spider web" speech two days after the Israel Defence Forces withdrew from southern Lebanon in May 2000. (In that speech Nasrallah said that Israel is "weaker than a spider's web" and stressed that his supporters do not fear it.)

Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah, left, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

Ahmadinejad promised that Iran will continue supporting the Lebanese people and its "resistance" against Israel. But he was careful to avoid expressions that could give the impression that Iran or Hezbollah would use Lebanese soil to attack Israel.

"The Zionists planned to destroy this community [Bint Jbail], but it stood strong against the occupiers," he declaimed. "The entire world should know that the Zionists are destined to disappear from the world, while Bint Jbail will remain alive. And the sons of Bint Jbail will know how to defeat the Zionist enemy."

But this display of force was undercut by the fact that Nasrallah was missing. Not only was he absent at Bint Jbail, but throughout the two-day visit, the Hezbollah leader was never seen in public with the Iranian guest. He made do with a speech broadcast from a bunker – where he is hiding from an Israeli strike. Ahmadinejad's vitriol of victory was dulled somewhat by Nasrallah's absence.

Many analysts argued that the presence of tens of thousands of people at the rally was the result of Hezbollah pressure on the people. But this is inaccurate.

Many residents of southern Lebanon received aid from Iran after the Second Lebanon War to repair damaged houses or build new ones. Tehran is behind the reconstruction of southern Lebanon: homes, schools, hospitals, utilities, infrastructure. The population owes a lot more to Ahmadinejad than it does to Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri. To them, the Iranian president is the real star.

Meanwhile, on the Israeli side of the fence, the visit passed relatively calmly. Recently, it was reported that Ahmadinejad was considering coming all the way to the border. But the Iranians apparently reconsidered and decided it would be too risky. They made do with the visit to Bint Jbail.

The IDF followed developments closely, but did not concentrate any forces in anticipation of an incident. Nor did the media cameras on the Israeli side of the border manage to catch a glimpse of the Iranian president.

But the real question is whether the Iranian leader's visit will have any impact on the most fraught issue in Lebanon: the investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri. Though the power struggle over this issue continues, most analysts concur that Hezbollah and its supporters currently have the upper hand.

The international tribunal is expected to announce the indictment of senior Hezbollah figures in December. But following years of delays, it would also not be surprising if another delay occurs. The international community's supreme interest is to preserve Lebanon's stability and avoid a civil war. Faced with tremendous pressure from Syria and Hezbollah, the other foreign powers involved in Lebanon – mainly the Americans, the French and the Saudis – may well capitulate on this issue.

During a meeting with Saad Hariri, Ahmadinejad claimed that he has a plan to resolve the issue of the investigation without a crisis. Part of his plan involves holding a summit for the leaders of Syria, Turkey, Lebanon and Iran.

But it is doubtful whether this proposal will ever bear fruit. Precisely because of Ahmadinejad's aggressive intervention in Lebanon last week, Hariri will now find it more difficult to relinquish his father's legacy and succumb to Iran's dictates.

Israel will 'soon go to hell'

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM—Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Sunday said that Israel would "soon go to hell" and called on the West to drop support for the Jewish state.

"Grounds are being prepared for the Zionist regime [Israel] to go to hell soon, and any country supporting this regime will join it on its trip to hell as well," Ahmadinejad said in a speech in Ardebil in northwestern Iran, carried live by the news network Khabar.

The comments Sunday fall in line with a series of provocative statements by the Iranian leader about Israel several times in recent years, sparking international anger.

Among others, he advocated relocating Israel to Europe or North America, and questioned the dimensions of the Holocaust during World War II.

The remarks by the Iranian president came in the wake of his controversial visit last week to Lebanon, in which Ahmadinejad voiced his support of what he called Lebanon's resistance of Israeli aggression.

Speaking last week in the South Lebanon town of Bint Jbail, which became one of the symbols of the Second Lebanon War of 2006, Ahmadinejad called local residents "Lebanon's first line of defence"

"You are heroes, you are those who protect Lebanon's independence," he told the tens of thousands of Shiites who gathered at the stadium.

Ahmadinejad promised that Iran would continue supporting the Lebanese people and its "resistance" against Israel.

Ahmadinejad's government is the principal backer of Lebanon's Hezbollah terrorist group. He has repeatedly expressed his desire to see Israel disappear.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu chose to respond in the residence of the first mayor of Tel Aviv where David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, declared independence in 1948.

"We heard… the cursing and the language of contempt from the Lebanon border," Netanyahu said, *Ha'aretz* reported."We will continue to build our country, and we will know very well how to defend it."

With files from JTA

Opinions

Whose Promised Land?

Jews may regard Israel as the Promised Land, but most still choose to live elsewhere. Though Africans normally don't describe the country in this way, many would like to move there. That's why a growing number of Sudanese, Eritreans and others continue to risk their lives to seek asylum in the Jewish state.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

They suffer unspeakable hardships on the way. To reach Israel, they have to walk through Egypt, where they're never welcome, always persecuted and occasionally killed. Bedouins smuggle them across the border and dump them on Israeli soil.

Israel, being a signatory to international conventions on behalf of refugees, is bound to receive them. To send them back would endanger their lives, and Jews know what that means better than most.

The monument designed by Daniel Liebeskind to be erected in Halifax Harbour tells it all. It will commemorate the tragic fate of the St. Louis, the ship with Jews fleeing Nazi-infested Europe that Canada sent back in 1939. Two hundred of its 900 passengers were later murdered. It has become a universal symbol of every refugee's tragic vulnerability.

Rachel Iscove-Peled was born in Toronto and qualified as a lawyer in Canada. Some four years ago, she made aliyah, was called to the Israeli bar and now works in the Tel Aviv office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. Her recent talk at Holy Blossom Temple, the congregation where she grew up, dramatically illustrated the hardships of many asylum-seekers in Israel.

They pose a difficult challenge. As a Jewish state committed to humanitarian values, Israel cannot turn them away. But if it indiscriminately opens its gates, the Jewishness of Israel may be compromised. So it grants them asylum, but no other rights, in the hope that things will soon improve enough in their own countries to allow for their repatriation.

Once in Israel, the refugees usually work illegally, have no insurance, live in squalid conditions and send home as much money as they can. They nevertheless insist that they'd rather be there than anywhere else in the region.

Understandably, the situation worries Israeli policymakers. The minister of justice declared recently that "Israel is facing an existential threat in the light of the waves of infiltrators coming through our border with Egypt."

The country finds itself in a painful dilemma: should it continue to receive them or turn them away? In either case, whether on grounds of demography or morality, the Jewishness of Israel may be severely challenged. The Promised Land comes with a heavy price and grave responsibilities.

Is militant campus advocacy the solution?

It's the conventional wisdom these days that young Jews don't know enough about Israel to defend us against anti-Zionists. However, there have never been so many different kinds of Jewish education: schools, yeshivot, women's study centres, Jewish studies programs on campus, summer camps, Birthright, Masa and adult study groups, not to mention the influence of the State of Israel, with its culture of Hebrew language in both religious and secular settings.

Seymour Epstein in Toronto

And yet there's still vast ignorance and rampant Jewish illiteracy, which is especially disappointing given the high levels of general education among most Jews. But is the solution to cram Zionist data into the minds of young Jews so that they can fight back with knowledge-strength? These are the terms being used for campus advocacy, and I think they're problematic from the perspective of an educator.

My purpose is not to convince the community to drop campus advocacy as an issue. I do, however, wish to point out the limitations of such activity. I've been influenced by a satirical article published in the 1990s called "How to Fight Anti-Semitism." It was written by a Columbia University campus activist as a reaction to a protest demonstration against an anti-Semitic speaker who was invited to lecture at Columbia.

Very quickly, the reader finds the author arguing that protesting this kind of anti-Semitism can be demeaning and counter-productive. It will do nothing to convince an anti-Semite to alter his or her views, and instead of making Jews "feel better," it relegates us to defending ourselves in silly ways. We don't poison wells. We don't use Christian blood to make matzot. We did not plan 9/11.

The solution offered in the article appeals to me because it's all about Jewish education. Most protesters against anti-Semitism know so little about their own "Semitism" that the real solution is deep Jewish learning to produce proud and courageous Jews, with pride in their past and courage to create new Jewish life in the future.

But what does this have to do with campus advocacy? The idea that we can create student activists to counter two major forces of anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic activity on campus is a non-starter. Those two forces are paid agitators who are on campus for one purpose only, and radical professors who abuse their academic podium with propaganda. They generally don't respect civil discourse and deliberately abuse the academic setting for their own perverse ends.

In any campus protest, these enemy forces make every effort to confuse the public by mixing messages and inviting conflict. Putting our students into that arena is inviting disaster. Does anyone think that knowing about Israel's positive accomplishments in science and culture is going to matter to paid mercenaries? How are our rational arguments going to sway the passion of "freedom fighters" who have relatives in Israeli jails or who aren't content with Gaza and Jenin, but really aspire to Haifa and Tel Aviv?

The university campus is meant to be a place of critical discourse. If it's truly a place where students develop the skills of critical thinking, there must be a place for those who differ from the norm, for those who both love Israel and maintain the right to criticize when appropriate. The university is where you should learn to be critical and responsible at the same time. Indoctrinating our young students with ammunition to fight anti-Zionist agitators and anti-Semitic professors is not in the spirit of autonomous critical thinking, and it puts us very much in the camp of the enemy.

There's every reason to enhance and expand campus services for Jewish students. There's every reason to develop academic programs in Israel studies and in related Jewish studies. But there's no reason to teach militant advocacy. The idea is a non-starter, both in terms of tactics and strategic objectives.

Giving thanks for the mosaic

Chatting with a few York University students about Thanksgiving confirmed my impression that this is an underrated holiday. None of the students had a tradition of celebrating the October festival with family and friends. One of them – whose mother is from the United States – celebrates "American Thanksgiving," traveling to family south of the border each year in November for turkey and trimmings. But the Canadian correlative is sorely neglected.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

One of the students reported that someone had told her that Thanksgiving is a Christian holiday, and she asked me whether this was so. I responded that it was not, that Thanksgiving is a secular holiday whose sentiments can be made consonant with anybody's idea of God, or even without reference to a deity. Because the student is Jewish, I made some assumptions about the source of her information about the religious origins of the fest. I added that while the American Jewish community regards Thanksgiving as a civic holiday – essentially pareve rather than denominational – the Canadian Jewish community, by and large, regards the autumn festival as Christian, and so off-limits.

What the student said next caught me by surprise: "Oh, no, I didn't hear it from anyone Jewish. A Muslim in one of my classes said that because Thanksgiving is a Christian holiday, people in the Muslim community don't celebrate it."

This unanticipated shared opinion linking the two Canadian communities, Jewish and Muslim, got me to thinking about Thanksgiving in this country, and the nature of Canadian multiculturalism. That Americans almost to a person embrace Thanksgiving, regardless of ethnic and religious origin, and that Canadians view it from the vantage point of their particular backgrounds, seems of a piece with the way we think about integration and acculturation in the two cultures.

The metaphor of the melting pot, for years the American ideal, envisions individuals from diverse backgrounds merging into a universal, shared culture – becoming "American," and, to a certain extend, "un-becoming" whatever they once were. The metaphor of the mosaic, the Canadian ideal, envisions a society composed of disparate pieces which, retaining their colouration and configuration, nonetheless constitute a harmonious whole.

Both models imply a shared civic culture, but the American metaphor suggests that one must give up aspects of one's particular identity in order to gain membership, while the Canadian metaphor allows for a complexity of identity and for the endurance of communities of origin.

And yet, at least as regards this civic fall holiday, American ethnic and religious communities have managed the feat of investing in a national sentiment without giving up who they are. As anyone who has celebrated Thanksgiving in the United States can attest, the traditional celebration is malleable and bears the imprint of its celebrants.

Come late November, families gather around tables graced with kosher turkeys, halal turkeys, even faux-turkeys. Our family traditionally serves the big bird with kasha stuffing, our Ashkenazi heritage sharing the plate with the memory of pilgrims on Plymouth Rock. Sounds pretty mosaic, when you think about it.

Perhaps the Jewish community refrains from celebrating Thanksgiving in Canada because it comes so close to our own spate of autumn holidays. We simply can't think of another big meal or another family get-together. Perhaps we've already given our harvest thanks Judaically and, therefore, feel no pull to do so in a secular venue. Perhaps the Muslim community can't commit to celebrating a holiday that will surely fall, at least every decade, during the fast of Ramadan. Perhaps.

But the net result is that rather than composing a harmonious mosaic composition, the desecularization of Thanksgiving leaves the individual mosaic pieces outside the civic whole, gathered in separate piles of like-coloured shards.

There is much for which to be thankful: the bounty that is Canada, its freedoms and opportunities, along with the blessings we acknowledge in our own lives. As in any country, there are contentious issues that divide Canadians – along political, ideological, economic, geographic and other lines. The secular, civic autumnal holiday points to what unites us. Embrace it, and fill the mosaic.

The Kirshner File

White House Diary is combative and revealing

Jimmy Carter, the 39th president of the United States, was a peacemaker. Without his persistent and intrusive intervention, Israel and Egypt would not have signed the Camp David Accords, which culminated with their historic peace treaty in 1979.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Carter, who took a great deal of interest in the Middle East while in office from 1977 to 1981, pushed and prodded the Israeli and Egyptian leaders, Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat, when obstacles and misunderstandings threatened to scuttle the prospect of peace.

More than 30 years on, Carter's indispensable role seems to have been forgotten or is downplayed. The reason is clear. Carter angered or alienated Jews who resented his pressure on Israel to withdraw from the territories and who took umbrage over his reckless and inaccurate comments suggesting that Israeli policy in the West Bank is akin to apartheid in the old South Africa.

Outraged by his views, some of which were stated in moralistic tone, they denigrated Carter, myopically ignoring his greatest achievement, the advent of peace between Israel and Egypt. The peace treaty, though unfortunately cold, still stands as a landmark in the annals of the Middle East. Thanks to it, Israel's strategic position in the region improved remarkably, helping to pave the way for Jordan's treaty with Israel in 1994.

During his presidency, Carter kept a private diary, recording his unvarnished observations of events and personalities. These entries, forming the backbone of *White House Diary* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), are supplemented by italicized notes in which Carter reflects on the past. Carter's prose style is simple and unadorned, bereft of flowery and convoluted language, and thus this book is eminently accessible.

To no one's surprise, a hefty chunk turns on the Middle East, particularly Carter's relentless attempt to forge peace. His efforts were recognized in 2002 when he won the Nobel Prize for peace.

White House Diary, which runs to 570 pages, unfolds in chronological order.

One of his first entries concerns Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's prime minister, whom Carter describes as "very timid, stubborn, and also somewhat ill at ease." When they met, Carter, much to Rabin's displeasure, had already enlisted the Soviet Union – Israel's Cold War nemesis – in efforts to convene a Mideast peace conference. Carter would modify his appraisal of Rabin. As he puts it, "In his second term, in the 1990s, Rabin proved to be a strong and courageous prime minister."

Sadat impressed Carter. He calls him "charming, frank and also very strong." King Hussein of Jordan, he notes, burst into tears as he spoke about the recent death of his first wife. Carter found Syria's president, Hafez al Assad, "constructive toward the need for a Middle Eastern settlement and somewhat flexible in dealing with the more crucial items involving peace."

After his secretary of state, Cyrus Vance, returns from a trip to the Mideast, Carter says, "It's becoming more and more obvious that the Arab leaders want a settlement, want peace – and that the Israelis don't want a settlement." Carter confers with U.S. Jewish leaders and assures them of his "basic commitment" to Israel's security and sovereignty. His first meeting with Begin goes well. Carter thinks he is dedicated, sincere and strong.

Carter hails Sadat's speech to the Knesset, but is disappointed by Begin's response, describing it as "a rehash." Prior to the 1978 Camp David summit, Carter summarizes Begin's proposal on the future of the West Bank as unacceptable, but "a step in the right direction." All in all, he adds, Begin is "much more flexible than we had feared."

He and Sadat agree that Israel ought "to withdraw completely from the occupied territories with minor adjustments." Carter is upset to learn that, in Begin's interpretation, United Nations Resolution 242 does not apply to the West Bank. "This is going to be a source of real confrontation," he observes.

Carter concludes that Begin is unwilling to withdraw from the West Bank or stop construction of new settlements there. After meeting Begin yet again, Carter writes, "He's a small man with limited vision, and my guess is he will not take the necessary steps to bring peace to Israel… I'm determined to put maximum pressure on him."

With the Camp David summit having begun, Carter learns from Sadat that Begin is "difficult to approach," "bitter" and "inclined to look back on ancient history rather than deal with the present and the future." Carter points out that Begin is "a man of integrity and honour, with deep and long-standing opinions that were difficult for him to change."

Sadat, "a spokesman for all Arabs," says he cannot accept a separate agreement with Israel. But that is what Egypt's peace treaty with Israel turned out to be.

Much later in *White House Diary*, Carter observes, "It's obvious the Israelis want a separate treaty with Egypt, to keep the West Bank and Gaza."

In direct talks, Begin says he cannot dismantle Israeli settlements in the Sinai, prompting Sadat to pound the table and say that "the land was not negotiable," either in Sinai or the Golan Heights. "Security, yes, land, no," Sadat declares.

"The discussions were very, very bitter – open and unrestrained," Carter says.

Later, Begin protests he cannot "sell" the dismantlement of the Sinai settlements to the Israeli people and claims it would cause the downfall of his government.

Menachem Begin and Jimmy Carter at the 1978 Camp David summit.

Sadat, exasperated, says, "I cannot compromise on land and sovereignty." In a reference to Begin, Sadat says, "The man is obsessed, a hopeless case."

After meeting Israel's foreign minister, Moshe Dayan, Carter writes, "I found Dayan… willing to accept failure rather than yield completely on the Sinai settlements."

Carter, in short, has mixed feelings about Begin, calling him "a strong and courageous leader" and "the obstacle to progress." He believes that the defence minister, Ezer Weizman, is "the most level-headed and able Israeli official I've met."

Sadat, convinced that the Camp David talks are going nowhere, demands a helicopter to take him back to the airport. "This was one of the worst moments of my life," Carter admits in a gloomy aside.

Two months later, the White House shifts into crisis mode after Sadat sends word that he will not sign a peace treaty unless there is a linkage between Sinai, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

As the talks intensify, Carter discovers that the Israeli delegation is split on the settlements: "Begin wants no withdrawal; Dayan is willing to withdraw after an extended period; and Weizman… [agrees] that the settlers should be withdrawn."

In the final analysis, Carter has what appears to be a schizophrenic opinion of Begin: "Begin had his strong points, too: intense feelings, courage, sure knowledge of history, a clear concept of what he wanted, and in the end a surprising flexibility that made it possible for us to achieve success." But several pages on, Carter, reflecting on the joint winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, writes, "Sadat deserved it; Begin did not."

Carter, in passing, also mentions ex-Israeli prime minister Golda Meir ("she doesn't think there is any Palestinian question") and Soviet foreign minister, Andrei Gromyko (who curtly dismisses the Jewish dissident Natan Sharansky as "a microscopic dot… of no consequence to anyone"). As well, he touches on the Holocaust, agreeing that the United States was all too often silent during this period, and commends Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal for having done "an outstanding job."

In short, *White House Diary* is intriguing, combative and revealing.

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Toronto voters prepare to choose new mayor

Rocco Rossi bows out leaving Ford, Pantalone and Smitherman in the race

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

The CJN's coverage of this year's municipal election focused on the wards with the greatest concentration of Jewish households both north and south of Steeles Avenue, namely Toronto wards 10, 16 and 21, and Vaughan Ward 5.

This week, we conclude our coverage leading up to the Oct. 25 vote with a round-up of recent events in the campaigns.

* * *

And then there were three...

Last week, Toronto mayoral candidate Rocco Rossi bowed out, leaving only councillors Rob Ford and Joe Pantalone and former provincial health minister George Smitherman in the race for mayor of Canada's largest city.

At *The CJN*'s deadline, all three were still in the running, with an Oct. 13 Ipsos-Reid poll of 400 people showing that 31 per cent would vote for Smitherman, 30 per cent would support Ford, and 11 per cent would back Pantalone.

All three candidates have told *The CJN* that if they were elected mayor, they would take Jewish community concerns seriously, particularly the issue of the Pride Parade and the controversial decision by its organizers to allow the group Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA) to participate.

Ford has said he will take a "zero tolerance" approach to the issue and simply cease funding the parade if organizers allows the group to participate again next summer, while both Pantalone and Smitherman said they want to sit down with Pride Toronto and discuss the issue at length.

Smitherman has said the city may not have any recourse through its own non-discrimination policies to stop QuAIA from taking part in the parade, and that the Jewish community may need to take the issue to court for a resolution to the issue.

All the candidates have unequivocally said they support Israel's right to exist.

* * *

In the council races...

From left, Rob Ford, Joe Pantalone and George Smitherman

On Oct. 8, lawyer, filmmaker and gay Jewish community advocate Martin Gladstone withdrew his candidacy in Ward 32 Beaches-East York.

Gladstone spearheaded advocacy efforts last summer to stop QuAIA's anti-Israel messaging at the 2010 Pride Parade.

And in Ward 10 York Centre, two more hopefuls declared their candidacies for council since *The CJN*'s initial coverage of the ward on Sept. 8.

Drago Banovic and Robert Freedland joined Joseph Cohen, Jarred Friedman, Magda Gondor-Berkovits, Nancy Oomen, James Pasternak, Eric Plant, Brian Shifman, Konstantin Toubis, Igor Toutchinski and Edward Zaretsky in that race.

The candidate lists in Toronto wards 16 (Eglinton-Lawrence) and 21 (St. Paul's) and Vaughan Ward 5 were unchanged as of last week.

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Israeli nanotech experts exploring Cdn. collaborations

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Three Israeli nanotechnology experts recently made visits to Ottawa and Toronto on a mission to make contact with Canadian counterparts and lay the groundwork for possible future collaborations between both countries.

Scientists Baruch Fischer, and Dov Sherman – a professor and associate professor respectively at the Israel Institute of Technology (Technion) – and Eylon Yavin, a researcher with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's faculty of medicine, met with peers at a two-day Carleton University nanotechnology workshop on Oct. 4 and 5.

They then made their way to Toronto to make the acquaintance of other researchers at the Ontario Centre of Excellence before heading back to Israel.

Israeli ambassador to Canada, Miriam Ziv, lauded the meetings.

"Israeli research and innovation is world renowned, and the potential benefits of an exchange of knowledge between Canada and Israel will be extremely valuable," she said in a statement prior to the workshop.

Carleton University vice-president Kim Matheson said her researchers looked forward to "sharing our work with top scientists from Israel and [to] co-operative ventures and initiatives that could result from these discussions."

Though no official agreements or projects resulted from the meetings, the Israeli researchers said they were excited at the opportunity to meet new colleagues and work with Canadians in the future and hoped both countries would find ways to free up grant money for collaborations in the future.

"It's difficult for us [to secure financing]. We need the help of industry to do this," Fischer said. "Universities in Canada are problem-solvers, and we want to collaborate on basic science and research. We are here to open windows and do more collaborating" with Canada.

Sherman expressed enthusiasm for his field and said that nanotechnology, while impressive for the layman, is still only in its infancy.

"This is an enthusiastic field. Things you could only imagine [before] are now possible," he said. But he cautioned that nanotechnology also has its limits in terms of applications in semiconductor technology.

"We can only shrink so much. We're getting to the limits of the semi-conductor," he said, adding that in his opinion, in about 15 or 20 years scientists will have to "find other ways" to go smaller in scale.

For his part, Yavin, the lone nanobiologist of the three, said his research is currently focusing on improving ways of drug delivery in the body as well as "finding ways to get molecules to where you want them in the body."

All three experts expressed their eagerness to reciprocate Israeli hospitality to sector representatives at the NanoIsrael 2010 Conference in Tel Aviv on Nov. 8 and 9.

From left, Prof. Baruch Fischer, Simone Moscovitz, director of public affairs with the Israeli embassy in Ottawa, Dr. Dov Sherman and Dr. Eylon Yavin. *[Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]*

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Christian Friends group voices support for Israel

By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN

Christians owe a special duty to study the Holocaust.

After all, acknowledges Susanna Kokkonen, centuries of Christian anti-Semitism lay the groundwork for the Holocaust, and Christian values – not to mention churches themselves – mostly failed to prevent the murder of Europe's Jews even as it happened.

Christians honour the Holocaust by studying it, says Kokkonen, and in so doing, wrestle with its many implications for their faith.

As director of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem, the soft-spoken Kokkonen oversees hundreds of Christian scholars and schoolteachers who come to the world-renowned museum and memorial in Jerusalem to learn how to teach history's greatest act of mass murder.

Susanna Kokkonen

It's also her role to reach out to churches and Christians around the world, not only to glean universal lessons of the Holocaust and showcase so-called Righteous Gentiles who saved Jews, but to voice support for Israel.

Christian Friends of Yad Vashem was established in 2006, and Kokkonen was appointed its director two years after that. A native of Finland who served as cultural attaché at the Finnish Embassy in Tel Aviv, for five years, she went on to earn a doctorate in Holocaust studies from Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

A believing Christian raised in a Pentecostal home, she does not support Israel in order to hasten the Christian apocalypse and the subsequent conversion of Jews. She does so because, as a strong Zionist, she believes Jews have a right to a homeland.

"Since I was a tiny girl, I knew the Bible spoke about the Jews' return to Zion. From then on, I knew my future would be connected to the Jewish people," Kokkonen told *The CJN* prior to addressing an audience last week at the Sarah & Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre.

Her appearance was also sponsored by the Canadian arm of International Christian Embassy Jerusalem and the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem.

Kokkonen supports Israel for other reasons: "It's a country that is trying to defend itself, surrounded by mostly hostile states. And we need Christians to wake up and to see that this is our responsibility now. We need to stand with Israel today."

Her views were also shaped by her youthful surroundings. Finland, she said, has been staunchly pro-Israel for years. And the top two countries to send teachers and researchers to Yad Vashem are Finland and Norway, she added.

The 30-something Kokkonen was in Toronto as part of a Canadian tour that took her to Winnipeg, Calgary and Vancouver to speak at churches and Bible colleges.

Kokkonen sighs softly when it's pointed out that the Holocaust was carried out in Christian countries. In some places, churches and clergy spoke out, while in others, they remained mostly silent.

"It's not fully understood, the Holocaust and its implications to us as Christians," she conceded. "That's why we have a special responsibility, not only to commemorate the Holocaust but to understand why Christian values did not work. The lessons speak to Christian failures."

An added dimension to the Holocaust's relevance, she noted, is its use to study other 20th-century genocides.

"Even if the Holocaust was unique to the Jewish people and it's the largest genocide the world has ever known, these lessons we learned from it are in fact valid to many other situations in our societies.

"The lessons are universal, and we can transfer those to other genocides to understand them better."

Kokkonen is dismayed that so many churches and Christian organizations in the West have led boycott, divestment and sanctions campaigns against Israel. Comparing the Holocaust with Israel's treatment of Palestinians is "obviously a lie."

"They cannot be compared in any way. Equating these hinders the peace process and obscures the facts. We know [the Holocaust] was mass murder. The conflict in the Middle East is over land."

She also understands the reluctance of some Holocaust survivors to open up to Christians.

"I understand their suspicion. It's completely justified. But it's misguided. It would be extremely short-sighted if this remained just a Jewish issue. It is an issue for the world."

As she sees it, "God requires from each of us to act. The worst thing that can happen is if people stopped acting."

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Righteous Gentiles honoured at 'True Heroes' gala

By STEPHEN SWEET
Special to The CJN

Hero is a word too often thrown around lightly.

But in the case of Marie-Francoise Borel, Cornelis and Heintje Roggeveen and Klaas and Boukje Feringa, it's an appropriate choice of word to describe each of them.

They risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust, and recently they were honoured as Righteous Among the Nations at the True Heroes Tribute Gala.

The gala, organized by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, was attended by about 1,000 people, including a number of Holocaust survivors.

I can't think of anything that's much more important than the act of Holocaust education and commemoration," said Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney at the event in downtown Toronto.

"This is really Canada's opportunity to participate in some of the most important educational work done in the world.

"You feel like you're in touch with living history. You watch Holocaust movies and read books, but it's never the same as to actually touch someone who's lived through this experience," Kenney added.

As none of the honorees are still alive, they were represented by family members who live in Canada and in the United States. Each family member was given a standing ovation.

"I've spoken to some of the survivors here, and my conversations with them are more my absolute astonishment at their bravery," said John Tory, who co-hosted the event with Ed Sonshine. Tory, the former leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, hosts a phone-in show on the radio station CFRB.

"I've just been in awe of these people and their relatives who did great things that we honoured here tonight," Tory said.

Canadian Society for Yad Vashem True Heroes Tribute Gala MCs and dinner co-chairs John Tory, left, and Ed Sonshine.

Borel saved Eugene and Esther Kaufman, as well as their daughter, by housing them in her small home outside of Paris.

She also took care of Faiga Kwiatek and her two daughters, Paulette and Therese, raising them as though they were her grandchildren.

Borel's grandson, Philippe, described his grandmother's thought process.

"There's a knock on your door," said Philippe. "It's your neighbour, and he fears for his and his family's life.

"Do you turn him away, or at your life's peril, do you welcome him into your home? You have come to a defining moment in your life.

"You will take them in, and know you did the right thing."

The Roggeveen and Feringa families took care of Max Noach during the Shoah.

Noach was supposed to do some land surveying work under the supervision of Cornelis Roggeveen. However, shortly after Noach started the work, all Jewish government employees in Holland were dismissed.

Roggeveen sent Noach a letter offering his help in hiding the Jewish young man in case things got any worse, knowing full well that the penalty for hiding a Jew in Holland was death for him and his entire family.

After a couple of years hiding at Roggeveen's house, Noach's living in the house became difficult. Roggeveen engineered a plan to take Noach as a "prisoner" by train to a houseboat, and when that became unsafe, he was hidden by the Feringas until the war's end.

"These people have done something so extraordinary in saving people that you almost can't believe that it happened," Tory said.

"But that's why these stories need to be told, and these people need to be recognized."

And while the content of the evening was quite serious, there was very much an upbeat feeling to the night.

"While we need to be serious about never forgetting and about those who put others ahead of themselves, it's also important that we celebrate the fact that we live in a country that protects people's rights, no matter the religion or minority," Tory said.

"There's an air of celebration to these events, to celebrate what we have and how far we've come.

"We haven't rid the world of genocide or crimes against humanity, but we've come a long way."

Rabbi Riskin makes case for keeping kids Jewish

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Much as Rabbi Shlomo Riskin is a proponent of Jewish day school education, he says it's not the answer to keeping future generations Jewish.

Nor is the memory of the Holocaust the key to Jewish survival, although it's something the Jewish community "dare not forget," he told a capacity crowd at Holy Blossom Temple last week.

He also noted that, even in Israel, there can be "total secularism."

The founder and chief rabbi of Efrat, speaking as part of the temple's Gerald Schwartz/Heather Reisman Centre for Jewish Learning series, spent more than an hour addressing the question, "Will our children and grandchildren be Jewish?"

"Why would they be Jewish?" he asked. "That is the most relevant question. It's the question of the so-called wicked child [in the Passover Haggadah], but it's the best question of all: 'What does this service mean to you? Explain it to me so maybe I can find meaning in it as well.'"

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

Whether future generations will be Jewish is "a foregone conclusion," he said, citing high intermarriage rates and even higher rates of children of intermarried couples not identifying as Jews.

"I certainly think we dare not give up on [intermarried couples]," the rabbi said. "I think we need to try very hard to explain Judaism to them."

Intermarriage, he believes, generally occurs not between a Jew and a Christian, but rather between "a secular American of Jewish background and a secular American of Christian background."

Alluding to the influence of grandparents, he noted that his own parents weren't observant Jews – his paternal grandfather was a Communist and his father never had a bar mitzvah – but his maternal grandmother was deeply religious, and her large extended family would gather at her house for an annual Passover seder.

Rabbi Riskin described Judaism as "a civilization with a language and a culture and a philosophy and a lifestyle and a calendar all of its own.

"We must understand that conveying Judaism is a very delicate and very difficult task, especially in the Diaspora," he said, citing the challenges of learning Hebrew and adjusting to a different calendar.

"And I'm not talking about Orthodox Judaism," added the rabbi, who is Orthodox. "I'm speaking of serious Judaism. There are 'Orthoprax Jews' who are not really serious – what they do, they do by rote. And there are non-Orthodox Jews – who identify sometimes even as humanist – who are very serious about the lifestyle and the civilization."

Being a serious Jew involves a time commitment, a learning commitment and an action commitment, he said.

Historically, there has always been assimilation, the rabbi said. "Those Jews who survived sometimes came from [outside the Jewish community], probably through conversion. Those Jews who survived… were the Jews who bought into the Jewish civilization, who studied Hebrew, who lived the Jewish lifestyle, who identified and informed themselves on Jewish history."

Addressing his own rhetorical question of why we don't "put Judaism to rest" if it's so difficult, Rabbi Riskin said he believes with every fibre of his being that Judaism must continue, because "the entire world depends" on the continuation of the teachings of Jewish civilization.

"No other civilization has come up with a moral code that is as accepted universally as the Ten Commandments," he said. "We gave the world the notion of peace as a core ideal."

As well, he cited optimism and the notion of "perfectibility of human nature" as gifts that Judaism brings to the world.

"It's an unfinished symphony in which one generation hands over the baton to the next until we finally succeed.

"The most important thing I can do is give [my grandchild] the baton… We're living in a global world in which we're all interdependent."

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Sharing the Holocaust — 140 characters at a time

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

A Canadian philanthropic organization has taken to the Internet to share Holocaust survivor memoirs, 140 characters at a time.

The Azrieli Foundation, which, among other programs, promotes access to Holocaust education and aims to expand Holocaust commemoration, is using Twitter to tell Anka Voticky's story.

Voticky, a 97-year-old survivor, left Prague in 1940 and went to Shanghai with her husband, Arnold, and eight others. In 1943, they and every other Jew who had come to Shanghai after 1937 were forced to move into a ghetto in the poorest area of the city.

The Twitter project is leading up to the Toronto launch of Series 3 of the Azrieli Series of Holocaust Survivor Memoirs, taking place on Oct. 26.

Naomi Azrieli, chair and executive director of the Azrieli Foundation, said using Twitter to share these stories is a great way to reach people who would not know about the memoirs otherwise.

"We were looking for something unique and compelling to bring the past into the present and reach out to a completely different audience," she said.

"By using 140 characters at a time, the story can be told in an unique way. [There is] even more impact getting it in short snippets."

The idea to collect and publish Holocaust memoirs came from her father, David, who is a survivor. He spent 10 years writing his memoirs and was able to find a publisher right away. Realizing that most survivors don't get their memoirs published, he knew it wasn't something that could be done for profit.

Once the call for submissions was put out in 2005, the Azrieli Foundation received 50 manuscripts in two months. Today, it has 170 memoirs from across Canada. Once Series 3 is released, 22 books will have been published, some in English, others in French. They are distributed free to libraries and schools.

"The stories were there, we had confirmation that they were," Naomi Azrieli said. "The program really grew when we realized there was a bigger mission here – [to] promote education about the Holocaust and tolerance in communities across the country."

Voticky's story, which has been tweeted since August of this year, marks the first time the Azrieli Foundation has used Twitter to share survivor stories. With almost 400 followers, Azrieli says the response to the campaign has been "wonderful."

Due to the positive response to Voticky's story, the foundation plans to continue using Twitter to share more of the survivor memoirs. The memoirs in Series 1 and 2 are currently available for download at www.azrielifoundation.org and will soon be available for e-readers and the iPad.

Although Azrieli is a big believer in and user of social media, there is no experience comparable to that of sitting down and reading a book, she says.

"I think that it's [social media] the best possible way to reach out now. At the same time, I truly believe in the book. I think that there's something about the experience of sitting down and reading a book that will never go away… It's very important to use social media, but at the same time it's also a means to an end to get you to read the books."

With Series 4 already in the works and planned to come out in 2011, Azrieli says the Azrieli Foundation is always on the lookout for more manuscripts.

The launch of Series 3 is being held at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, with excerpts from the new memoirs being read by the authors or their families. Linda Hooper, who, as principal of Whitwell Middle School in Tennessee started a Holocaust education program at the school in 1998, is the keynote speaker. The school is also home to the Paper Clip Project and a children's Holocaust museum, established by Hooper.

Admission to the launch is free, and all guests will receive a set of the Series 3 memoirs. To reserve a spot at the launch, visit www.azrielifoundation.org or call 416-410-5875.

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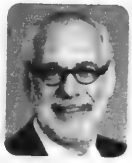

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Singer's dream to come true at Massey Hall

BY VICKY TOBIANAH
Special to The CJN

After three decades of putting her talent aside to raise a family, Andrea Iscoe will fulfil her dream of performing on stage at Massey Hall.

She has booked the venue, and along with a slew of undiscovered Canadian entertainers, including Sarah Dylan and Jessica Saithe, will perform there for one night next month. The money raised from the concert will go to support the SOS Children's Villages.

Iscoe grew up in Toronto's Forest Hill neighbourhood and was always interested in the arts, and less so in school. She studied radio and television at Seneca College and later pursued a film degree at York University.

She always loved singing and met her husband at a bar where she was performing. After travelling in Europe and singing in bars there, Iscoe realized that being a singer was a lonely existence, especially without a band, and returned to Toronto, where she focused on raising a family. Thirty years later, she will return to the stage.

"I never had room for a musical career, although music continued to be important in my life," Iscoe says. "I used my music to help plan events and charities throughout my life, but I never really had time to sing. Suddenly, my kids were grown up and I thought, 'Wouldn't it be amazing if I could sing at Massey Hall?'"

Although friends and family didn't take her seriously, she was not deterred. Two years and many phone calls, e-mails and meetings later, her dream is about to become a reality. "So many things kept happening to me that led me to Massey Hall. My friend Judy Wingold Rosenberg came back into my life, and she was involved with a charity called SOS Children's Villages. She inspired me to fulfil my dream," says Iscoe.

Andrea Iscoe with Canadian Music Hall of Famer Duff Roman, who will MC the Nov. 17 event .

"I realized that if I wanted to sing at Massey Hall, there must be others like me in Canada. So my friend taught me how to put an ad on craigslist, and suddenly I was receiving audition tapes. I've been a musician long enough to know you can make anything sound good in a studio, so I needed to hear them live. And that's why I had to start clubbing."

Iscoe wanted a chance to fulfil her dream and to give others the chance to fulfil theirs as well. "I didn't want to look back later on and realize I never pursued what I wanted to do. I believe if you have a dream, you should stick to it."

The road to her dream was not easy. When Iscoe called Massey Hall and asked about renting the venue for a charity concert, people there thought she was crazy. "I had one person scream at me through the phone saying, 'You can't do this!' I thought to myself – no, you can't, but I can," Iscoe says.

While planning this event, her friend Wingold Rosenberg passed away. "When Judy passed away, it was so difficult," Iscoe says. "She was the impetus behind me."

The concert is dedicated to Wingold Rosenberg, who died of breast cancer last year, and to a family friend who died on the same date as the concert, Nov. 17.

"I don't regret putting my career aside while my kids were growing up. I want to show them that young dreams don't die just because you get old," Iscoe says. "If anything, they only become stronger. I didn't do this to get a career in music – I know I'm not going to be a rock star."

Iscoe's team is now made up of 75 people and includes Canadian Music Hall of Famer Duff Roman, a former CHUM-AM deejay, who will MC the retro-themed event at the hall called A Night at Massey Hall: Rockin' Out The Oldies.

"If this had been my kids' dream, I would've done anything to make it possible," Iscoe says. "So I thought why not fulfil my own dream as well, while also giving back to my community."

For tickets, visit www.masseyhall.com. E-mail anightatmasseyhall@gmail.com for more information.

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Jewish Life

Is the Internet Jewish?

Jewish & Digital
By Mark Mietkiewicz

When Rick Sanchez was recently fired from CNN for calling Jon Stewart a "bigot" and questioning whether Jews really were discriminated against since they controlled the media, there were predictable responses looking at how much power Jews do have in publishing, broadcasting and Hollywood. (According to Slate's reckoning, "Maybe the movies, but not the news." **[http://bit.ly/jewishweb1]**)

But I was far more taken by a thoughtful piece by Liel Leibovitz in the online magazine Tablet. Reacting to similar claims that many Internet giants are Jewish, Leibovitz responds with a somewhat surprising, "They're not wrong." But he explains that "there is, of course, no Jewish cabal scheming behind the scenes to entice Muslims and others to join Facebook, use Google or consult Wikipedia. But a case could be made that the Internet, in its current iteration, commonly referred to as Web 2.0 – focused on applications that facilitate user interaction and collaboration – is governed by a logic that is inherently Jewish, a logic that has sustained the Jews as a community for millennia and that propelled a disproportionate number of them – Sergey Brin, Larry Ellison, Jimmy Wales, Mark Zuckerberg – to the helm of Web 2.0's most important companies." **[http://bit.ly/jewishweb2]**

In the book *The Talmud and the Internet: A Journey Between Worlds*, Jonathan Rosen writes, "I have often thought, contemplating a page of Talmud, that it bears a certain uncanny resemblance to a home page on the Internet, where nothing is whole in itself but where icons and text boxes are doorways through which visitors pass into an infinity of cross-referenced texts and conversations." **[http://bit.ly/jewishweb3]** (A couple of chapters of Rosen's book can be read online.)

People of the Book, People of the Link, is presented by Estee Solomon Gray at San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum. The images are striking, often juxtaposing ancient and modern. **[http://bit.ly/jewishweb5]** I like how (on page 54 of this pdf) Gray lays out an article titled Two Jews, Three Blogs, in the form of a page of Talmud with the contents in the centre and annotation around the edges.

You can read a more legible version of that article by early blogger Esther Kustanowitz, who writes that "if the Talmud were being compiled today, instead of separate Babylonian and Jerusalem versions, we would likely have one big blog edition – a living document, constantly evolving through international, interdenominational discussion. No longer the private domain of rabbis and sages, this contemporary Talmud would be accessible to everyone." **[http://bit.ly/jewishweb6]**

Harvey Blume isn't convinced. Writing in the TheAtlantic.com, he suggests that "the seductive esthetic of Talmudic form should not obscure its point. The Talmud was no text-based interactive game, no recipe for an open-source religion. Its function was to regulate Judaism in the Diaspora, when it was no longer possible for Jews to discharge their religious obligations in a cult centred on a temple in Jerusalem. However labyrinthine its methods, the Talmud's rulings were binding." **[http://bit.ly/jewishweb7]**

Leibovitz concludes his article in Tablet by asking whether repressive regimes – or anyone – should fear the web and its Jewish personalities. "They know that the most radical thing about Brin, Zuckerberg, and the technologies they created, is that they encourage constant commentary, ongoing debate, endless involvement. It's a way of thinking that is… bad for oppressive corporations, zealous theocracies and anyone else wishing to exert complete control over information. But it is very good for the Jews."

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based website producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be contacted at highway@rogers.com.

When it's about more than service

CLASS ACT
By Daniel Held

Jewish service learning has grown by leaps and bounds. While the boom may have been sparked by the ongoing Jewish volunteer response to Hurricane Katrina, today, under the aegis of various Jewish organizations, immersive service programs for teenagers and college students seem endless. During school breaks, students can build a medical clinic in Africa, serve meals in a soup kitchen in Israel or teach in underprivileged schools in rural America.

The programs go beyond one-shot volunteer projects. Ranging from a week to a year, immersive experiences build a sense of community, teach about Jewish values to supplement the experiential learning and instil a sense of communal obligation.

In this column, I recount my own stories leading groups doing disaster relief in New Orleans, working with Ethiopian immigrants in Israel and building homes for the poor in rural Appalachia. As an educator, I believe these to be Jewishly exhilarating, impactful and educative experiences.

We must, however, acknowledge that service learning is not always about service. Last year, I travelled to a Mayan village in rural Mexico with a group of rabbinical students ostensibly to help build a textile workshop. Rabbis should not work in construction. In pursuit of economic development, our money and effort would have been better spent hiring locals to build the workshop.

Still, I offer three rationales for immersive Jewish service learning.

• The Jewish experience

When Hillel sends a group of students to New Orleans to gut homes, a primary goal is to create a uniquely Jewish experience. When a group of Jewish students volunteers together, learns Jewish texts relating to social justice and spends Shabbat together, the experience works its magic. Highlights of the trips I ran volunteering for Habitat for Humanity in West Virginia include kashering a kitchen, praying in the early morning mountain air, and engaging in interreligious dialogue with local church leaders.

• Institution building

Service learning trips are today's UJA Israel missions. Organizers hope to build a group of impassioned supporters who will return home and share their stories. When the rabbinical students returned from Mexico, each was expected to raise money for the sponsoring organization and to speak in synagogue about the trip. The trip is an investment in building a cadre of long-term donors and supporters. Like Birthright, Hillel hopes that taking students on alternative spring breaks is a way to engage them in year-round activities. I struggle with ethical challenges associated with these two goals. Are we strengthening Jewish identity on the back of hungry Africans or building a donor base by using illiterate children? Are we exploiting the needs of others as a means to an unrelated end? These dilemmas are mitigated by the goal of authentic service.

• Authentic service

Authentic service in aid of development must be both an immediate economic calculation and a long-term support-building exercise. After Katrina, labour was in such short supply that McDonalds hired staff for $15 an hour. In New Orleans, volunteers helped those who could not afford the inflated cost of contractors. In Mexico, our "service" often seemed futile. Viewing the exercise not as direct service but as an attempt to build long-term support for international development, we could contextualize why a group of rabbis were mixing cement as skilled and unemployed locals chuckled.

As service learning grows, we must balance these goals. As a Jewish educator, I place value on identity building and organizational development. As a social activist, I'm committed to serving those in need in an authentic and non-paternalistic way. Finding the balance between these goals will ensure that service learning meets both our own needs and those of the communities we seek to serve.

Jewish Life

Yiddish culture celebrated at Ottawa U

Yiddish culture is alive and well at the University of Ottawa.

Prof. Rebecca Margolis, an esteemed Yiddish scholar, is responsible for the Yiddish language, film and culture courses at the University of Ottawa. The courses she teaches are taken by Jewish students who are looking to further understand their roots and non-Jewish students who are interested in learning about various cultures and leaning different languages. Yiddish academia is growing in Ottawa, and it is predominantly due to these courses offered at the University of Ottawa.

On Campus
By Justin Dahan

Toba Cooper, an alumnus of Ottawa U, who partook of Yiddish learning during her school tenure, has created the Ethel Cooper Yiddish Studies Award of Excellence. The award is for a student who has immersed her or himself in the Yiddish language and culture.

Cooper named the award in honour of her mother, Ethel, in celebration of her mother's 60th birthday and to recognize her mother's lifelong commitment to Yiddish.

Ethel Cooper was born to Holocaust survivors in a Yiddish home, where she maintained pride in her culture and began to find ways to pass on the Yiddish culture.

Cooper's Yiddish-language career began with the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, which is dedicated to the history and culture of Ashkenazi Jewry and its influence on the Americas.

Cooper has a teaching degree, and in the 1990s, she used that degree as a way to spread the Yiddish language. She taught Yiddish at the Bialik Hebrew Day School in Toronto and later at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (now the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto). She was able to reach many students, and they acquired a love for the language and culture through poetry, songs and literature.

Cooper is the chairperson of the UJA Federation Committee for Yiddish, through which she has has worked to promote a vision of Yiddish as integral to the Jewish community at large.

The inaugural Ethel Cooper Yiddish Studies award ceremony took place on Oct. 17 at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre. The event began with two Yiddish musical performances: Musical Ebraica, a choir dedicated to performing Jewish music, and Shiru Lach, the Soloway JCC's resident choir. The two performances featured rare Yiddish music and were an exceptional way to kick off a night celebrating Yiddish.

The Ethel Cooper Yiddish Studies Award of Excellence was given to Danielle Lynch, a biomedical-sciences student. "I have enjoyed studying Yiddish so much because it is so inextricably linked to European Jewish history and culture," said Lynch.

Interest in the Yiddish language is growing in Ottawa, and with an award to celebrate the language in the Ottawa region, that interest will only continue to grow. Many Jewish students have a fond appreciation of their culture, and a big part of it is Yiddish culture – films, music and, of course, the spoken word.

People such as Toba Cooper and her mother are helping to promote the continued growth of interest in the Yiddish language, and the award is certainly a good show of support to Margolis, who has worked hard to ensure that the interest continues.

Help from the righteous

One of my most enduring childhood memories is of my grandmother, Rachel Abecassis, the mother of my mother.

My grandmother was truly a holy woman. She had no formal education – she didn't know how to read and spoke only Arabic – but she walked with God.

A vivid image of my grandmother waking up every morning, approaching the mezuzah and praying remains with me to this day. I even remember her words as she conversed with God, her Beloved.

Sephardi Window
By Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Memé prayed for her children and grandchildren – indeed, for her whole family. She prayed for the soldiers protecting Israel. Her prayer was powerful in its simplicity.

My grandmother is a treasure I grew up with and continue to cherish. Her memory continues to inspire me and reinforce my faith, with no room for despair.

I have asked myself time and again what the secret of this simple, heartfelt faith in God is. The only answer I come up with is the upbringing of her generation.

My grandmother's generation grew up with this faith, literally, from birth. It is something palpably innate in them, while I strive to acquire it.

Part of our ancestors' faith was *emunat tzaddikim* – faith in the righteous and saintly. I would often hear my grandmother pray in the merit of certain tzaddikim. She believed the tzaddikim were so close to God that they could pray on her behalf.

The concept of *emunat tzaddikim* originates in our Torah. After the Jewish Nation crossed the Red Sea, the Torah proclaims, the Israelites believed in God and His faithful servant, Moses, without reservation.

The Ibn Ezra (1093-1167) explains that, at this point, the Jews saw Moses as the vessel for the voice of God. The spiritual level of His servant was such that, after Moses' sister, the saintly Miriam, was afflicted with leprosy, Moses prayed on her behalf, and she was cured.

A tzaddik has the merit of being so close to God that if he asks for something of God, it's difficult for Him to refuse. We recall what King David wrote in Psalm 145: "He will fulfil the will of those who fear him and hear their cries and save them."

In Sephardi communities, there exists a custom called, in Arabic, *zeyara*, meaning "visiting." *Zeyara* is a widely held custom whereby individuals, and even whole communities, visit the gravesites of tzaddikim on the anniversaries of their deaths and beseech God in the merit of these saintly people. This is not a pagan tradition that transforms the tzaddikim into God. Rather, we pray to God in the merit of these tzaddikim.

My mother, born in the city of Mogador in Morocco, tells of witnessing miracles with her own eyes, wonders realized through prayer at the grave and in the merit of the revered Rabbi Chaim Pinto, of blessed memory, who is buried there. These miracles were an accepted fact for my mother and her generation.

I endeavour to uphold this tradition whenever I have the chance to be at the gravesite of a tzaddik or where a tzaddik lives, be he Ashkenazi, chassidic or Sephardi. I inevitably feel so refreshed, so moved, as if my soul becomes further infused with faith and purpose.

Whether at a graveside or in the company of a living tzaddik, or from afar through prayer and mitzvot, all of us can strive in our own lives for the very real help of our tzaddikim.

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NIF rep advocates alternative

'Israel right or wrong' not the only choice

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Acknowledging Israel's challenges and flaws shouldn't mean that people are slotted into an "anti-Israel" camp, Rabbi David Rosenn said in Toronto recently.

The New York-based chief operating officer of the New Israel Fund (NIF) – who is was ordained by the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary and is the founder of AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps – said that the organized Jewish community is risking "the relationship that people have with Israel, and their ability to have a nuanced relationship with Israel."

Speaking Oct. 6 at the Al Green Theatre in place of the NIF's CEO, Daniel Sokatch, who was unable to get to Toronto because of a medical emergency, Rabbi Rosenn said that some people – especially young people – "want to be supportive of Israel and find there isn't a way between 'Israel right or wrong' and 'Israel always wrong.'"

In the last six decades, Israel has come to play an "incredibly significant" role in the North American Jewish community, Rabbi Rosenn said. Support for Israel has been "strong, and in the centre.

"There's been a diversity of opinions on how to support and love and connect to Israel, but the official voices of the Jewish community have pretty much had a consistent message," he said.

The message, as Rabbi Rosenn conveyed it, is: "We've got to support Israel, right or wrong.'"

However, he pointed out, younger Jews grew up with an image of Israel as a Goliath rather than a David.

"It has been very difficult for people to find a way to ask questions, even if they think not everything Israel does is right," because they'll be labelled as anti-Israel, he said.

Rabbi Rosenn, who began working for the NIF six months ago, said the organization would like to provide an alternative by supporting efforts to work on social issues including poverty and protection of civil rights.

The NIF has partnerships with almost all the major universities in Israel and works with many government ministries, he said.

But, he noted, about 10 months ago, there was a billboard and newspaper ad campaign in Israel accusing the NIF of being anti-Israel. It claimed, he said, that 92 per cent of the material in the United Nations' Goldstone Commission report, which accused Israel of war crimes, was provided by NIF-funded groups. The claim turned out to be "completely false," Rabbi Rosenn said.

Rabbi David Rosenn

"The notion that human rights organizations doing what they should be doing – reporting, not concluding – is somehow a threat to the State of Israel, was really the message behind these ads," he added. "The New Israel Fund is very proud of its support for the human and civil rights sector in Israel."

He also noted that, in the wake of some of the human rights organizations' reports about last year's Gaza operation, the IDF has begun to change some of its policies. "The New Israel Fund sees it as core to the mission of the State of Israel to continue to reassert and re-entrench its commitments to democracy."

Prior to and following Rabbi Rosenn's talk, a protester handed out papers from NGO Monitor, accusing the NIF of claiming to love Israel, but giving millions of dollars to "groups that delegitimize it."

Rabbi Rosenn said both groups want the same thing – "an Israel that is strong and secure" – but that they disagree on how to attain it. He expressed regret that "people in the Jewish community can't do more to come to an understanding that we shouldn't attack the other on issues where we could actually find some common ground."

Rabbi Rosenn stressed that the NIF is "not going to support organizations that isolate and demonize Israel" and encouraged the audience to visit the organization's website and look at its principles.

Curb Your Enthusiasm's Jeff Garlin headlines UJA celebration

Tickets to October 27th event at Royal York Hotel are going fast

Curb Your Enthusiasm's Jeff Garlin

By Daniel Horowitz

"A Frenchman, an Irishman and a Jew are walking through the desert. The Frenchman says 'I'm so tired; I must have a glass of wine.' The Irishman says 'I'm so tired, I'm so thirsty, I must have a glass of beer'. The Jew says, 'I'm so tired, I'm so thirsty, I must have diabetes.'" The above is Jeff Garlin's favourite Jewish joke and just a sample what attendees of a special United Jewish Appeal 2011 Campaign event on Wednesday, October 27th, can expect. That's when, at Toronto's Fairmont Royal York Hotel at 7:30 pm, UJA presents Garlin, the Jewish 48-year-old co-star of HBO's *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, as the keynote speaker in a celebration of its 2011 Campaign.

UJA Campaign 2011 – chaired by Sherry Firestone and Jeff Rosenthal - has already raised more than $33 million toward its goal of over $66 million in the wake of threats to our children, our grandchildren and our way of life created by the global movement designed to delegitimize Israel as a Jewish state. Campaign 2011 dollars will continue to fund transformative change for Jews in need here in Toronto, in Israel and around the world. At the same time, dollars raised beyond last year's campaign total will support initiatives designed to instill a strong Jewish identity in our young, including a deeper connection to Israel. In the course of doing so, UJA will provide the next generation with the tools they need to successfully answer the challenges posed by those who attack the core of the Jewish people through their efforts against Israel.

In addition to *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, which launched its eighth season just last week, Garlin is a respected writer, producer, director and stand-up comic. He began his career in stand-up while at the University of Miami, before eventually dropping out, honing his comedic skills on the stage of Second City in Chicago. He was part of the cast of NBC's *Mad About You* and in the film *Daddy Day Care* with Eddie Murphy. His other film roles include the voice of The Captain in Disney Pixar's *Wall-e*, and as Buttercup the Unicorn in *Toy Story 3*.

"My background is that I always was the class clown," says Garlin, who plays the fictional Larry David's henpecked manager, Jeff Greene – and the perpetually scolded husband of Susie Essman - on the television show. "I went to Hebrew school, had a bar mitzvah, used to go to Temple with all the old Jewish men and then have lox and bagels. I married a Jewish girl; my boys will be bar mitzvahed, and I'm very proud and happy to be Jewish and I think that everything I do is naturally Jewish."

Regarding *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, and his role on the popular show, Garlin states: "Originally, I approached Larry David with the idea for the show, and my intent was to direct it, and not even be in it," he says. "He's the one that insisted that I play his manager and be an executive producer. It totally has changed my life, and I'm indebted to him forever, and every time I work on that show, not only am I lucky, I laugh my ass off and I have a great time. And it's probably the most fun I'll ever have as an actor, ever."

Garlin is a Chicago native whose father had a plumbing supply business and whose mother was active in community theatre. He also authored his first book this year titled *"My Footprint: Carrying the Weight of the World,"* in which he describes a 10-month period spent testing every pound-shedding strategy imaginable: exercise regimens, 12-step programs, diets, workouts with Richard Simmons, saw him reduce his weight from a high of 320 pounds to 260.

For readers who regard him as a likeable, fun guy, Garlin expects that they will be surprised by the desperate, relentless side of himself presented in his book.

"I've always been the kind of unhappy person who didn't bring others down with him," he told *The New York Times* in an interview. "Even if you worked with me and spent time with me, you'd never know. I was the jolly fat man."

Even today, Garlin, who counts Richard Pryor as his all-time favourite comedian, and lists Jack Benny, Shelley Berman (who plays Larry David's dad on the HBO show), Woody Allen, Albert Brooks and George Carlin as other favourite comedic influences, still enjoys the company of "old Jews."

"Both my children went to Jewish nursery school, so I was at the Temple almost every day picking them up and dropping them off," he says. "Here's the thing – my Temple doesn't have this, but I would love to go to one where they have a big lox platter after the service on a Saturday morning. And I love being around old Jews. My great-grandparents lived in London and I went and saw where they lived and went and saw the oldest synagogue in London."

This event, chaired by Joel Feldberg and Leslie Salmons, is open to all community members who commit to making a gift to the current UJA Campaign 2011. Tickets are $30 and include a dessert reception.

To register, please call Michelle at 416.631.5685 or visit ujaevents.com/registration/JeffGarlin.

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Garlin, with Curb's Larry David.

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Judie Oron

Judie Oron's new book, ***Cry of the Giraffe*** is based on the true story of Wudifu, her adopted daughter.

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Marek Halter speaks on his new epic ***The Jewish Odyssey***, the far-reaching story of a people who, despite facing perpetual struggle, have shaped modern civilization.

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Journalist, political advocate, and the founder of the liberal Muslim organization Muslim Canadian Congress, Tarek Fatah speaks on his new book, ***The Jew is Not My Enemy: Unveiling the Myths that Fuel Muslim Anti-Semitism***.

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APPLE CRUMBLE SALE: Max Collie, left, Josh Hendel, centre and Jonny Micay were among middle school students at Leo Baeck Day School's south campus (in Holy Blossom Temple) who opened their ovens recently for the much-anticipated Annual Apple Crumble Event. With the help of more than 200 capable hands – washing, peeling, stuffing and wrapping – students raised more than $1,000 for Mazon Canada.

HOW SWEET IT IS: At right, senior kindergarten student Shayna and her mother, Yael Katzman, enjoy the fruits of their labour while picking apples during Netivot HaTorah Day School's annual preschool apple picking trip.

[Rebecca Ansel photo]

GIMME SHELTER: Below, grade 6 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School collaborated to build a shelter as part of a range of team-building activities and survival skills they learned at a recent retreat at Camp George. Pictured, from left, are Anna Nabutovksy, Jacob Tobin, Naama Nefech-Mozes, Sarah Eisen, Dylan Wagman, and Danielle Clasky.

Rae plans to visit Mideast later this month

Continued from page 3

The former NDP premier of Ontario, Rae plans to visit the Mideast later this month, stopping in Israel, the Palestinian areas in the West Bank, Jordan and Egypt. By his count, it will be his 10th visit to Israel since the early 1990s.

Speaking in his constituency office in Cabbagetown, Rae, an advocate of a two-state solution, took questions on a wide variety of Middle Eastern problems.

Taking issue with the perception that Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government has been more pro-Israel than previous Canadian governments, he said, "I don't think that's true. No party has a monopoly on its commitment to Israel's security within recognized international borders."

Rae, claiming that Harper's foreign policy is based too much on "partisan advantage," said he has failed to recognize that Canada has a national interest in defusing the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Professing to be unconcerned about the perception that Jews in Canada have begun to rethink their traditional support of the Liberal party, Rae suggested that Canada's relationship with Israel is not the only issue on their agenda.

"All voters, regardless of background, will vote on the basis of various issues. It's an oversimplification that there is only one issue."

"We, as a national party, have to appeal to the whole electorate," he noted.

The Liberal party, Rae went on to say, has "a long-standing connection" with the Jewish community and hews to a "principled" position that takes Israel's security needs into account.

He downplayed media speculation that Canada's failure to win a non-permanent seat on the United Nation's Security Council last week was partially a function of its increasingly unflinching pro-Israel stance.

"Not really," he said. "Canada has always consistently supported Israel."

His own personal support for Israel, he observed, hinges on his understanding of its need for peace and security.

Asked whether he has policy differences with Israel's current right-of-centre government, Rae replied, "It's not a personal issue. Canada has taken a consistent position since 1967. We don't regard settlement activity [in the territories] as conducive to peace. Nor does it advance the cause of Israel's security."

Advocates two-state solution

A peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians should include two major provisions – mutually recognized borders and self-determination for the Palestinians.

As he put it, "There has to be a recognition of borders and boundaries and of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to have a country of their own."

Coming out in favour of an extension of Israel's partial moratorium on construction in the West Bank, Rae said, "It was a statesman-like gesture, and something like it again would be helpful to get the parties back to the negotiating table. Getting back to the table is important."

Sizing up Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's commitment to peace, Rae said, "He is sincere about wanting peace. He has a keen sense of Israel's long-term security interests."

Rae said he hopes to meet Netanyahu when he travels to Israel at the end of this month.

Asked for his appraisal of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, whom he has met, he said, "He's committed to mutual recognition, a two-state solution and negotiations. He's a man who has to be talked to."

When he was asked whether Israel should withdraw to the pre-1967 lines to achieve peace with the Palestinians, Rae said this pivotal issue should be settled in bilateral talks, adding that border adjustments should be the outcome of mutual agreement.

Likewise, he said, Israel's demand for Palestinian recognition of its status as a Jewish state should be hammered out in talks.

Rae would not be drawn into a discussion on whether Israel, as claimed by the United Nations' Goldstone commission, committed war crimes during its invasion of the Gaza Strip last year. "Goldstone's report is not determinative of that issue, and I'll leave it at that."

He was also careful in answering a question about allegations that Israel used disproportionate force in the Gaza war.

"Israel's motivations in entering Gaza were based on a profound sense that attacks from bases in Gaza were continuing," he said in a reference to Palestinian rocket barrages. "Those motivations are completely understandable."

What has to be assessed, he said, is what impact Israel's military response had on Gaza's civilian population.

As for Israel's siege of Gaza, Rae offered a two-pronged answer. "The human needs of Gaza have to be recognized and conditions in Gaza have to be improved, as they have been. But it's entirely legitimate that Israel is concerned about its security."

Rae suggested that Hamas – which has been in control of Gaza since June 2007 – cannot be part of any peace process unless it recognizes Israel's existence and disavows violence.

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Ignatieff clarifies Liberal stand on Israel

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

The Liberal Party "stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the democratic state of Israel. End of story."

That was the first message Liberal party leader Michael Ignatieff told an audience at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue in Toronto last week.

As part of his ongoing "Open Mike" town hall discussions, Ignatieff also responded to a question about an Oct. 7 blog post made by a Liberal candidate in the riding of Toronto-Danforth, Andrew Lang, that criticized Canada's current policies on Israel, saying they're too "sycophantic" and that the country should stop "placating" Israel.

Ignatieff said Lang's comments don't reflect his party's position on Israel and that he was "caught by surprise" by them. "We've told [Lang] you're not speaking for the Liberal party and what we think about the necessity for our party to stand by Israel."

Ignatieff also said Canada's failure last week to attain a seat on the UN Security Council was "a sad day for Canada." He noted that while he doesn't believe the UN "is perfect," the country has lost a chance to get involved to make it a better institution.

Additionally, he said he realizes that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is the current "incarnation of Holocaust denial. I can't be in the room when that man's talking. Is that clear? Nor, were I... your prime minister, would I authorize any [government official] to be in the room."

Ignatieff said the Jewish community should have no doubt that a Liberal government he led would continue to "stand against a regime that stands against everything that right-thinking Canadians represent."

The Liberal leader also took questions on fighting AIDS in Africa, making post-secondary education more affordable, strengthening First Nations communities, and fiscal responsibility to preserve social programming such as welfare and pensions, among others.

Ignatieff was joined at the event by other high-profile Liberals, including MPs Joe Volpe, Judy Sgro, Ken Dryden, Rob Oliphant and former justice minister and renowned human rights advocate Irwin Cotler, who flew in from Montreal to attend.

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum.

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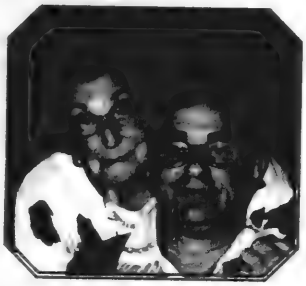

Happy 60th anniversary to Faina & Max Sitzer from your children, grandchildren, family and friends. Mazel tov on this tremendous milestone in your lives.

Mazel tov Marisa Perfetti & Jeffrey Baum on their engagement. Parents, Shirley & Louis Baum, Gabriele & Rita Perfetti. Brothers, Dave and Brian Baum. Zaidie, Kalman Baum.

David, Ayala, Sammy & Ellie Socol announce the birth of Naya & Ezra in California. Grandparents, Verna Erez, Elaine & Harvey Socol. Great-grandfather Albert Socol.

Boris, Lori and big brother Gabriel are thrilled to announce the arrival of Jayme Mikayla. Excited grandparents, Jack Donsky, Marla Hebscher and Alex & Lily Rabinovitch.

Happy first birthday Sophie! Love, Mommy, Daddy, Bubbie Alydia, Bubbie Janet, Zaide Irwin and Zaide Raphael. We love you so much.

Debbie & Frank Myers and Janet & Tony Mills are thrilled to announce the engagement of Andrew & Danielle.

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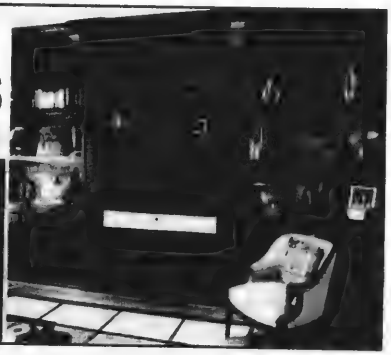

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What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

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Deadline for Nov. 4 is Oct. 25. Deadline for Nov. 11 is Nov. 1. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Oct. 21

CONVERSION BILL

The conversion bill being debated in Israel will be discussed by **Howard English** at an Association of Jewish Seniors-sponsored meeting. 10 a.m. Shaarei Shomayim. Members free, guests $2. Tammy, 416-635-2860.

FOOL FESTIVAL

Festival of Oral Literatures (FOOL) includes **Hilary Peach, Laura Simms, Alan Shain, Éric Gauthier, Regina Machado** and many more storytellers, poets and theatre artists. www.foolfestival.ca, to Oct. 24.

Friday, Oct. 22

SHABBAT SERVICE

Join Beth Emeth for Shabbat services every other Friday with **Rabbi Leslie Lipson.** 6:15 p.m. at Garnet Williams Community Centre. www.bebv.org for service times.

Saturday, Oct. 23

TORAH STUDY

Beth Tikvah Torah class. Saturdays to December. This week, **Abe Birenbaum** does parshah Vayera. 9:45-10:45 a.m.

YES I CAN ALUMNI

Current and past attendees of Yes I Can nursery school are invited to a special reunion. 12-3 p.m. 100 Ranleigh Ave. RSVP reunion@yesicannurseryschool.com

SHABBAT LECTURE

"Young Jews, Zionism and the 'Failure' of the Jewish Establishment." Insights and opinions on the future of the Diaspora Jewish community and its relationship with Israel. Includes a discussion of writer **Peter Beinart**'s challenges to the American Jewish establishment with **Stephen McDonald, Rabbi Jared Grover** and **Adam Eilath**. At Beth Tikvah after kiddush.

YIDDISH FILM NIGHT

Unzere Kinder (Our Children) screening. $5 suggested. 7:45 p.m. Kehillat Shaarei Torah.

Sunday, Oct. 24

GLOBAL JEWISH VILLAGE

Rabbi Bonita Sussman and **Rabbi Gerald Sussman** discuss their visit to the Bene Ephraim community of Kotha Reddy Palem, India, in 2007. Darchei Noam. 7 p.m.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Beth Emeth presents Breakfast and Briyut. 9:30 a.m. With **Stephanie Bergman**, audiologist, on "It's Never Too Early to Check Our Hearing." $12. 416-633-3838.

RCMP EXPERIENCE

Shaar Shalom Singles presents **Fran Salzman**, the first Jewish female RCMP officer: "One Woman's Experience in the RCMP." 7:30 p.m. Shaar Shalom Synagogue. $6, includes coffee and cake.

Monday, Oct. 25

CONJOINED TWINS

Temple Emanu-El's lecture series continues. "Conjoined (Siamese) Twins and the Challenges That They Present," with **Robert Filler**, former surgeon-in-chief at the Hospital for Sick Children. 2-4 p.m. $10. 416-449-3880.

Tuesday, Oct. 26

LUNCH & LEARN

"The Mid-Term U.S. Elections, The Blue/Red Divide." With **Ronald Prussen**, history professor at U of T. With Obama's falling approval ratings and the stagnation of the economy, what does the future hold? By reservation only. Beth Tikvah at 12:15 p.m. helen@bethtikvah.on.ca or 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

Continued on page 29

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What's New

Continued from page 28

WINTER BLUES

Beat the winter blues by learning to recognize symptoms of seasonal affective disorder, dysthymia and depression. 1:30 p.m. Beth Tzedec. Free, registration required. 416-781-3514 ext. 225.

Wednesday, Oct. 27

INTER-GENERATIONAL JAZZ

Jazz for Juniors and Spirited Seniors, at Baycrest, Winter Garden Court. 7-8 p.m. Meet your neighbours by enjoying jazz together.

FACING LOSS

Jewish Family & Child's Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario invites the public to "Encountering Loss and Healing in Jewish literature." With **Rabbi Tina Grimberg**. Congregation Darchei Noam. 7:30 p.m. 416-638-7800 ext. 6202.

Other News

TAREK FATAH SPEAKS

Oryanu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism presents **Tarek Fatah** at the Jewish Book Fair, on his book *The Jew Is Not My Enemy: Unveiling Myths That Fuel Muslim Anti-Semitism*. Beth David. Oct. 31, 8 p.m. $10. 416-638-1881 ext. 4281.

BEETHOVEN PROGRAM

Performance of an all-Beethoven program by concert pianist **Stewart Goodyear**. Nov. 28, 3 p.m. Royal Conservatory of Music, Koerner Hall. $40, includes transportation from Temple Sinai. Book early at 416-487-3281.

REFUSENIK

Screening of *Refusenik*, which chronicles the three-decade-long movement to free Soviet Jewry. Introduced via video by **Natan Sharansky**. Oct. 28, 8 p.m. $5 at the door. Beth Tikvah.

'FABULOUS FABERGÉ EGGS'

Shalom Branch of National Council of Jewish Women of Canada presents **Corey Keeble**, curator of decorative arts at the ROM: "Fabulous Fabergé Eggs and Greatest Goldsmiths in the World." Oct. 28, 7:30 p.m. Council House, 4700 Bathurst St. Members free, guests $5. Register: 416-633-5100.

MELTON MINI SCHOOL

Still space left in Melton Adult Mini School's Rhythms of Jewish Living and Purposes of Jewish Living. 416-789-7400.

MOSHE RONEN SPEAKS

Shabbat service with address by **Moshe Ronen**, national chair of the Canada-Israel Committee. Panel discussion with Soviet Jewry activists after kiddush. Beth Tikvah. Oct. 30.

FRANK BIALYSTOK SPEAKS

Join Solel Congregation of Mississauga for Shabbat services on Oct. 29, 8 p.m. to observe Kristallnacht with Holocaust education speaker **Frank Bialystok**, chair, Ontario region, CJC. RSVP: 905-820-5915.

'ZION: HOME OR HARM'

"Zion: Home or Harm to the Jews?" with **Rabbi Daniel Gordis** and writer **Peter Beinart**. Oct. 28, 8 p.m. Holy Blossom Temple.

BOWLERS WELCOME

Friendly, non-competitive 10-pin bowling (two games) for adults 60+ each Tuesday. Starts 1 p.m. Playtime Bowl, 33 Samor Rd., North York. **Gerry**: 416-633-7594.

STAINED GLASS VOLUNTEER

Are you interested in teaching seniors the art of stained glass? Baycrest's volunteer services department is looking for a stained glass instructor interested in working with beginner clients. If you are available weekdays, contact 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

PAUL PENNA OPEN HOUSE

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School is holding an open house for senior kindergarten to grade 6. Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m. 750 Spadina Ave. RSVP: **Judy**, 416-928-3537 ext. 135.

EINSTEIN'S GIFT

Medina Theatre Ensemble presents as a Holocaust remembrance a staged reading of *Einstein's Gift*. Nov. 2, 7:30 p.m. Temple Sinai. Free. **Lois**, 416-781-8076 or **Morris**, 416-785-0344.

READ HEBREW

Beth Emeth's crash course in reading Hebrew. For those with no knowledge of Hebrew. All welcome. Free. Register at 416-633-3838.

JF&CS GROUPS

Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit jfandcs.com. Registration required.

Adult Children Losing a Parent: 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Oct. 26, 7:30-9 p.m. Lipa Green Building.

For Men After Divorce: 6-week group for men experiencing separation or divorce. Oct. 27, 7:30-9 p.m. Lipa Green.

Moods, Moods, Moods – The Link Between Anxiety, Depression and Learning Disabilities in Children: Workshop with **Annabelle Fell**, for parents and professionals. Oct. 27, 7-9 p.m. Lipa Green.

My Nest Is Empty! Now What?: New workshop for parents whose children have recently gone off to college or university. Oct. 28, 7-9 p.m. Lipa Green, LL #9.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. Everyone welcome. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC. Harold Troper presents illustrated talk, "Jewish Toronto: Portrait of a Jewish Past." Oct. 28, 1:30 p.m.

Connecting the generations brings together students and seniors. Kosher lunches, guided visit to Royal Ontario Museum and more.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Nov. 17, departs 10 a.m. $5 per person, $15 cash back. Sunday dance Oct. 24, 7-9 p.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. $35 for 10 weeks. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Seniors woodworking, 416-630-6487.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Holocaust Education Week program: "Holocaust by Bullets – My Personal Testimony," with **Alex Levin**. Nov. 3, 1-3 p.m.

Lecture: "An Introduction to Yiddish Theatre Before 1880: Part 2," with **Prof. Myra Fooden**. Oct. 26, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

Arthritis Self-Management Program: Play a more active role in reducing the impact of arthritis on your life. Oct. 26-Nov. 30, 1-3 p.m. $20 members, $35 guests. Register with **Mary**, 416-979-7228 ext. 657.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Chef **Margie Arosh** shares her favourite Spanish Moroccan dishes. Oct. 21. $50 members, $70 guests. Ext. 4325 to register.

Daycare and preschool open house. Oct. 27 and 29, 9:30-11:30. Ext. 4351.

Professional Retirees Organization with **Ben Schlesinger**, discussing the "Modern (Jewish) Family." Oct. 27, 12-1 p.m. Round table meeting, 1-2 p.m. New participants welcome. **Janet**, ext. 4259.

Register for beginner bridge classes, Nov. 3-Dec. 22. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. $45 members, $60 guests.

"Kabbalah: An Introductory Course," with **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**. Call for information.

Nov. 21, 2-4:30. Official launch of Mind, Body and Soul seminar series. "Raising and Sustaining Healthy Families," with **Joe Rich, Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** and **Dr. Ariel Dalfen**. Lipa Green Building. **Natalie**, ext. 4036.

Celebrate Shabbat with Prosserman. Free drop-in program of Shabbat songs, stories and activities. Nov. 6, 1-5 p.m.

Half the Kingdom: The Next Generation: It has been 20 years since "Half the Kingdom" came out. It had the first footage of Women of the Wall and introduced the normalcy of baby namings. 20 years later, we ask, what's next? $36, seniors and students $20. Nov. 30.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel services Sundays 8 a.m. and Thursdays 7:15 a.m. Kosher breakfast follows. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Between Stages Play Reading. Oct. 24, 2 p.m. 2009 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition winner: *Martyrs Street* by **Misha Shulman**, directed by **Chris Abraham**. $9 at door. esthera@mnjcc.org, ext. 606.

Renee Barda: Life Begins Again! With **Dorothy Krizmanic, Gideon Wilk** and **John Lettieri**. Barda performs **Gershwin, Cole Porter** and more. Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $22, $18 group (10 or more). Ext. 0.

Media Monday (Oct. 25, Nov. 1, Nov. 8). "The Cinema of Israel" with film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. Oct. 25: "Social Portraits of Israeli Society," 7-9 p.m. $12. Ext. 606.

Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space. *Dogs*, paintings by **Julie Glick**. To Nov. 21.

imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival. Celebration of indigenous-made works on the forefront of innovation in film, video, radio and new media. Oct. 21-24. At Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, Bloor Cinema and Lee's Palace. www.imagenative.org.

Small Group Training: Small group training includes kettlebells, specific strength training for women, equalizer strength training and bootcamp. Team work, challenge, individual attention. $120 members or $180 non-members for 4 sessions. mnjcc.org for start dates and times.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 34

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Lily Finkelstein	Sep 27/10	9800 Yonge St
Ida Weisfeld	Sep 27/10	541 Finch Ave W
Stuart Dean	Sep 26/10	34 Hillholm Blvd
Frank Frankfurter	Sep 27/10	115 Antibes Dr
Milton Johnson	Sep 27/10	2 Sunrise St
Shirley Vernon	Sep 27/10	55 Ameer Ave
Harold Brown	Sep 27/10	8 Sheila Cr
Robert Cook	Oct 2/10	350 Lonsdale Rd
Toby Steinberg	Sep 30/10	277 Brighton Ave
Sharon Haas	Sep 30/10	10 Wellesbourne Cr
Maurice Kerbel	Oct 2/10	2 Buchan Crt
Eleanor Appleby	Sep 30/10	4005 Bayview Ave
Benjamin Marks	Sep 30/10	650 Briar Hill Ave
Albert (Bert) Abugov	Oct 2/10	305 Richview Ave
Jill Gluckman	Oct 3/10	268 Ridley Blvd
Sylvia Vinegar	Oct 2/10	6 Dixon Court
Rose Fogle	Oct 2/10	13 Torresdale Ave

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Anne Kirshenbaum	Oct 6/10	1035 Eglinton Ave W
Rose Smith	Oct 7/10	645 Castlefield Ave

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
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Sunday, October 24th at 11:30 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
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To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling.

We would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to all our friends, family and members of the community who have been so supportive during this difficult time. Our grief with the passing of

GABRIEL ZIMMERMAN ז"ל

has been immeasurable but the legacy he left behind will be in our hearts forever.

The Zimmerman & The Spiro Families

Obituary

Larry Hurtig aided Jewish Argentines

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Larry Hurtig played a key role 15 years ago in encouraging several hundred Jewish Argentines to make Winnipeg their new home.

He was also a central figure in establishing Jewish group homes for developmentally challenged adults in the community here, and he is being remembered as a man who accomplished great things without fanfare and despite a lifetime of physical challenges.

Larry Hurtig

Hurtig died Oct. 6, as a result of a heart attack. He was 73.

The son of Bert and Rae Hurtig of Thunder Bay, Ont., Larry Hurtig was stricken by polio at the age of 15. He overcame the illness and went on to university in Winnipeg.

A chartered accountant by training, he was in public practice for 20 years. In 1981, he was invited by one of his clients, a property management company, to join the firm as vice-president. When that company went into receivership, he and an associate opened their own company – ASH Property Management and Chartered Financial Services.

Hurtig's community work began through the Talmud Torah where his children were attending school, when he organized lottery campaigns.

He began volunteering with the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg about 25 years ago and served as president from 1996-99. The highlight of his term in office was the inauguration of the Argentine immigration to Winnipeg. He and his son Jack made their first trip to Buenos Aires following up on contacts made by then-premier Gary Filmon with a member of the Argentine Jewish community. That first trip opened the doors to more than 100 Argentine Jewish families who came here.

At first, Hurtig and his wife, Roberta, would meet and greet all the newcomers at the airport – until the numbers were too high. The community as a whole then opened their homes and hearts to the immigrants.

Larry and Roberta were also among the major forces behind the success of the Shalom Residences, where their son Bradley is a resident. Larry was MC for Shalom's annual lottery and served as its chief financial officer for many years.

Hurtig was also one of the founders of Versatech Industries – a sheltered workshop for people with developmental and physical challenges.

Although he completely recovered from his first bout with polio, he began to experience the symptoms of post-polio syndrome in the early 1990s, and eventually lost the ability to walk. He also overcame a bout with cancer.

His illnesses never prevented him from getting on with his life in business and in community work. In recent years, he used a scooter. And he bore his afflictions with an even disposition and a positive outlook.

At his funeral, his children Jack and Renee remembered him as a warm and loving father who always had time for them and Bradley.

Holocaust Education Week

Focus on survivors' testimony

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

To mark the 30th anniversary of Holocaust Education Week, being held Nov. 1 to 9, all programs will highlight the importance of survivors' testimony.

Mira Goldfarb, executive director of the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, part of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, said that this is the first time HEW has revolved around a single theme.

The opening program, Nov. 1, 7:30 p.m. at Adath Israel Congregation, features Stephen Smith, executive director of the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation Institute and one of the world's leading advocates of Holocaust education and genocide prevention, and Toronto Holocaust survivor Pinchas Gutter.

For several years, Smith and Gutter "have explored the life that resides in Pinchas' memory," and during the program, sponsored by the Joseph Gottdenker Family Foundation, they will talk about how both beautiful and terrifying memory can be.

The closing program and Kristallnacht commemoration, 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, is titled "May your Memory be Love," and features Ephraim Kaye, director of international seminars at the International School For Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

He will present a project developed with Hebrew University and Yad Vashem that preserves the legacies of Holocaust survivors by producing eight films that follow eight survivors as they journey back to their birthplaces.

The evening, sponsored by Yad Vashem – the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority and the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, will also commemorate the 72nd anniversary of Kristallnacht, and honour Jewish war veterans.

Goldfarb said that in an effort to target every community and every age group, there are programs offered in Hebrew, Russian and French.

A program at Aurora High School on Nov. 4 at 7 p.m., recommended for students over 13 and their parents and grandparents, will feature the testimony of George Berman, who was born in Poland in 1923 and lived in the Lodz Ghetto between 1940 and 1944 before being deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where he lost his parents.

Also on Nov. 4, Robert Adam, the grandson of four Hungarian survivors, will be featured at a church-sponsored program at St. James Cathedral, 7 p.m. While in medical school, Adam wrote a musical inspired by the life of his grandmother, Lily Lerner, who was a strong advocate for Holocaust education. He combined her testimony with specific musical numbers.

The program features the vocal performance of Renee Barda, accompanied by Dorothy Krizmanic, an organist and chamber musician, and Gideon Wilk, a clarinetist and pianist.

A half-day symposium for people in their 20s and 30s will be held at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life on Nov. 7. "Legacy: A Symposium Exploring the Future of Holocaust Remembrance" will consist of discussions and presentations on such topics as the Holocaust in Pop Culture, Would You Buy a BMW?, and Teaching the Holocaust. It will conclude with "Holocaust Remembrance in the year 2050" facilitated by Shelley Hornstein, a York University professor of architectural history and visual culture.

The program is a partnership with Hillel of Toronto and March of the Living Toronto, as well as the Annex Shul, Beth Tzedec young professionals, Birthright Alumni Community, The House, Jewski, Impact Toronto, JUMP and Shaarei Shomayim young professionals.

On Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Torah Congregation, Constanze Beckman will give a piano recital featuring pieces of composers who suffered during the Holocaust.

For information on all programs, visit www.holocausteducationweek.com.

VETERAN VISITS: Robbins Hebrew Academy Grade 8 students were privileged to spend time with George Macdonell, who served as a sergeant in the Canadian army in the Hong Kong campaign during World War II. Pictured with Macdonell at the Beth Tzedec campus are Maxwell Charlat and Brooke Lindzon.

The Gerald Schwartz Heather Reisman Centre for Jewish Learning at Holy Blossom Temple

RADICAL JUDAISM AND THE WAYS OF CHASSIDIM

Rabbi Arthur Green, *Founder*, Chavurah Movement, and *President*, Boston Hebrew College

Fri. Nov. 12, 2010, at 6 p.m. | Kabbalat Shabbat Service, Dinner and First Session: "Recovering the Mystical Traditional — a Kabbalah for Tomorrow"
For dinner reservations, please call Elana Fehler, at (416) 789-3291, ext. 532.

Sat. Nov. 13, 2010, at 9 a.m. | Torah Study, "Rediscovering the Chassidic Masters" — a Reading of Today's Parashah
10.30 a.m. | Shabbat Service and Sermon
After Kiddush Lunch | Final Session: "Radical Judaism — a Theology of Creation for the Post-Darwinian Era"

For more details on these events and other programming, please visit our website at www.holyblossom.org and download our Gerald Schwartz/Heather Reisman Centre for Jewish Learning at Holy Blossom Temple Fall 2010 Calendar of Events.

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Victims of Nazis' killing fields must never be forgotten

By OLEKSANDR FELDMAN
Special to The CJN

If you make your way beyond the outskirts of Kiev and continue deep into the forests of the neighbouring village of Radomyshl, you soon enter an unmarked clearing. To the untrained eye, the gap in the trees would appear random, and most passersby would likely admire the lush vegetation enveloping the spot before continuing along the way.

The horrific reality rooted here, as in hundreds of other sites around the Ukrainian landscape, is of a tragic, often ignored chapter in the incomprehensible history of the Holocaust.

Beneath those grasses and lilies that now sprout unchecked lie the bodies of hundreds if not thousands of Jewish victims, summarily murdered during a brief span of days in early 1942. The massacre was carried out by Nazi killing squads acting alongside their local paramilitary collaborators. All too often, nearby villagers joined in, welcoming the chance to translate age-old hatred of the Jews into cold-blooded murder.

Beneath these grounds are the stories of remarkable families, families who exemplified centuries of Jewish traditions that personified the rich cultures of eastern European Jewry.

With the crack of each killer's bullet, lives were terminated without any chance to say goodbye.

The Nazis diabolically assumed that their Jewish victims would be quickly forgotten and recognized that unmarked killing fields would quickly fade into the lush surrounding landscape.

Incredibly, they were right, multiplying the crime, not just making it the murder of innocents, but also erasing the crime and the memories of the victims.

Decades later, there is a growing fear that in this regard, the Nazis may have succeeded. For even while historians desperately try to document how many souls were lost to the Final Solution, if these clearings in the forest go forever unnoticed, the reality is that the sacred lives lost in each spot will also vanish.

There is no disputing that a life lost in the backwoods of Ukraine or Belarus is no less valuable than that extinguished in the gas chambers of Auschwitz. Every one of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis deserves to be remembered and all of their lives memorialized. There are many reasons why this effort is critical for humanity. But undeniably, our most important motivation in accurately preserving the memories of the victims of Nazism is to ensure that humanity never ignores, forgets or diminishes the fact that these horrors occurred.

As absurd as it might seem that people could ever deny the systematic annihilation of millions of innocents, current events prove that evil-intentioned people are intent on doing just that. It is therefore incumbent upon us in the Jewish community, and indeed upon all humanity who understand the true dangers represented by hate-filled and genocidal regimes, to do everything in our power to make sure that every victim of the Holocaust is properly remembered.

It is this commitment that drives our current initiative to create a Ukrainian Jewish museum. This project will provide a physical facility where guests can come, visit and learn about the remarkable, centuries-old history of one of the Jewish world's proudest communities. Equally as important, the museum will embrace a monumental commitment and infrastructure to identify these anonymous killing fields in the woods that would otherwise continue to be ignored.

Clearly, the clock is working against us. This effort should have been launched two or three decades ago. Regrettably, the political environment and other factors then prohibited us from pursuing this approach at that time.

It is all the more critical today for us to move as quickly as possible while the greatest resource available for understanding the Holocaust – the survivor community – remains alive. In our limited capacity to work to identify mass graves to date, survivors have been absolutely instrumental in the process.

Some of these survivors were able to remain alive as small children, fleeing into the forests and literally hiding behind trees as they witnessed their family members being slaughtered and thrown into the pits. While the Nazis would force Jewish labourers – kept alive for that purpose – to cover over the bodies and disguise the unthinkable crimes taking place, those who were able to survive would eventually find their way back and reveal the truth.

Join with us as we commit ourselves to one crucial, if limited, campaign: we will, God willing, identify every possible mass grave of Jewish Holocaust victims in Ukraine, and ultimately everywhere in Europe, that is today unmarked and dishonoured. And we will do this to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Babi Yar massacres outside of Kiev, to take place in September 2011.

This effort demands the full support of the global Jewish community. If we are to truly understand the breadth of the Holocaust and the massive toll it represented for humanity, we know that all affected communities deserve to be remembered in a way that respects those who were lost, but most of all, ensures that their deaths – and their lives – will never be forgotten.

Oleksandr Feldman is a member of the Ukraine Parliament and chair of the Ukrainian Jewish Committee. He was recently appointed to head his parliament's committee on commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Babi Yar massacre.

Guest Voice

Oleksandr Feldman

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Concert to honour survivors with uplifting music

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Cantor Benjamin Maissner didn't get it at first when he was asked to do a concert with the Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir, of which he is musical director, as part of Holocaust Education Week (HEW).

At first Maissner, cantor of Holy Blossom Temple, thought that Mira Goldfarb – executive director of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre – had in mind a "Holocaust memorial kind of concert" when she told him that HEW organizers wanted the event to honour survivors from different countries, 10 of whom will be speaking briefly as part of the program.

Instead, the concert – titled "Keeping the Music Alive: A Choral Tribute" – is a celebration of music originating from Jewish communities in countries that were occupied by the Nazis. It will take place at Grace Church on the Hill, 300 Lonsdale Road, at 8 p.m. on Nov. 3.

"The music that we're doing is showing that there was Jewish life in those places, and it thrived to great heights," Maissner said. "The music is not morbid at all. It's uplifting, it's bright, and some of it is subdued and reflective."

One segment – unusual for a Holocaust-related event – will feature music from the 18th-century inauguration of the synagogue in Siena, Italy, "to show there was Jewish culture in those countries for centuries before the Nazi occupation," Maissner told *The CJN*.

Probably the oldest piece is a selection from Italy by Jewish Renaissance composer Salamone Rossi, who lived in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

As well, there will be music from Hungary, Holland, France (an 18th-century circumcision cantata written in Provence) Germany – "very much Mendelsohnian and 19th-century Romantic" – a piece from Austria by Franz Schubert, and even music from Yugoslavia, Maissner said.

The end of the concert will feature a memorial section that will include two Partisan songs and "a very modern *Kaddish*."

As well, there will be music composed in Terezin, a propaganda camp to show that inmates, who performed there in orchestras and theatre groups, were being treated well. A segment from *Brundibar*, the children's opera performed there, will be included.

Lachan, which Maissner created in 1993, performed in Nuremburg, Germany, 10 years ago in concerts aimed at fostering reconciliation between Jews and Germans. "It's a very unique chamber group," he said. "We've travelled the world over."

Cantor Benjamin Maissner

Torah in Motion Fall 2010
Program Highlights

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Professor Daniel Lasker
Thursday November 11, 8:00 pm
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Yeshivat Or Chaim
159 Almore Avenue

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Begins Wednesday, October 27,
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Or Chaim Yeshiva
159 Almore Avenue

An Italian Renaissance: Choosing Life in Canada
Eli Rubinstein discusses his fascinating and deeply moving account of how his Holocaust survivor parents succeeded in reconstructing their shattered lives in Toronto.
Sunday, November 7, 8:00 pm
Shaarei Shomayim Congregation
470 Glencairn Avenue
Co-sponsored by Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

The World Turned Upside Down:
Islamism, Anti-Zionism and The Betrayal of Reason
Melanie Phillips, British journalist
Wednesday, November 10
8:00pm
The Village Shul
1072 Eglinton Avenue West
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On Campus

Israel's enemies hijacking its brand: professor

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Richard Cravatts is an expert in marketing and advertising and so, when he saw the way Israel's opponents were labelling the Jewish state with all manner of negative stereotypes, he immediately recognized it as a form of "brand hijacking."

Brand hijacking can be positive when consumers tout a product they love, but in the case of Israel's enemies, it is being used to attack it morally, intellectually and physically, all with the intention of eliminating it entirely, Cravatts stated.

The impact can readily be seen in polling data from Europe that shows Israel at the very bottom of the public's perception when it comes to "place branding," he said. "The perception of Israel in the world is largely formed by enemies of Israel. Those enemies have come to campus and... they are effective."

Cravatts, director of Boston University's Program in Publishing, delivered his rather bleak appraisal of "the campus war against Israel" at a lunchtime lecture sponsored by the Speakers Action Group and the Canadian Jewish Civil Rights Association at the downtown Toronto offices of law firm Cassels Brock & Blackwell.

Richard Cravatts

The intellectual assault on Israel has resulted in public perception of Israel as being a militaristic society populated by Orthodox Jews. Europeans have told pollsters they see Israel as the prime obstacle to world peace, a ridiculous conclusion said Cravatts, who pointed out that of all international conflicts since 1948, all the Arab-Israeli wars rank 49th in terms of casualties.

The negative branding on campuses in North America has been facilitated by several factors, among them the prevalence of liberal-leaning professors in history and anthropology departments who are hostile to capitalism, colonialism, imperialism and who see the Palestinians as "the new favourite victim."

Quoting conservative writer David Horowitz, Cravatts said that has created "an unholy alliance" of the left and Muslim student groups.

University administrations, he continued, "have been incredibly craven and lax to the anti-Israelism and the anti-Semitism on campus, which are growing unchecked."

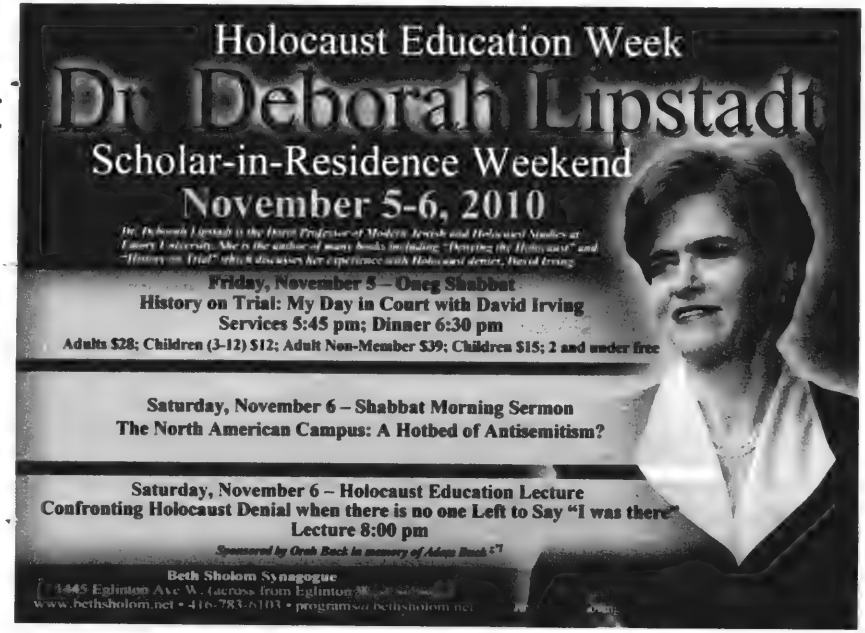
The principle of multiculturalism has prompted campus administrations to overlook the kind of extreme speech and hate by minorities that would not be tolerated in whites if directed against blacks, said Cravatts, who recently authored a book, *Genocidal Liberalism: The University's Jihad Against Israel*.

Administrations also do not see Jews as a weak minority in need of protection, though "Jewish students feel intimidated. They do not want to wear their yarmulkes, mezuzot and stand up for Israel. They're afraid."

That assessment was backed up in a question and answer period by Adir Dishy, president of Hasbara@York, a grassroots educational group. In an interview, he called on mainstream Jewish organizations including Canadian Jewish Congress and the United Jewish Appeal Federation of Greater Toronto to try to prevent hate speeches on campus, particularly those associated with Israeli Apartheid Week

"A lot of time their message is just cloaked anti-Semitism," he said.

"Jews are definitely intimidated" on campus, said Dishy, who wears a knitted kippah. "Friends wear hats, normally they'd wear kippot. Calling yourself a Zionist on campus is scary. They shy away from it."


Holocaust Education Week
Dr. Deborah Lipstadt
Scholar-in-Residence Weekend
November 5-6, 2010
Dr. Deborah Lipstadt is the Dorot Professor of Modern Jewish and Holocaust Studies at Emory University. She is the author of many books including "Denying the Holocaust" and "History on Trial" which discusses her experience with Holocaust denier, David Irving.
Friday, November 5 – Oneg Shabbat
History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving
Services 5:45 pm; Dinner 6:30 pm
Adults $28; Children (3-12) $12; Adult Non-Member $39; Children $15; 2 and under free
Saturday, November 6 – Shabbat Morning Sermon
The North American Campus: A Hotbed of Antisemitism?
Saturday, November 6 – Holocaust Education Lecture
Confronting Holocaust Denial when there is no one Left to Say "I was there"
Lecture 8:00 pm
Sponsored by Orah Beck in memory of Adam Beck z"l
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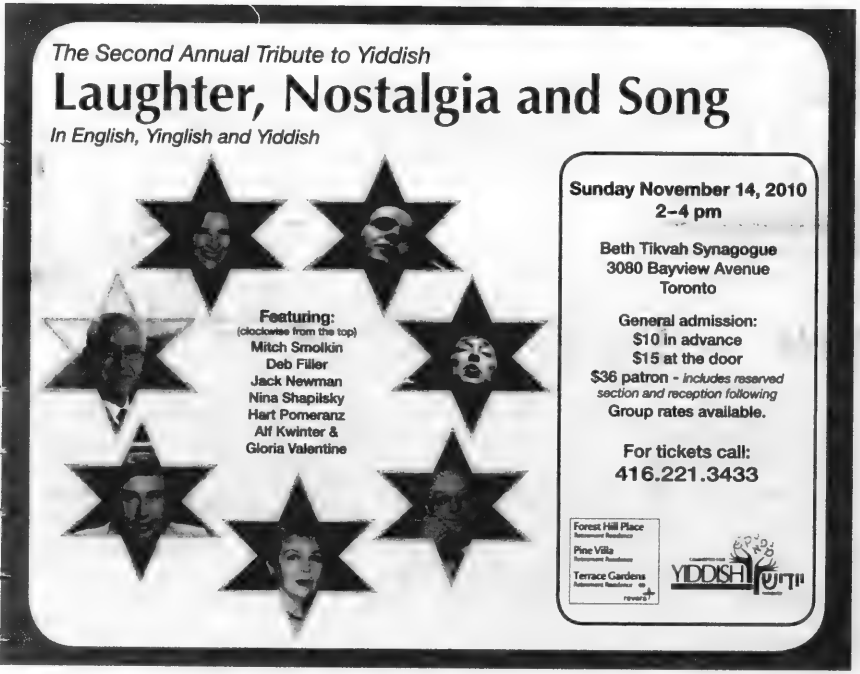
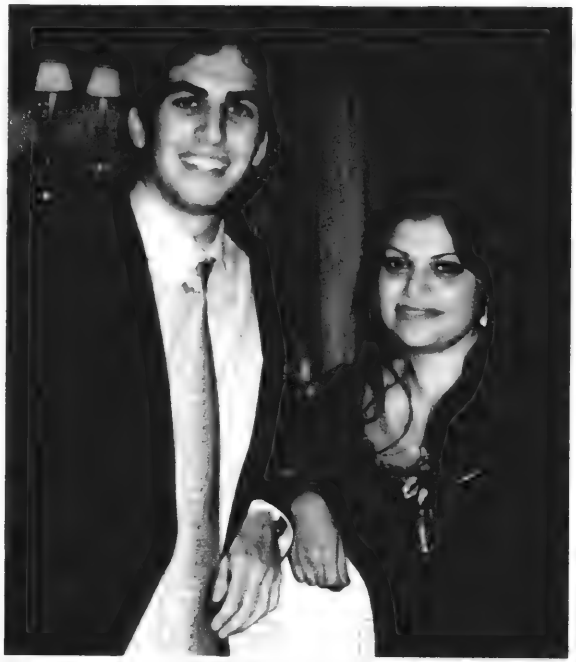


Civility on campus urged

A new lawyers group called Advocates for Civil Liberties has written to presidents of three Toronto universities calling on them to push for more "civil dialogue" on campus.

Lorne Saltman, a lawyer at Cassels Brock & Blackwell, said the group hopes to meet the presidents to propose measures that could tone down the rhetoric on campus. One of the group's proposals would be to videotape public demonstrations and debates. "We think that would have a salutary and civilizing effect," he said.

The group is also planning a conference on Feb. 16, 2011, at the Toronto Reference Library with the theme, "setting the record straight on the Middle East." It will feature speakers who will "counter the enemies of Israel and take back the narrative," he said. — P.L.



Daniel Pincus (left) and Rana Halloumee were the first two medical students to participate in a research exchange between University of Toronto and Technion – Israel Institute of Technology.

Medical students take part in exchange program

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

The first two medical students to participate in an exchange between University of Toronto and the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology recently shared their experiences at a dinner celebrating the inauguration of the program.

Rana Halloumee of Israel and Daniel Pincus, a Toronto student, were the first participants in the CREMS (Comprehensive Research Experience for Medical Students) Program between Toronto and Israel. Halloumee spent her two months on exchange researching heart rate-dependent electrical remodelling. This was her first time in North America, and one of the first things she noticed about Toronto was its multiculturalism.

"I was very impressed to see how people [in Toronto] respect each other and treat each other well no matter what their nationality or homeland is," the third-year medical student (equivalent to first year in Canada) said.

Pincus spent his three months in Israel researching hip fractures and bone imaging at Carmel Medical Center in Haifa. When asked about his experience on exchange, he said he would definitely recommend that others should participate.

"It's good to get some really productive research done, and on the other hand, have an experience that is usually not offered to medical students in first and second year.

"I am humbled and privileged that I was able to participate," he added.

The CREMS Program, established in 2005, allows first- and second-year medical students from the University of Toronto to participate in research-based exchanges at medical schools all over the world.

The idea to start a Toronto-Israel exchange came from Dr. George Fantus, associate dean of research in the faculty of medicine at U of T. He was familiar with schools in Israel – his daughter went to medical school there, a nephew attended the Technion and his son spent some time at the Weizmann Institute of Science.

One of the largest hurdles, Fantus said, was getting money to fund the students. After approximately a year of negotiating, the Canadian Technion Society approached with a proposal to support the exchange program. Gary Goldberg, national president of the society, has been very supportive, he said. In all, it took about 2-1/2 years to get this exchange off the ground.

At the dinner, Judith Wolfson, vice-president of university relations, discussed the importance of students appreciating and being aware of the world beyond where they live.

Continued on page 38

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On Campus

Technion, U of T team up

Continued from page 37

"[There is a] huge interest in all students at all levels to 'internationalize' their experience and ensure a broader understanding of their field in the world," Wolfson said.

Catharine Whiteside, dean of the U of T faculty of medicine, was excited by both the potential of the Israel branch of CREMS and that of the program in general.

"We're very keen to partner with the best in the world, and this opportunity with Technion exemplifies that for us," she said.

"It's a great opportunity for our students to experience another institution in another country and learn about health and about medical sciences from a different perspective, but still have an experience that's beyond just learning about science.

"These types of experiences have a lifetime impact on the students. I think we'll probably see this program grow."

For Fantus, the importance of the exchange program is threefold: it furthers medical research, creates global citizens and promotes peace in the world.

"It's important for people everywhere to have different experiences and be exposed to different cultures," he said.

"Only with common goals and understanding can we create a better life for everybody."

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Correction

In the picture "Terry Fox Run," Oct. 14, page 36, one of the Robbins Hebrew Academy students preparing banners for the run was incorrectly named. The student on the right is Lindsay Parkes. We apologize for the error.

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כצפוי, רוב המוחות הישראלים הבורחים נמצאים בארה"ב (80%), כ 10% בקנדה ו 8% באנגליה.

התגובה לנתונים אלה בארץ היתה צפויה ידי סטראוטיפית: ישראל איננה מעריכה את המשאב החשוב ביותר שלה- מוח מדעניה ויוזמיה.

לדעתי הבעייה הרבה יותר מורכבת: ישראל יוצרת מדעני- על במספרים שאינם פרופורציונים לגודלה ולצרכיה, ועל כן אין לצפות ממנה שתוכל לקלוט את כולם. יתירה מזאת- כמדינת עלייה, ישראל קולטת אלפי מדענים שלמדו על חשבון מדינות מוצאם, ורבים מהם נקלטים בארץ. צריך להשלים עם כך שהעולם של 2010 הוא כפר בינלאומי, ונתונים כאלה משקפים מציאות עולמית חדשה.

מדען שעוזב את ישראל איננו בהכרח הפסד טוטאלי למדינה. כמי שהכשיר במעבדה שלו מעבר לעשרים מדענים ישראלים שחזרו ארצה, אני חייב לומר שדווקא בימים קשים אלה, של עוינות וחרם נגד הקהילה המדעית של ישראל- הקהילה המדעית הישראלית מחץ לגבולות הארץ מהווה איזון רציני לעול הזה.

אבל שישאר בינינו.

<u>מה רוצים מליברמן</u>

מדינת ישראל בסערה גדולה: שר החוץ ליברמן העז לעמוד באו"ם ולומר להם: תשכחו מזה! אנחנו לא ניתן לפלשתינאים כלום! ועוד מתאושש בארץ מחצפתו- הוא אירח את שרי החוץ של ספרד ונרטת ואמר להם: תפסיקו לתת לנו עצות! אתם, עם החוקים נגד המוסלמים- הרבה יותר גרועים מאיתנו. השרים האירופאים לא נשארו חייבים ואמרו לאבינדור את מה שהם חושבים עליו ועל מדינה שמאפשרת לו להיות שר החוץ שלה.

אז הינה דעתי: ליברמן הוא הפוליטיקאי הכי הגון בישראל! הוא היחיד שעושה בדיוק את מה שהצהיר שיעשה בבחירות. זה שהוא מאשיסס, שמציע טראנספר של ערבים- כל זה היה ידוע! ולמרות זאת מינה אותו נתניהו לשר חוץ במהלך חמור למחות כמו זה של אולמרט שמינה את אמיר פרץ לשר בטחון למני מלחמת לבנון השניה.

רק מה- בתרבות השלטון הישראלית אומרים נתניהו, ברק וישי דברים "באילו", שלא הם ולא איש משומעיהם מאמין להם. נתניהו למשל הצהיר שאפשר לחשיג שלום עם הפלשתינאים "תוך שנה"- תוך שהוא וכל שומעיו יודעים שתוך שנה לא ישבו אפילו לשולחן הדיונים! לו רצה נתניהו שלום תוך שנה- הוא היה יוצר קואליציה עם ציפי לבני, שלמפלגתה יש יותר מנדטים מאשר לליכוד ולבטח יותר מאשר לליברמן. אבל נתניהו איננו מעוניין בשלום. הוא מאמין שישראל תהיה חזקה גם בלי שלום. מאחר והוא נבחר באופן דמוקראטי- זכותו לומר ולעשות מה שהוא רוצה, אבל אל לו ולחבר מריעיו להלין על ליברמן. הוא לפחות פוליטיקאי שאומר את מה שהוא חושב.

ואיך הם נראים כולם ביחד! כדברי ג'ורג' וושינגטון: לכל מדינה יש את הממשלה שהיא ראויה לה.

<u>Wall Street 2</u>

די היססתי אם ללכת לסרטו החדש של מייקל דוגלס שמוקדש למציאות המושחתת של וול סטריט בזמן הקריסה הכלכלית האחרונה. יד על הלב- אני באופן אישי מקבל תאוצה מהנושא הזה ומאנשים שמקדישים לכסף את כל חייהם. מה לאמר- כדברי הסתגם הישראלי- "התאכזבתי לטובה". שרט מצויין, שמספר סיפור אישי מרתק על איש בורסה מושחת, ובתו שמנוגדת לו מרחק שנות אור, ודרכם מביא את חדילמה של העולם הקאפיטאליסטי.

שמונה בסולם קורן.

On Campus

Noble drops law suit

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

York University professor David Noble has agreed to drop a defamation suit against Canadian Jewish Congress that arose out of a news release in which the advocacy organization suggested Noble published an anti-Semitic flyer.

Noble consented to a court order after Congress asked that the defamation action be dismissed against Congress' Ontario region and its chair at the time, Joel Richler.

"The bottom line for us is that we admitted no liability," said Congress CEO Bernie Farber. "He abandoned the case and we hold by our original position. The fact he abandoned it speaks for itself."

The genesis of the case can be traced back to November 2004, when Noble published a flyer titled, "The York University Foundation: The tail that wags the dog."

The document suggested the university was influenced when disciplining pro-Palestinian activists by the board of its fundraising foundation. Noble set out an incomplete list of board members and officers, noting their connection to Jewish organizations such as the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

"The York University Foundation is biased by the presence and influence of staunch pro-Israel lobbyists, activists and fundraising agencies," the flyer stated.

Congress responded with comments to the media and a news release that suggested it was anti-Semitic to point out these connections and to imply that the board controlled the university's decision-making in a way that promoted a pro-Israel position.

In addition to Congress and Richler, others sued by Noble included the board of directors of the York University Foundation, the foundation itself, senior York officer Paul Marcus and former York president Lorna Marsden, Hillel of Greater Toronto, Hillel at York University and several of its staff, as well as UJA Federation.

Federation spokesperson Howard English confirmed last week that the case against his organization is ongoing, while Farber said there was no indication the case against the others has been dropped.

In its statement of defence, Congress asserted that Noble's flyer singled out foundation board members who were Jewish (with one exception); stressed their involvement in Jewish community work; alleged they controlled the entire board and, therefore, the foundation, and said that the foundation directed the affairs of the university to achieve the personal objectives of the Jewish board members.

"No support for these claims or suggestions, other than the presence of Jews involved with Jewish organizations as members of the foundation board, was offered in the flyer," defence documents stated.

The defence also contended that the Congress news release was factually correct and expressed fair comment made in good faith on a public issue, which protected CJC from a defamation suit.

Calls to Noble for comment were not returned last week, but at the time of the incident in 2004, he was widely quoted as saying that as a Jew himself, Congress' statement that his flyer was anti-Semitic was "deeply offensive to me, because my own family has suffered from anti-Semitism."

He denied the flyer singled out anyone on the basis of ethnicity or religion, and he asserted that the foundation is "de facto running York. They clamp down on any criticism of Israel."

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UJA Federation announces nominees

Toronto – David Koschitzky, Nominating Committee Chair for UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, has announced the nominees for the Board of Directors and Individual Representatives Council Members.

Elections will be held during UJA Federation's annual meeting on Tuesday November 30, 2010 at 7:00 p.m, at Holy Blossom Temple (1950 Bathurst Street, Toronto).

In accordance with the by-laws, the governance consists of a Council, a Board of Directors and an Executive Committee. The Board of Directors, the Chair and the Senior Vice-Chair will be elected by the Council Members; The Executive Committee will be ratified by the Board of Directors from among the Directors. No nominations can be made from the floor during the annual meeting. However, any member of the Jewish community may be placed in nomination by complying with the following by-laws:

"In order to be elected or appointed and to continue as a Council Member, each individual must (a) be an Individual General Member; (b) have made a financial commitment to the United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto in respect of the most recent annual campaign and be in good standing with the United Jewish Appeal in respect of such commitment; and (c) shall not have refused to remove any barrier that is within his or her control that would prevent his or her spouse's religious re-marriage."

"Each Individual Representative Council Member shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting by the Individual General Members from among the qualified candidates duly nominated therefore by the Nominating Committee or nominated by any seven Individual General Members; provided that in respect of nominations made by Individual General Members: (a) No Individual General Members may nominate more than three nominees for election as Individual Representative Council Member at any Annual General Meeting; (b) such nominations shall be in writing and accompanied by the written consent of the nominee; and (c) such nominations shall be delivered to the Secretary at least 21 days before the Annual General Meeting at which the election is to occur."

Nominated for Chair of the Board is Elizabeth Wolfe and Senior Vice-Chair of the Board is Richard Venn. Nominees for the Board of Directors include:

For a two year term:
Jeffrey Cohen, Michael Diamond, David Dulberg, Sara Gottlieb, Sarena Koschitzky, Glennie Lindenberg, Beverly Lyons, Steve Mayer, Ran Mesterman, Elan Pratzer, Brian Schachter, Sara Schur, and Randy Shiff

For a one year term:
Sheldon Goodman

Continuing their two year term:
Elena Aleinikov, Michael Davis, Richard Diamond, Sheldon Disenhouse, Steven Farber, Jill Goldberg-Reitman, Louis Greenbaum, Warren Kimel, Elyse Lackie, Bruce Leboff, David Mansell, Robert Palter, David Peltz, Craig Rimer, Ralph Shedletsky, Honey Sherman, Eileen Silver, David Spiro, Arthur Stern, and Sara Zagdanski

The following are to be elected for a two-year term 2010-2012 as Individual Representative Council Members:

Cheryl Appleby Jackson, Sandra Atlin, Arna Banack, Tobie Bekhor, Marc Benjamin, Donald Bennet, David Wm. Brown, Sandra Brown, Vicki Campbell, Robert Cherniak, Jack Chisvin, Karen Chisvin, Jeffrey Cohen, Roz Davidson, Michael Diamond, Yale Drazin, David Dulberg, Anita Ekstein, Susan Fenwick, Bernard Fishbein, Abe Glowinsky, Jill Goldberg-Reitman, Jeffrey Goldfarb, Harry Gorman, Sara Gottlieb, Abraham Green, Louis Greenbaum, Michael Halbert, Susan Harris, Debbie Kimel, Lynn Kirshin, Henry Koschitzky, Stanley Kugelmass, Ruth Ladovsky, Judy Libman, Howard Lichtman, Glennie Lindenberg, Beverly Lyons, Agi Mandel, Ran Mesterman, Pamela Medjuck, Howard Meyer, Paul Morton, Gilbert Palter, Elliot Peranson, Morris Perlis, Gerald Richler, Rammy Rochman, Gerald Ross, Sheila Rother, Alan Sandler, Brian Schachter, Sara Schur, Laurie Sheff, Marlene Sklar, Arthur Stern, Raymond Stone, Kenneth Tanenbaum, Cyrel Troster

In addition to the Individual Representatives listed, each Group General Member of the Federation shall be entitled to two representatives on the Council (Group Representative Council Members). Any Group General Member which has membership in good standing in excess of 100 persons residing in the Greater Toronto Area shall be entitled to one additional Group Representative on the Council. According to the by-laws of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, organizations and associations may apply to become Group General Members by submitting an application that confirms that it subscribes to the objects of the UJA Federation, and promotes the United Jewish Appeal annual campaign. Applications for Group General Membership were solicited via mail in September 2010. All Group General Members must be registered with UJA Federation by October 15, 2010.

Media bias workshop aims to expose 'big lie'

By LAUREN KRAMER
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — It's not often that the words of Adolf Hitler make an appropriate quote, but they drove home an important point Oct. 3 when Mike Fegelman, executive director of HonestReporting Canada, delivered a talk to members of the Richmond, B.C. Jewish community.

Fegelman was in town to present a workshop about identifying and countering unfair media coverage of Israel.

"Hitler once said, 'Make the lie big, make it simple, keep telling it and eventually everyone will believe it,'" Fegelman said. "It worked for the Nazi propaganda machine, and now it's being used by the Arab world and by Palestinians to ensure that a particular message is being broadcast to the media."

Fegelman spoke at Beth Tikvah Synagogue in Richmond, describing to a rapt audience of 50 how news stories can be manufactured and how false, malicious and egregious accusations are quoted on the record to this day.

"This is why HonestReporting was created 10 years ago," he said. "We were fed up with the coverage of Israel and needed a response committee to deal with it, so that we can engage with the media and be advocates and ambassadors for Israel."

HonestReporting is dedicated to ensuring fair and accurate media coverage of Israel and the Middle East. The mission of HonestReporting Canada, which has 25,000 members, is to mobilize thousands of Canadians to directly target anti-Israel bias in the Canadian media.

To illustrate his point, Fegelman showed examples of doctored photographs that were published out of context, but when the context is made evident, they suggest a very different reality. One cropped image depicted a Palestinian throwing what appears to be a stone. The unedited image shows him surrounded by eight photographers who are sufficiently close to him to suggest that there is no immediate danger and that this was a manufactured situation.

In another image, a Palestinian woman holds a photograph of her destroyed home while standing strategically before a section of the West Bank security barrier that was spray-painted with the English words: "stop kill [sic] the Palestinians." The unadulterated photograph shows the woman surrounded by photographers.

"How did they know to be there?" Fegelman wonders. "Who takes a leisurely stroll to the security barrier with a picture of their house? This is a very cleverly designed photograph that tells us that there's a process involved here."

Fegelman said that Canadians are lucky, because our news media outlets tend to be professional and responsible.

"I don't believe the Canadian media has any desire to malign the State of Israel or that they're anti-Semitic," he said. "But there are some very serious impediments to doing good media coverage of the Middle East, because the news process, not the news makers, is biased against Israel."

Part of that process, he explained, is the question of what's newsworthy. The media maxim is "If it bleeds, it leads," which is why subjects such as Israel's technological and medical prowess and its many Nobel laureates seldom make it into newspapers.

"When I ask editors why they aren't publishing stories about a rocket landing next to a kindergarten in Sderot, for example, they'll say it doesn't have news currency," Fegelman said. "That's not true. It's the responsibility of the media to tell this story."

"We need to remember how much power the media has," he continued. "What is reported in the news pages oftentimes becomes foreign policy tomorrow. The media educates the masses and teaches us what's going on in the world."

And their lessons can be incredibly inaccurate at times, he said, citing a story in the *Al-Ameen Post*, a Canadian Islamic newspaper, alleging that Israel was trying to harvest the organs of 25,000 Ukrainian children.

"B'nai Brith Canada found the story, complained, and within a couple of days, the paper apologized," he said.

Last month, *Time* magazine published a cover story under the title "Why Israel Doesn't Care about Peace," in which Israelis were depicted as decadent, affluent people who aren't interested in peace and don't believe in the peace process.

"HonestReporting believes that continued media bias against Israel will only lead to the rise of anti-Israel sentiment," Fegelman said. He cited as evidence the attempt by activists to boycott Mountain Equipment Co-op for sourcing products from Israel and the rise of anti-Israel sentiment on Canadian campuses.

He encouraged the Jewish community to create a dialogue with the news media through letters and phone calls in response to stories about Israel that they find disturbing or inaccurate. "Be informed about what's going on and teach your kids to be media literate," he urged. "Watch as much news as you can, and be an ambassador for Israel wherever you are."

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Coast to Coast

Montreal Y polls members on Saturday hours policy

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — One year after its controversial decision to open its main Snowdon branch on Saturday for limited operation, the YM-YWHA is polling its members on whether that should change.

Between Oct. 20 and 26, adult members can cast a secret ballot on whether they think the Y should be closed on Shabbat, as it was before Oct. 31, 2009, or operate on Saturday virtually like any other day of the week.

No formal consultation of the membership was conducted prior to the decision last year.

Executive director Michael Crelinsten said the number of people using the Y on Saturdays is averaging a disappointing 250, compared to the "thousands" that pass through the building on Sunday.

One of the most popular facilities, a room with an array of electrically powered cardiovascular-training equipment, is not open Saturdays, nor are there any group fitness classes.

Keeping the cardio room closed was part of a compromise the Y reached with a group of congregational rabbis out of respect for Jewish law's proscription against initiating an electrical current on Shabbat.

"Frankly, the current situation is not pleasing anybody," Crelinsten said, neither those who want the full use of the facilities seven days a week nor those who are observant or believe that the Y, as a major Jewish institution, should maintain community tradition.

Opting for virtually full operation on Saturday would mean that the only part of the Y that would be closed are the front desk and the restaurant, he said, to avoid the exchange of money, which is also forbidden by Jewish law.

This is not a referendum, since the poll will not be binding. Crelinsten said the Y's boards of directors and trustees will take the results "under advisement" and make a decision shortly afterward. The results will, however, be made public.

Voting is taking place in the atrium, as well as through the Y's website. The polling station will be closed on Shabbat from 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 22, until 8 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 24.

Voters must be 18 years or older and a member of the Y as of July 31, 2010.

The Y has 6,500 members, of whom 3,500 pay full fees, Crelinsten said.

If membership opinion favours full operation, Crelinsten acknowledged that the Y leaders will be faced with breaking their agreement with the rabbis.

"But the Y is membership-driven, and the feedback we have had from [Federation CJA] and, to some extent, the rabbis, is that, at least, if we open on Shabbat, the decision should be broader based," he said.

One of rabbis involved in negotiations with the Y, Reuben Poupko, said it's possible the Y realizes opening on Saturday was not a good idea and is looking for a face-saving way of returning to its former schedule.

Winnipeg's Gray was a philanthropist

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG —Gerald Gray is being remembered as an unassuming man who gave millions to charity yet shunned the spotlight.

"His death is a devastating loss," said Penny Kalef, who with her husband, Gerry, were longtime friends of the former bottling company magnate. "He was extremely caring and generous."

Obituary

Longtime community leader Marjorie Blankstein recalls first meeting Gray in the early 1990s when community leaders were trying to raise funds to build what is now the Asper Jewish Community Campus. The facility's Gray Academy of Jewish Education was named in his honour, reflecting the generosity of his contribution to the campus project.

"He was a pleasure to deal with," Blankstein said. "He was very supportive. He was a really nice guy and a caring human being."

Gray, who died suddenly on Oct. 8 at the age of 80, was, along with his family, second only to the Asper family in contributions to the Jewish community and the community at large in Winnipeg.

Gray was born in the old North End. He was a nephew of M.A. Gray, the first Jewish member of the Manitoba Legislature. He dropped out of school at age 16 after his father died.

He went into the bottling industry and eventually became president of Blackwoods Beverages. The company had plants in Winnipeg and Vancouver and bottled and distributed soft drink products such as Pepsi, 7Up, Crush, Schweppes Ginger Ale, Hires Root Beer and Nestea. In the early 1990s, Gray sold the company to Pepsi for several million dollars.

Gray was also a founder of the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba, and in the mid-1990s, he offered to put up $10 million in the unsuccessful community effort to keep the NHL's Winnipeg Jets in Winnipeg.

In addition, he had pledged $1 million to the new Canadian Human Rights Museum being built in Winnipeg. Most recently, he donated $1 million toward the makeover of an inner-city park in an area of downtown that is a central gathering place for new immigrants and low income people.

Gray is survived by two daughters and a son.

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Hezbollah mischief could mean chaos in Lebanon

As Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad began his provocative visit to Lebanon last week, analysts were busy assessing its impact both locally and regionally.

"A surging Hezbollah is making increasingly threatening noises against the government of Sa'ad Hariri," wrote the *Globe and Mail*'s Patrick Martin on Oct. 13.

Hezbollah, of course, is Iran's proxy in Lebanon. Ahmadinejad's presence there was not only wildly celebrated by Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, it added sinister force to its determination to thwart the United Nations' investigation into the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri, Sa'ad's father.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Unofficial reports about the inquiry, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon headed by Canadian Daniel Bellemare, point to possible indictments of Hezbollah officials before the end of the year. Hezbollah is trying to forestall this by, among other things, attempting to cut off funding in the Lebanese parliament for the tribunal.

But Hezbollah's intimidation goes much further. Last week's *CJN* editorial "Sacrificing Lebanon on Iran's altar?" drew attention to a Hezbollah member of the Lebanese parliament who warned that any Lebanese who might accept a finding of the organization's culpability would be killed as a "collaborator" with Israel and the United States. (Hezbollah recently presented "evidence" showing that Israel was responsible for Hariri's assassination – a claim dismissed by UN investigators.)

Scores of Iranian Revolutionary Guards are in Lebanon training Hezbollah personnel. Hezbollah's heavily armed fighters have been re-deployed in the south, in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 barring their presence. Under the impotent watch of UNIFIL, Hezbollah has all but taken over the country.

While some observers speculate that Hezbollah is preparing a coup d'etat, others caution that it need not go that far, at least not now, given that it's already largely in control thanks to its Iranian sponsor. In the Oct. 13 *Jerusalem Post*, analyst Jonathan Spyer wrote that "reports of an upcoming coup are probably overblown. But Ahmadinejad's appearance on the scene will exacerbate fears. This is undoubtedly what the Iranian president wants."

Can anything prevent a total takeover?

Martin argued in the *Globe* that Syrian President Bashar Assad, who has his own designs on the country, might well be the required counter-force by trying to "play Hezbollah off against [Sa'ad] Hariri, then offer Syrian assistance in resolving the political crisis."

If that seems a bit fanciful, it's also accepted as a likely response by veteran Mideast observer Samuel Segev. In the Oct. 13 *Winnipeg Free Press*, Segev wrote about "behind-the-scene manoeuvering" involving Turkey and Syria. Despite what he calls their "competitive alliance" with Tehran, the two do not want to see Shia Iran taking over Lebanon through its proxy.

"A Syrian military return to Lebanon this time would be explained by the desire to save the Sunnis and the Christians from the hands of Hezbollah and Iran.

In such a dramatic and chaotic situation, one should not rule out an American, European, Turkish, moderate Arab countries and Israeli agreement to have the Syrians return to Beirut."

However, what needs to be explained is how Syria, which has grown increasingly dependent on Iran and which has provided massive military support to Hezbollah, is going to be able to displace Iran without also having to vastly weaken Hezbollah. Moreover, how would this be accomplished without throwing Lebanon back into warfare?

* * *

A great deal has been written recently about the official Palestinian refusal to accept Israel as the state of the Jewish people, in keeping with Israel's acceptance of a future Palestine as the state of the Palestinian people. What has been overlooked in this discussion is that the Palestinians themselves, through the Palestinian National Council – the PLO's parliament-in-exile, which met in Algiers in November 1988 – set a precedent of recognizing Israel as Jewish. They did this when, 41 years after the fact, they finally accepted the 1947 UN partition resolution. In the words of the PNC, the resolution "partitioned Palestine into two states, Arab and Jewish."

It appears that this was the only time the word "Jewish" in connection with statehood has appeared in an official Palestinian document. But just as the PNC went on to argue that the partition resolution "still provides the legal basis for the right of the Palestinian Arab people to national sovereignty and independence," its members cannot, without contradicting themselves, deny the same for the Jewish people.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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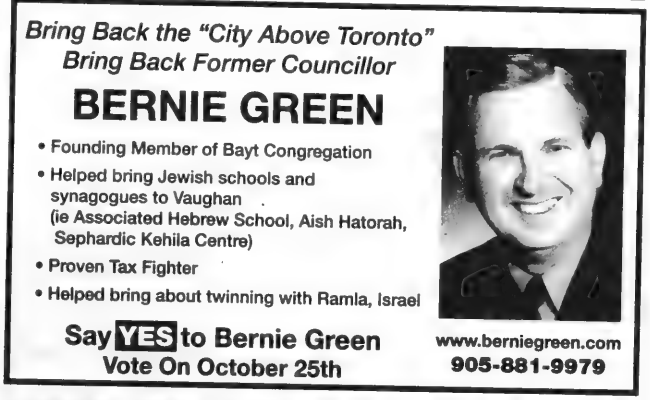
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Couple produces nostalgic look at old Canadian shuls

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

An Edmonton couple who assembled and distributed three PDF documents over the Internet on old synagogues of Canada say they were amazed at the positive reactions that the electronic publications sparked across the country.

"We were overwhelmed," said Bernie Estrin, who along with his wife, Gail, produced the three pieces, one on Western Canada, the second on Central Canada (Ontario and Quebec), and the third on the Atlantic region.

"We heard from all types of people, and many told us the bulletin reminded them of where they were born – they said it took them back to their youth."

The Estrins sent out the three special editions of their Canada Jewish Pipeline, which is normally a small weekly e-mail bulletin, shortly after Canada Day as a means of celebrating Canada's 143rd birthday.

Each one features historic photographs and capsule histories of various old synagogues in major cities and a few towns.

"Gail did most of the work," Bernie admitted. "Every city has a Jewish historical society, and they're usually happy to share their work with legitimate Jewish organizations. So with their permission, we were able to reprint a lot of Canadian Jewish history."

The Ontario and Quebec edition features articles and old photographs on numerous Montreal congregations including Shearith Israel, the Stanley Street Synagogue, and Shaar Hashomayim.

Also featured are the Toronto congregations Knesseth Israel (the Junction shul), Holy Blossom Temple, Congregation Anshei Minsk, the First Narayever Congregation, the Kiever Shul and the Beach Hebrew Institute. Articles about the Jewish communities in Sherbrooke, Que., Quebec City, Kirkland Lake,Ont., London, Ont., and Ottawa are also included.

The Estrins started their weekly Internet newsletter eight years ago as an e-mailed bulletin for the Jewish community of Edmonton. They later added Calgary and changed the name to the Alberta Jewish Pipeline. When Vancouver and Winnipeg were added, it became the Western Canada Jewish Pipeline.

It's now called the Canada Jewish Pipeline, with editions for Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Winnipeg and Ottawa, but it doesn't yet include the major Jewish population centres of Toronto or Montreal.

"Basically it's a very quick take on the upcoming events and the community news – somebody had a baby, somebody's getting married – that sort of thing," Bernie Estrin said.

Former Albertans living in Toronto, among others, may be interested in subscribing to the free weekly bulletin to keep up to date on happenings in their former hometowns, Estrin said.

For a weekly subscription or a copy of one of the Old Synagogues of Canada editions, e-mail the Estrins at info@canadajewishpipeline.ca, or visit their website at www. canadajewishpipeline.ca.

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"I believe Gila Martow is the best choice for Ward 5 Councillor because she possesses the qualities that our City of Vaughan needs to move forward in a positive and successful way. Gila is a hard working, community driven individual - she has my vote!"
Susan Kadis – long time Vaughan city councillor and former Member of Parliament for Thornhill

"As the Member of Provincial Parliament for Thornhill, I am pleased to offer my support to Dr. Gila Martow, Candidate for City Council Ward 5 Vaughan. With Gila, I am certain that residents will be well represented and will be able to feel confident that their interests are being kept front and centre at the Council Table."
Peter Shurman – Thornhill Member of Provincial Parliament

"Gila is a good friend and a close supporter for whom I have a great deal of respect. Her utter devotion to her community exemplifies a standard of excellence to which we should all aspire."
Peter Kent – Thornhill Member of Parliament

"Gila is a bright, articulate, natural leader who has the ability to bring together people with different views to find a workable solution. As an integral part of our community, Gila understands it well and has been a caring and dedicated advocate for all segments. I'm convinced Dr. Gila Martow will make an excellent representative for Thornhill and will be a welcome breath of fresh air on Vaughan Council."
Rabbi Yisroel Janowski - Thornhill

Allan Kliger – the king of soup and 'spoonable' foods

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The brass plaque on his cluttered desk says it all: Souper Al.

Allan Kliger, president of Victory's Kitchen, is a major producer of private-label "spoonable" foods ranging from soups, sauces and gravies to dips, pizza sauces and salad dressings.

"We make hundreds of products," says Kliger, a 52-year-old former tax lawyer whose forte is soup.

Kliger's "spoonables" are sold throughout Canada, the United States, Mexico, Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong. In Toronto, supermarket chain stores including Loblaws, Metro, Longo's, Sobeys and Safeway stock them on their shelves.

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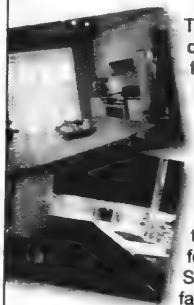

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Kliger, who has been in the food business for 25 years, works out of a 120,000-square-foot plant in western Toronto that used to be an abattoir before he refurbished it.

Not bad for a guy whose mini-empire was launched in a rented apartment in midtown Toronto when he was jobless.

A graduate of the University of Western Ontario whose parents are Bernard and Ethel Kliger, he might have still been a practising lawyer had an employer not terminated him.

Not long after being hired as an in-house counsel at a local accounting firm, Kliger learned that his services were no longer required. "I was given the boot," he said. "They decided they didn't need me. It was a disillusioning experience."

When he was on the eve of embarking on a trip around the world to nurse his wounds, a friend handed him a copy of Ayn Rand's fourth and last novel, *Atlas Shrugged*. The book, he recalled, taught him the value of independence and creativity and bolstered his self-confidence.

Shortly after returning to Toronto, Kliger was puttering around in his apartment, ready to make lunch for himself, when he noticed two cans of soup in his kitchen cupboard.

In one of those eureka moments he would savour, he asked himself why consumers could not buy fresh soup and had to be content with the canned or dehydrated variety.

"No one was doing it in Toronto," he said in a reference to what he describes as "fresh, refrigerated, convenient, retail soup."

Armed with a new, yet old, concept, Kliger began experimenting with soup recipes after receiving government research grants.

"I loved the idea of starting something from scratch," said Kliger, who's passionate about food.

Borrowing a Cuisinart from a friend, he developed a line of soups – from minestrone vegetable to chicken noodle – whose flavour and consistency were never less than uniform. Once they had passed his demanding taste test, he hired a caterer to cook them.

He approached Loblaws and a number of specialty food stores and, much to his relief, they recognized the novelty and usefulness of his freshly-made soups.

Sales sputtered, at first. But after convincing Fran's, a Toronto restaurant chain, to try his wares, he never looked back.

"I couldn't accept the idea of failure," he said.

Focusing on restaurant chains, he picked up the Great Canadian Soup Company, as well as Cara, the supplier of Swiss Chalet and Steak & Burger.

Allan Kliger

Allan Kliger at his plant. ***[Sheldon Kirshner photos]***

As volume increased, Kliger rented commercial space, hired his first employee and purchased 40-gallon stainless steel kettles.

At this juncture, Kliger, then single, was still sleeping on a mattress on the floor of his flat.

In 1989, flush with success, he bought a building that sat on 1-1/2 acres, in the packing house district.

Today, Victory's Kitchen – a maze of connecting production rooms brimming with 400- and 600-gallon kettles and Israeli-made packaging machines, freezers and storage areas – employs more than 40 workers, all clad in white gowns, hair nets and latex gloves.

Soups, from wild mushroom and egg drop to roasted red pepper and potato leek, account for 40 per cent of overall production.

New products are always in the pipeline. "We're in a great period of creativity," said Kliger, whose wife, Aviva, works for the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School, where their children, Jedediah, Eden and Isaiah, are students. "It's buzzing."

Private labels, tailor-made to customer needs, are Kliger's specialty. As always, he continues to cater to grocery and restaurant chains.

Some of his products are kosher, under the supervision of the Kashruth Council of Canada (COR).

He takes pride in the fact that quality controls and sanitation standards at Victory's Kitchen are second to none, and that it is a vertically integrated company.

"We grow our own produce," he said, taking a luscious carrot out of a bag.

Given the scope of his operation, Kliger travels quite frequently to drum up sales and keep customers happy. "I'm the rainmaker," he said, a smile creasing his face.

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Stir Crazy

Former Israeli army officer segues into baking

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Nissim Sadiklar was in his element when a visitor arrived at his bakery, Creation Food Services, one recent afternoon.

He was kneading and braiding a challah, one of 40 products he and his staff churn out at a 9,000-square-foot facility in Woodbridge in suburban Toronto.

A former Israeli army officer, Sadiklar makes a dizzying array of Jewish and Middle Eastern-style baked goods, all of which are certifiably kosher, nut-free and sold in bulk in frozen form.

Apart from bourekas, bureks, puff pastries, strudels and croissants, he whips up Danish pastries, cookies, muffins, yogurt cakes, breads, pitas, buns and rolls.

Sadiklar's products are currently sold at Wal-Mart, the T & T chain, What a Bagel and Aroma cafes. They're also served at Jewish summer camps in Ontario.

He also sells to individuals, who can order online or buy from his recently opened factory outlet.

In addition to the Toronto area, Sadiklar's line of goods are sold in Montreal, Buffalo, New York City, Boston and Detroit.

Nissim Sadiklar and his wife, Aviva, at their bakery in Woodbridge.
[Sheldon Kirshner photos]

And if his plans materialize, Creation Food Services will expand further afield in Canada and the United States.

Though his business has grown by leaps and bounds since he started eight years ago, Sadiklar has not advertised until now, depending on word-of-mouth references.

"It's an old-fashioned way of operating, I know," he said.

But his formula has proven to be successful because of the quality and pricing of his pastries and breads.

Many of his private customers are Jewish, but Sadiklar gets a lot of orders from Arabs, Turks and Armenians as well.

Happily describing himself as a workaholic, Sadiklar, 54, immigrated to Canada in the mid-1990s.

A native of Jerusalem whose parents made aliyah from Turkey in 1947, Sadiklar was a distributor of pastries and the owner of a kosher vegetarian and dairy restaurant on the campus of York University before establishing Creation Food Services.

In Israel, he was an officer in the army, charged with maintaining armoured vehicles in the field.

He lived and worked in the Golan Heights, claiming he was the first Israeli to buy an apartment unit in Katzrin, the administrative centre and only town in the Golan.

A veteran of the 1982 war in Lebanon, he spent about a dozen years in the army before deciding to become an independent businessman.

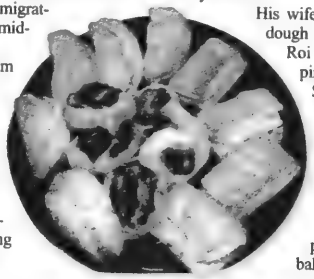
He opened pizza parlours and a cafe in two settlements close to Jerusalem, learning the business from reading books and consulting his mother, Rachel, an accomplished cook.

Sadiklar, who has had kosher certification from the Kashruth Council of Canada since 2005, runs Creation Food Services as a family business.

His wife, Aviva, works on the dough line, while his sons, Roi and Kfir, handle shipping, receiving and sales. Sadiklar's daughter-in-law, Rosita, performs secretarial duties.

He creates new products, bakes and oversees the operation.

Although not a professionally trained baker, Sadiklar knows the business from top to bottom, judging by the success Creation Food Services has enjoyed.



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Stir Crazy

Food is much more than food

By BEVERLY LEVITT
Special to The CJN

And the lord said to Adam, "Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat… except one." Adam took a bite anyway – and it wasn't because he was hungry. As Adam's appetite invariably led to his ruin, so does it often lead to ours.

So much food, so little time…

In our land of gastronomical plenty, we have long passed the period where we were eating to live – today most of us live to eat. By analyzing why we eat, what we eat, when we eat it, we will try to gain insight into our psyches – especially that uncontrollable feat of the subconscious – devouring a quart of chocolate ice cream in one sitting.

Aside from man's inherent urge to rebel or be naughty, most medical professionals agree that people eat primarily because of how it makes them feel. Especially when they're upset.

"When we feel emotionally deprived, we very often act out with food," says psychologist and screenwriter Michael Berlin. "If I'm feeling deprived in the world, why shouldn't I eat whatever I want? What do I have to lose?"

So we choose extravagant, sugary, fattening treats which are considered taboos – mostly chocolate or creamy desserts. When we're happy, we don't need to compensate with food. In fact, when we're happy we don't eat as much, in general.

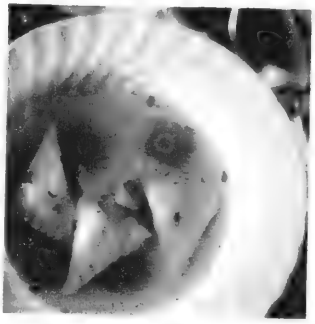
The chocolate industry thrives on people's upset moods. Many people instinctively eat chocolate because it makes them feel better – physiologically! Serotonin is released, which calms the senses and contributes to a sense of well being. "We're not saying there's anything wrong with eating a piece of chocolate. It's when we gorge an entire pound, we have to worry," Berlin emphasizes.

Other people have the opposite reaction. When they're upset, they refuse to feed or nourish themselves. Their stomachs tighten, and the thought of putting anything into their mouths makes them nauseated. They will deliberately let their cupboards get bare so that they can't eat anything. And the idea of going to the market seems as overwhelming as climbing Mount Everest.

A favourite saying of psychiatrist, Dr. William Rader, who ran a chain of eating disorder clinics, is, "Food isn't food. It has a myriad of other connotations. Food is your best friend.It's always there for you. It never judges you. It even comforts you when you're depressed. Your very favourite food can make your troubles disappear. Albeit temporarily! Food can also be your drug. Or your lover. Or the downfall of your life."

According to Rader, "everyone has trigger foods – comfort foods, familiar foods – foods we automatically reach for when we're upset."

These are not necessarily taboo foods, but chances are they were fed to us by our mothers when we were very young. When we were good, we were given sweets. When we were bad, we were sent to bed without supper. When we were upset, mom soothed us by serving up a special dish to make us feel better. Or she served our favourite meal just to show how much she loved us.



"Come on son, have a babkah and we'll talk about what happened. You don't look so good, come, sit, I'll make you a nice bowl of chicken soup. Sorry you didn't get that job, Levi, but I made your favourite stuffed cabbage. Eat, eat, you'll forget all about it."

Or, the proverbial, "Guess what I made for dinner – your favourite brisket!"

When we were children, our mothers gave us ice cream and cake when we had birthdays; chocolate cake, sweet rolls, or chocolate chip cookies when we came home from school; various forms of chicken soup – with matzah balls, noodles or even rice, when we got sick. Some of us remember the BRAT diet (foods prescribed for diarrhea: Bananas, Rice, Apple Sauce and Toast) and they still give us solace.

"We eat these foods not because we're really hungry; we have a different kind of hunger," Rader says. "We're anxious, we're nervous, we're scared. The comfort foods of our childhood calm us down; they embody mom's concern and kind heart."

The simple act of smelling certain foods can have the same effect. "The aromas of our early years will forever haunt us," explains Beverly Hills psychiatrist, Dr. Howard Shapiro. "There are certain buildings I go into that take me right back to my grandma's kitchen, with her chicken soup simmering on the stove. One whiff – I feel her warm, loving presence."

The way we remember family life is often associated with our memories of the dinner table. "In my family, dinner was the most important event of the day," Berlin recalls. "My mother believed that the family should eat together every night, no matter what. Because she nourished my sister and I so well, we always felt loved and well taken care of. We learned early that food not only nourishes the body, it nourishes the soul."

"Who eats first or who is served first invariably denotes social position within families, offers Shapiro. "Usually that honour is given to the father, and often there are severe consequences for breaking it."

Next in line is the oldest son, and many daughters complain that their mothers showed favouritism toward their brothers, painfully remembering the words, 'Look, son, I saved the best part for you.'"

Dr. Irene Goldenberg, family psychologist and professor of psychiatry at UCLA, adds, "In many immigrant families, the mother wasn't expected to eat with the family; she was so busy cooking, serving, and cleaning, she often dined in the kitchen, straight out of the pot. The kids got the message that dad was the breadwinner and therefore deserved to be waited on. Little girls were taught that would be their role when they grew up. Little boys got another message...

"Food isn't as significant as the statement it makes.'We are a family who sits down together.' 'Mother takes care of everyone by waiting on us.' 'We eat in the living room and watch TV'".

The damning testimony that she was hardly ever home for dinner contributed to federal judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit Sharon Prost, losing custody of her two sons. Prost was accused by her au pair of "often eating dinner alone, very late at night, sitting on the kitchen floor, surrounded by briefing papers." The fact that she woke up at 6 a.m. to play with her sons and make them breakfast apparently held little sway with the judge.

"The dwindling of the family dinner signifies the breakdown of the family," Goldenberg says. "In days gone by, the traditional, nightly meal was a signpost of stability. Today, mom and dad are often working late, and the kids are told to heat up leftovers or get takeout for dinner. Or mom and the kids sit down to a nice dinner but one chair is empty. No one says anything. No one has to.

"Teenagers, in rebellion, will make excuses to get out of family dinners. Or, worse, they will defiantly refuse to eat what mom has so painstakingly made, claiming they're on a diet, they have suddenly become vegetarians, or they'll drop the bomb, 'I hate your cooking! You're the reason I'm fat!'"

According to Goldenberg, their angry accusations have more to do with family dynamics than food.

But errant eating patterns aren't always harmful. Some people choose healthful foods, in times of stress. One woman can only eat raw fruits and vegetables when she's upset, claiming she just can't get herself to turn on the stove. Another woman will turn on the stove, but only to make oatmeal, served with raisins and bananas, just as her health-conscious mother fed her as a child.

The actual preparation of food can be a positive way out of a depression. Since being depressed is being out of control, being meticulous – cutting things into small, perfect pieces, following a recipe precisely, or just throwing everything into a pot and have it turn out delicious, is not only a creative, satisfying activity, it takes our mind off our problems. When we eat the fruits of our labour, our pride and self-esteem are validated, making us feel better. The preparation of holiday meals – Rosh Hashanah feasts and Yom Kippur break the fasts, Chanukah parties, Passover, Shabbat, or Sunday dinners – can be rewarding, as we assume our mother's role, and provide pleasure and sustenance to our own families. Our culinary labours bring us back to comforting times – perhaps hanging out in the kitchen with mom – and make us feel proud we can pass along this revered family tradition.

Continued on page 48

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Memories of childhood meals

Continued from page 47

Food produces still other feelings. "The sensation of being full actually makes us feel secure," notes Shapiro. "Thanksgiving is the most popular American holiday because people associate feeling full with being part of a happy family. It's the one time of year, it's good to stuff yourself," he smiles. At Passover we find ourselves doing the same thing—when we finally get to eat.

In the same vein, some people need a fully stocked larder because having enough food makes them feel secure. This is especially true of our parents who went through the Great Depression. They often buy more food than they need because they remember all too vividly what it feels like to ration it out.

So much food, so little time… Maybe the next time you find yourself taking a bite anyway -- and not because you are hungry, you'll think about your biblical role model, Adam, and dear ol' mom, bustling sweetly about the kitchen. You might even find yourself whispering, "Food is not food. It has a myriad of other connotations."

MATZAH BALL SOUP

Matzah balls
1 tbsp. schmaltz (rendered chicken fat)
1 tbsp. canola oil
2 eggs, beaten slightly
1/2 cup matzah meal
1 tsp. salt
2 tbsp. soup stock or water

Mix together fat, oil and eggs. Add matzah meal and salt. When well blended, add soup stock or water. Place in refrigerator for 30 minutes.

Using a tablespoon, fashion balls out of matzah meal mixture. Set aside. Bring to boil 2 quarts salted water; reduce heat, drop matzah balls into slightly bubbling water. Cover pot and cook 30 minutes. Transfer to soup that is slightly warm and simmer for 5-7 minutes. Makes 8 balls.

Chicken soup
1 - 4 lb. roasting chicken, cut into pieces
4 quarts cold water
1 large onion
6 stalks of celery with tops
4 carrots, sliced thick
1 parsnip
1/2 cup parsley, chopped

Clean and wash chicken thoroughly. Cover with water and bring to brisk boil. Skim until liquid is completely clear. Add onion, celery, carrots and parsnip. Boil gently 3 hours. Remove all vegetables but carrots. Fifteen minutes before serving, add parsley.

TAPIOCA PUDDING

The king of nursery desserts we were all given as babies, this soothing mixture of milk, eggs and sugar gives us just as much comfort today as it did then.

6 cups milk
1/2 cup minute tapioca beads
1 vanilla bean OR
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
1/2 cup sugar
3 egg yolks

Combine milk, tapioca and vanilla bean in saucepan; bring to boil, stirring constantly with wooden spoon. Cook over low-medium heat 7 minutes. Beat sugar and egg yolks with wire whisk until light and yellow-coloured. Add a little of the hot tapioca mixture. Stirring constantly, return mixture to saucepan. When it begins to boil, continue cooking, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Remove vanilla bean. Pour pudding into a serving dish or individual dishes and let cool. If desired, top with whip cream and peach or apricot jam. Chill until ready to serve.

AFTER SCHOOL APPLE PIE

Adapted from "Great Desserts from Ceil Dyer" McGraw Hill

1 1/4 cups unsweetened apple juice
1/4 cup apple brandy or applejack
3/4 cup granulated sugar
7 or 8 tart, crisp apples, such as Macintosh or Granny Smith, peeled, cored, and cut into wedges
3 tbsp. cornstarch
1 tbsp. butter
1/2 cup currant jelly
1 tbsp. more brandy or applejack
1 9-in. pie shell, baked and cooled whipped cream, lightly sweetened (optional)

In large saucepan over medium heat, combine apple juice or brandy and sugar. Bring to boil; add chopped apples. Cover and simmer 5 minutes or until apples are tender. With slotted spoon, transfer apples from liquid to colander. Reserve liquid. In small bowl, stir juice or brandy into cornstarch until smooth; add to liquid. Cook, stirring constantly, until thick and bubbly. Remove from heat; stir in butter. Cover and let stand for 30 minutes, or until thickened to a smooth custard.

In small saucepan, melt jelly over low heat. Stir in remaining brandy or applejack. Cool slightly. Brush bottom of baked pie shell with about one-fourth of mixture. Cover with cooled custard. Arrange apple slices in a circle over surface. Brush evenly with remaining jelly mixture. Cover and refrigerate until chilled. If desired, garnish with sweetened whipped cream. Serves 6 to 8.

OLD FASHIONED SPAGHETTI AND MEAT BALLS

Meat Balls
1 lb. lean ground sirloin
1 egg, lightly beaten
1/2 cup bread crumbs
1/2 cup parsley, chopped
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup pine nuts
salt and pepper to taste

Spaghetti Sauce
1 onion, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tsp. dried basil
1 tsp. dried oregano
pure olive oil for frying
1 large can Italian plum tomatoes
1 small can tomato paste
1 cup hearty red wine
1 tbsp. fresh parsley
1/2 cup fresh mushrooms, halved

For meatballs: mix ingredients together by hand. Shape into balls. Lightly brown in olive oil.

For sauce: brown onion, pepper, garlic and spices in olive oil until golden. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, wine, and 2-3 cups water. Add meatballs. Cook over medium heat until tomatoes have completely dissolved. Add parsley and mushrooms. Lower flame and simmer until sauce becomes rich and thick. Serve over spaghetti or linguine. Serves 6.

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Israeli cabinet backs loyalty oath

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel's cabinet approved a loyalty oath requiring non-Jews wishing to become citizens to pledge allegiance to Israel as a "Jewish and democratic state."

The requirement of an oath for new prospective citizens was approved on Oct. 10 by a vote of 22 ministers in favour and eight opposed – five from the Labor Party, including party head Ehud Barak, and three from the Likud Party.

"There is no other democracy in the Middle East," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said at the beginning of the cabinet meeting before the debate and vote on the amendment. "There is no other Jewish state in the world. The combination of these two lofty values expresses the foundation of our national life, and anyone who would like to join us needs to recognize this.

"To my regret, today there are those who are trying to blur not only the unique connection between the Jewish people and its homeland but also the connection between the Jewish people and its state. Democracy is the soul of Israel, and we cannot do without it. No one can preach democracy or enlightenment to us. Zionism established an exemplary national state, a state that balances between the national needs of our people and the individual rights of every citizen in the country."

During the meeting, Justice Minister Yaakov Neeman proposed that in addition to non-Jews seeking Israeli citizenship, Jews seeking Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return also should be required to swear allegiance to Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.

Defence Minister Ehud Barak said Sunday that he would vote in favour of the amendment only if it included his suggested change, adding the phrase "In the spirit of the Declaration of Independence."

Neither change was adopted.

The amendment advances to the Knesset's legislative committee and then to the full Knesset.

The loyalty oath amendment fulfils part of the government's coalition agreement with Avidgor Lieberman's Yisrael Beiteinu party.

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC), said his organization will continue to monitor the progress of the proposed legislation and will engage with Israeli political leaders in discussions to get more information on the legislation.

He said the CIC does not characterize the draft as a loyalty oath.

"A more accurate description would be a citizenship declaration. Just like new Canadians are expected to pledge allegiance to the Queen and all her heirs, new Israelis, according to this proposed legislation, would be required to articulate similar allegiance to the state of Israel," he said, adding that the proposal was "far from a done deal" and could go through many modifications before it's considered by the Knesset.

In related developments, the American Jewish Committee called on Israel to exercise caution in enacting a measure that would require non-Jewish citizens to swear loyalty to Israel's Jewish character.

"AJC wholeheartedly supports the principle that Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people and is proud of the fact that Israel is a genuine and vibrant democracy, indeed the only democracy in the Middle East," a statement issued last week by the group said.

"However, applying different standards, based on ethnicity, to applicants seeking the country's citizenship may detract from the noble cause that the amendment purports to promote. AJC hopes that the Israeli cabinet will carefully review all the ramifications of this amendment before it advances further."

U.S. Jewish groups generally have been silent on the bill, which has stirred controversy in Israel.

An Anti-Defamation League statement last week did not oppose the measure, but urged that the oath be extended to all new citizens, Jewish and non-Jewish.

With files from Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf

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Manitoba premier wowed by Israeli dynamism

By JENNY HAZAN

TEL AVIV — In order to further deepen ties between Manitoba and Israel in the fields of medical research, commercial business development, agriculture, water technology and ecotourism, Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger went on a mission to Israel last week, along with the provincial ministers of water stewardship, Christine Melnick, and innovation, energy and mines, David Chomiak.

"It's a very dynamic country. No two ways about it," Selinger said on his final day in Israel, where he arrived on Oct. 10. "Any country where Starbucks can't get a foothold and local cafes are bustling and successful, you know is a country that's doing pretty well."

During the seven-day trip, Selinger met with Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Silvan Shalom and Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. He oversaw the signing of memos of understanding between the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the University of Manitoba's Asper School of Business on agricultural and medical research and commercial business development, between the Province of Manitoba and the State of Israel on the development of water technology, and between Manitoba and the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI) on ecotourism.

Under the universities' agreement, the University of Manitoba (U of M) will be working with the Yissum Research Development Company, an arm's-length corporation of Hebrew U, to identify technologies produced by U of M that are suitable for commercialization.

The agreement will enable teams of MBA students from U of M to work with Yissum and the developers of a chosen technology to develop a proposed venture and prepare a business plan to bring this venture to the market.

Selinger also dedicated the Playground for Peace at the Arab-Jewish Community Center in Jaffa and inaugurated a youth leadership program, to which Manitoba committed $40,000 (US). He visited Better Place, an Israeli company that develops networks and services to support electric automobiles, and went to the Augusta Victoria Hospital in east Jerusalem, where the Manitoba government has instituted a busing project to improve health-care accessibility for dialysis and cancer patients in the West Bank. "The mission covered many diverse dimensions," Selinger said. "It has been an intense week, and a very good week. We have learned a ton. The highlight has been the total amount of dynamic activity going on in Israel, the push to make things better."

Selinger was particularly impressed by the collaborative medical research currently taking place between Hebrew U and U of M on HIV/AIDS and Parkinson's disease."We have very smart people collaborating to solve these big problems. It's very exciting stuff. They are doing research that can have major global implications, that has the potential to change people's lives dramatically."

He was also pleased with the agreement signed between his province and the SPNI to co-operate on ecotourism initiatives focused on birding and guiding.

"We [in Manitoba] have many migratory paths and we do a tremendous amount to protect birding. We are very interested in promoting ecotourism, and our agreement to collaborate on conservation techniques is a unique and promising one."

A special feature of the mission to Israel was a performance of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, which is celebrating its 70th anniversary with a tour of Israel. Selinger, along with Canada's new ambassador to Israel, Paul Hunt, hosted a reception after the ballet's opening night last week at the Tel Aviv Performing Arts Center.

"It was a great evening, and they [the ballet] are great ambassadors both for Manitoba and for Canada," Selinger said.

The trip is one of several Manitoban missions to Israel that have taken place since the beginning of 2010, including two major Manitoba-Israel water symposiums hosted by the Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael – Jewish National Fund, aimed at bringing together Israeli and Manitoban researchers and policy-makers to boost co-operation on mutual water issues.

"The relationship between Manitoba and Israel has been building. There are a lot of good dimensions to it and it is built on a very positive foundation," Selinger said. "The hope is that we will continue to strengthen this relationship, and that it will continue to generate positive outcomes."

With files from Rhonda Spivak.

Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger, centre, David Barnard, president of the University of Manitoba, left, and Menahem Ben-Sasson, president of Hebrew University, sign a memo of understanding.

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A partnership on environment

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The Province of Manitoba and the Society For the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI) last week signed a ground-breaking memorandum of understanding relating to ecotourism, birding and the environment.

"This agreement is unique. The SPNI has never signed an agreement with a foreign government," Manitoba Minister of Water Stewardship Christine Melnick, who was at the signing ceremony Oct. 13, said in a statement.

Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger signed the agreement with Avinoam Ben Yitzhak, the director of SPNI in Jerusalem.

This is the first stage in what is ultimately designed to build environmental and ecological co-operation between Canada, Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority.

The agreement calls for SPNI and the director of wildlife and ecosystem protection of Manitoba to co-operate in the areas of birding, advancement of ecological tourism and the environment. It calls for Manitoba and Israel to share knowledge and co-operate on research and educational activities to preserve the environment. Manitoba and SPNI will build teams to work together on mutual concerns of ecotourism, birding, co-ordinating bird ringing, tracking migrating birds, migration and ecological research and preserving bird habitats.

Melnick and Paul Hunt, newly installed Canadian ambassador to Israel, and Imad Atrash, the founder and director of the Palestinian Authority's Palestine Wildlife Society [PWS], were all present for the signing. The PWS was established in 1999 and is headquartered in Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem in the West Bank.

In a telephone interview, Atrash told *The CJN* that he hopes in the future to work with Israel and Canada in promoting ecotourism and awareness of nature.

"Instead of tourists coming to the area only to see religious sites, we want to involve them with nature. We want to promote regional ecotourism… The Jordan Valley is a bird flight path. Birds coming from Europe go to Jericho, especially the raptor and the white stork," he said.

Atrash said the signing ceremony was his first meeting with the Canadians, but added that plans are in the works to have him and Yossi Leshem, an Israeli bird expert, come to Manitoba next June as part of the growing sharing of knowledge relating to birding, bird habitats and protection of the environment.

"Preserving biodiversity is not a local issue – it's a global issue. Without continental and intercontinental co-operation, degradation of habitats and species that we depend upon cannot be mitigated and halted," said Amir Balaban, director of the Jerusalem Bird Observatory, in a statement.

"Canada is an enormous country… while Israel is a tiny country…lacking in natural resources. Yet each country… can provide inspiration and new ideas to one another in nature conservation – and work to bring people and nature together," Balaban said.

European Jews face more anti-Semitism

JTA

BERLIN — European leaders must intervene to save small Jewish communities from an anti-Semitic onslaught, the head of the European Jewish Congress said.

In a statement issued Oct. 14, Moshe Kantor said European Jewish communities are in "grave danger" from the anti-Semitism, some of it officially sanctioned, as made clear by recent sensational anti-Semitic incidents in Belgium and Sweden.

Kantor, who is hosting a conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia, later this month on best practices for combating racism and xenophobia, said European Union and European leaders should "launch a campaign against intolerance and anti-Semitism to remind European citizens that the new Europe was established after the Second World War on the concept of 'Never Again.'"

Among the recent incidents he cited were a "Palestine Day" at a Catholic school in Antwerp, Belgium, during which children were invited to throw replicas of Jewish and Israeli soldiers into two large tanks. The game was called "Throw the soldiers into the sea."

In another incident, a gang shouting "Heil Hitler" and "Jewish pigs" attacked a Jewish children's event in Malmo, Sweden, earlier this month. Many Jews reportedly have been leaving Malmo this year due to an increase in anti-Semitic incidents.

Kantor also pointed to recent anti-Semitic statements by former German central bank board member Thilo Sarrazin and other public figures.

Citing a feeble official response, Kantor said that "anti-Semitism is at best actively promoted and at worst ignored by some officials in Europe. Due to this intolerable situation, small Jewish communities, like Malmo, are teetering on the brink of extinction," threatened by extremists on the left and right.

"If they can't receive protection or respite from mainstream officials," he said, "then we are entering a very dark period for the Jews in Europe."

Miliband worries U.K. Jews

By WINSTON PICKETT
JTA

LONDON — Less than a month after Ed Miliband was elected leader of Britain's Labour Party, Jewish concerns are growing about how his views will shape the policies toward Israel of the party favoured by most British Jews.

Jewish political observers are talking about a possible new reality in Labour in which Miliband, the first Jewish head of the 110-year-old party, will deviate from the solidly pro-Israel stances of former prime ministers Gordon Brown and Tony Blair, also of Labour.

The concerns were stoked when Miliband, in his keynote address to Labour's annual conference in Manchester earlier this month, told party members that they must "strain every sinew" to end Israel's naval blockade of Gaza. Although he said he "will always defend the right of Israel to exist in peace and security," Miliband also said Israel's "attack on the Gaza flotilla was so wrong."

"It was very disappointing that his conference speech criticized Israel without mentioning Hamas rocket attacks on civilians," Louise Ellman, a Labour MP from Liverpool and chairwoman of the Jewish Labour Movement, told the *Jewish Chronicle*, the main Jewish newspaper in Britain. "It's important for Ed to show he is evenhanded on the Middle East, and the first things he must do are support the universal jurisdiction legislation, show he is opposed to boycotts and support a negotiated peace agreement."

Ed Miliband

The universal jurisdiction legislation is a proposed law pending before Parliament that would restrict the application in Britain of arrest warrants issued elsewhere on the ground of "universal law" – essentially removing the threat that visiting Israeli leaders would be arrested on war crimes charges.

Miliband, 40, surprised pundits last month by beating his older brother, former foreign secretary David Miliband, 44, in the race for Labour leader. He was the first party leader elected since Brown resigned as prime minister after losing the U.K. election last May.

After Miliband's Manchester speech raised Jewish eyebrows, a spokesperson declined to answer questions that the *Jewish Chronicle* had for Miliband about Israel, foreign policy or his plans to meet Jewish leaders.

"These are serious issues requiring serious answers," one Labour insider said. "Ed's not about to make up policies on the fly just to answer a reporter's questions. Moreover, there are a significant number of pro-Israel members of his shadow cabinet."

At the "fringe" meetings held at the Labour Party conference, where elected party leaders can speak directly to supporters' concerns, Jews got a mixed message from Miliband.

At the Labour Friends of Israel meeting, Miliband said he considers himself a friend of Israel and that "I take incredibly seriously the issues of peace and security." He called for the condemnation of Hamas rocket attacks and affirmed his support for a two-state solution while saying that any questioning of Israel's legitimacy is "just totally unacceptable."

But Miliband also issued a statement to Labour Friends of Palestine suggesting that trade policy could be used as a coercive tool against Israel. The message said, "The major instrument for influence at our disposal in relation to the Middle East is trade policy. I am against blanket boycotts of goods from Israel. But Israel, and all countries in the region, must live up to the commitments they have made to respect human rights as part of trade agreements. The EU must be tough enough to ensure that these commitments mean something."

Officially, the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the country's main Jewish umbrella body, welcomed Miliband's election, emphasizing his opposition to boycotts "which discriminate by targeting Israelis."

But Jonathan Arkush, senior vice-president of the organization, told the *Jewish Chronicle* that he was worried. "His speech singled out Israel for criticism and lacked balance in relation to the Middle East," Arkush said.

Israeli Embassy staffers in London said they would give Miliband "the benefit of the doubt" and adopt a "wait-and-see" policy. Miliband's perceived policy unknowns have left analysts to scour his personal biography for clues.

At the party conference in Manchester, he spoke openly of growing up the child of Jewish refugees. His late father, Ralph Miliband, fled Poland and the Nazis in 1940 and later became a Marxist, a professor at the London School of Economics and one of Britain's most celebrated left-wing intellectuals.

Miliband's mother, Marion Kozak, 75, escaped mass murder and deportations in Poland and fled to Belgium, where she was hidden by a Christian family. She eventually went to London and became a supporter of groups such as Jews for Justice for Palestinians.

By contrast, Miliband's older brother, David, the former foreign secretary, has an established track record of pro-Israel engagement. In the brothers' race for Labour leader, David Miliband won the backing of more rank-and-file party members, MPs and members of the European Parliament. But the trade union vote went to Ed, helping to push the younger Miliband over the top by 1.3 per cent of the vote.

It's Miliband's dependence on trade unions, which are seen as having anti-Israel policies, that have Jewish leaders worried. Among his supporters during the Labour leadership campaign was Unite, which in June passed a motion "to vigorously promote a policy of divestment from Israeli companies." Unite also supported a motion reaffirming a boycott of goods produced in the West Bank at the last Trades Union Congress conference.

While Labour figures insist Miliband won't be swayed by union positions on Israel, Robin Shepherd, author of *A State Beyond the Pale: Europe's Problem with Israel*, thinks that fails to account for Miliband's baseline values.

"Miliband comes from left of the Labour Party, which is instinctively hostile to Israel, and if he becomes prime minister, like all others, he will defer to the interests of the Foreign Office and the European Union, both of which have that as their default position as well," Shepherd, the European director of a British think-tank, The Henry Jackson Society, told JTA. "I don't see a lot of manoeuvrability there."

Israel Briefs

ICC asked to prosecute

Israel should be prosecuted for war crimes committed during the interception of a Gaza-bound flotilla, lawyers told an international court. Lawyers representing the nine Turkish passengers who were killed aboard the Mavi Marmara, which was part of a flotilla trying to break Israel's maritime blockade of the Gaza Strip, presented a brief with evidence of what they call war crimes and crimes against humanity to the International Criminal Court in The Hague on Oct. 14. The May 31 incident brought international condemnation on Israel. Neither Israel nor Turkey is a signatory to the ICC. "If there are war crimes, there is jurisdiction and the ICC should act," attorney Ugur Sevgili said, according to the French news agency AFP. The ICC prosecutor will analyze the data to see if a full investigation is warranted, AFP reported, and that could take up to a year.

Spy drone deal signed

Israel has agreed to sell spy drones to Russia in a $400-million (US) deal. The deal for the unmanned aerial vehicles between the government-owned Israel Aerospace Industries and arms maker OPK-Oboronprom, which has Russia as its majority owner, was signed Oct. 12 in Israel. The Russian firm will reportedly buy the drones over a three-year period. They'll be assembled in Russia, *Ha'aretz* reported. A statement from the two firms said the deal will "strengthen the bilateral relationship between Israel and Russia." Russia bought IAI spy drones in a $50-million deal in April 2009.

Tourism record

Some 2.5 million tourists have visited Israel since the start of 2010, according to figures kept by the nation's Central Bureau of Statistics. The figure is nine per cent more than in 2008, which was the record tourism year in Israel, and a 27 per cent increase over last year. Some 22,300 tourists visited Israel on cruise ships, double the number visiting in September 2009 and three times more than in 2008. Israel's Tourism Ministry is investing more than $19 million (US) until the end of 2010 on marketing Israel. "New countries and new target audiences are expressing an interest in visiting Israel and see it as an attractive tourism destination," Tourism Minister Stas Misezhnikov said. "In the next year, the Tourism Ministry will work to challenge these new target audiences including, for the first time, Muslim groups to visit Israel."

Yahoo! to buy firm

Yahoo! has agreed to buy an Israeli start-up company reportedly for more than $50 million. Dapper Inc., founded in 2006, has developed technology to create interactive display ads and target the personalized ads at Internet users. While neither Yahoo! nor Dapper released terms of the deal, Israeli media are citing sources as saying the deal is for about $50 million. Dapper's development centre in Ramat Gan will become Yahoo!'s development centre in Israel, the Israeli business daily *Globes* reported. The Internet giant also has a research centre in Haifa.

WEIZMANN CANADA

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We are pleased to announce that **Susan Stern** has been appointed National Executive Vice President of Weizmann Canada.

Weizmann Canada represents the Weizmann Institute of Science, based in Rehovot, Israel, and develops philanthropic support in Canada for the Institute's scientific research and education programs.

Susan has been the Executive Director for Weizmann Canada, eastern region for the past five years. In that time, she has significantly increased our presence in this region and developed existing and new sources of support for the excellent and important work being done at the Weizmann Institute of Science.

In her new role as National Executive Vice President, Susan will direct and oversee the organization's development activities across Canada, working with the professional and lay leadership in the regional offices.

We are very pleased that Susan has agreed to take on this new role. She brings exceptional vision and leadership to the Weizmann Institute family and a passion for our mission of science for the benefit of humanity. Her relevant experience will enable us to increase our organization's presence in Canada.

Catherine Beck, President

Weizmann Canada

And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Stacey Farber on love, loss and what she wore

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Throughout her life she's been a high school goth, an 18-year-old newlywed and a young woman sharing memories and the clothes that go with them.

In reality, she is 23-year-old actor Stacey Farber.

Known for her role as Ellie Nash in *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, Farber's show *18 to Life* is entering its second season on CBC in January. Currently, she is making her theatrical debut in *Love, Loss and What I Wore*, written by Nora and Delia Ephron and based on the book by Ilene Beckerman.

Born and raised in Toronto, Farber got interested in acting when she was accepted to Claude Watson School for the Arts, which she attended from grades 4 to 8. She majored in visual arts but acting caught her attention because a number of her classmates were involved in it.

"Suddenly it was a very normal thing to have an agent and be on TV," she said. "I'd never been around that before – no one in my family is in the industry."

After getting an agent when she was in Grade 8, Farber's first major role – on *Degrassi* – came when she was 15. She was on the show from 2002 to 2008 and "had a great time on that set," she said.

Two of her *Degrassi* co-stars, Lauren Collins and Paula Brancati, were in *Love, Loss and What I Wore* at different times, playing the role that Farber now occupies. The cast, which changes every four weeks, includes, in addition to Farber, Trey Anthony, Mary Lou Fallis, Patricia Hamilton and Leah Pinsent.

"It's so fun!" she said of being in the play. "I knew it would be different from TV, which is mainly what I do and it is very different, but I love it. I find it really interesting to see how the audience changes every night and how they react differently to different things.

"It's pretty cool to feel the energy from the audience and use their energy to fuel your own. It's exciting – I definitely get an adrenaline rush before I go on stage."

The play features the five women all dressed in black, who spend the entire show sitting on tall chairs. The few props in the intimate performance include life-size drawings of the outfits that appear in Beckerman's novel.

It is this intimacy in the play that Farber loves.

"All the women share one dressing room, and we do our own hair and makeup pretty much and get ready for the show together. I think that's really fun and it helps us bond, sharing that space, it's so intimate. We have to be close and working off each other on stage, so I think it helps."

When asked how she tackles the darker aspects in some of the roles she plays – Ellie on *Degrassi* had an alcoholic mother – Farber says it comes to down to imagining what the characters have been through has happened to her.

"I don't really have any darkness in my life. Growing up I had such a happy childhood... For playing Ellie, I'm not sure where I got all that darkness and sadness from, because I couldn't draw from my own experiences. I guess it was my imagination.

"I'm able to really feel things that I haven't necessarily experienced in my own life. So for *Love, Loss*, if there's a monologue that's darker, I read the script over and over again, really focus on the words. I imagine it happened to me and I'm confiding in the audience. I try to tell the story in a way that's as natural and realistic as possible.

Actor Stacey Farber

"I work on it every night and I try different things. That to me is the fun part. It's sort of like piecing together a puzzle."

In *Love, Loss*, Farber's character discusses in depth her clothes and the memories – some good, some bad, some embarrassing – that are associated with them, including buying her first bra, her prom dress and her love for short skirts and tall boots. In real life, she is just as much a fan of fashion.

"I've been interested in fashion for a long time," she said. "My interest has changed over the years. I studied it for a long time. I used to buy fashion magazines and study them. I loved fashion writing. I lived in New York for a few years [where she graduated from The New School university in 2009] and I interned for several fashion magazines.

"Now it's more just an appreciation for fashion as a form of expression or even as art.

"*In Love, Loss*, the whole point of talking about your clothes is to talk about the memories that go with them or experiences you had while wearing a certain piece of clothing."

Judaism is also something that's important to Farber, although she says she's still trying to figure out where she fits in the community.

"I think that's something that people at my age question and start to figure out on their own once they're independent and not living with their parents anymore.

"My family celebrates so many Jewish holidays and we have Shabbat dinners. I had a bat mitzvah and went on Birthright. Lots of my friends in Toronto are Jewish, and I went to a Jewish sleepover camp as a kid. Those things have all contributed to who I am today," she said.

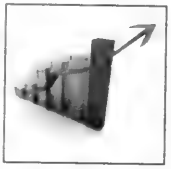
"There's definitely a Jewish thread that runs through [the play]," Farber added. "So many of the stories are about the women and men who are Jewish."

Love, Loss and What I Wore with Farber in it runs to Oct. 30 at the Panasonic Theatre. Tickets can be purchased at www.mirvish.com or by phoning 416-872-1212.

Toronto olim start swimwear business in Israel

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

There was a time when Israel's reputation for fostering business wasn't – let's be charitable about it – not that positive, but that was years ago.



Marci and Harold Rapp have discovered quite a different reality as new olim in the Jewish state. As they try to get their swimwear business off the ground, they've found "lots of support" from various ministries and agencies, Marci said on the phone from their home in Jerusalem.

The Rapps found they qualified for low-interest loans, interest-only payments, free consulting services, help in developing a website and other perks to help them get their feet on the ground.

The result was the creation last January of MarSea Modest Swimwear, a company that produces a line of swimming clothes for a niche market (www.marseamodest.com).

"This is modest swimwear for religious women and for those wanting some protection or those wanting to cover up age, weight or medical imperfections," said Marci. "I designed everything from swim dresses, tops, shorts, capris, swim berets, bandanas and tankinis."

Harold believes that while they're catering to a niche market, it's quite a large niche. "There are lots of frum women who go to beaches, resorts, cruises, and they're making do with what's out there, which isn't much," he said.

There are also plenty of Christian women as well who are looking for "modest" swim gear, plus a substantial number of women who are attracted to the product for vanity reasons. "There are so many months of beautiful weather here, beaches, resorts, the opportunity to go to the beach is greater than in Toronto," Marci said.

Like many other startups, sales numbers in the first year are admittedly "small," said Harold. "This was our first summer and coupled with our financial situation, we couldn't get our inventory in time and now we are carrying inventory."

Although they now have two people selling for them, they have to do most of the legwork themselves, Marci said. After she designs the outfits, she drives to the town of Shoham, near Ben-Gurion Airport, where her pattern-maker resides. Fabric, a high-quality nylon/lycra blend that is manufactured in Italy, comes from a shop in Tel Aviv, is printed in Shoham, brought back to the manufacturer in Tel Aviv for production.

Because they are new customers with a modest order, they often find themselves last in line when it comes to production, Harold said.

Their first run was only 300 swim dresses, which almost sold out, Marci said.

Marketing and sales is also done on a small scale. Many are sold from their apartment in Katamon, others at home shows, mini-malls, fairs or street stalls.

Though still a young enterprise, MarSea Modest is already looking abroad for sales. "We have a store in the Catskills [upstate New York, about a two-hour drive from New York City], that has sold most of the swim dresses sent there.

Aretz Originals in Thornhill, Ont., has also sold a few of their tankini sets, she added.

"We do plan to grow [the business]," she said, "but right now, for the first six months, we're getting used to getting around, introducing ourselves and perfecting new designs. We hope to increase our variety, our customer types, do more home shows, mini-malls and advertising."

Getting a foot in the door at larger retailers has proven a challenge. Most aren't interested and those who are will only do so on consignment, limiting their incentive to sell them, Marci believes.

Hotel gift shops want nothing to do with them – and tell them so in rather abrupt language, Marci said.

Marci Rapp shows off her line of beach clothing.

She has a good mind to complain to the managers – except it was the managers who were less than courteous to them. It's all part of adapting to a new business environment, which includes plenty of challenges along with the advantages, Marci said.

Language is one of the biggest adaptations to deal with, Marci and Harold agree, along with production difficulties at the small plant and "not always getting exactly what you asked for," Marci said.

Cash flow is also an issue for the Rapps, as is getting the product out to where the public can see it. And they rely heavily on local accountants to advise them about Israeli laws and regulations.

Still, with three of their sons living in Israel, the Holy Land is where they want to be. Residents of Thornhill for most of their lives, in 2008 they moved to Israel with their daughter and embarked on new careers as well as new lifestyles. In Toronto, Marci worked as a bookkeeper for Zareinu and Harold was in the kosher food business.

"The whole idea of this business germinated in the Muskokas," Harold recalled. "We rented cottages and we found my wife and friends, to be modest, wore cotton T-shirts over bathing suits. That does not work well in the water," getting heavy and clingy, he said.

There didn't appear to be much available on the market and "if you can't find suitable items, that means there is a need," he added.

Harold is confident the business will grow by 50 per cent this year as word gets out. "It's a huge market and it's only getting bigger," he said.

Google buying Israeli media firm

By GUY GRIMLAND
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — Internet giant Google is buying its second Israeli startup, Quiksee, a media company based in Or Yehuda. The deal is estimated at $10 million (all figures US).

Quiksee, also known as MentorWave Technologies, allows users to create location-based interactive media content. Its web-based content, the company says, "lets you quickly and easily create stunning virtual tours… to provide guidance to mankind."

Two investment groups have put $3.5 million into Quiksee, Ofer Hi-Tech and Docor International, while a number of private investment "angels" have also backed the firm.

Quiksee was founded in 2002 by Gadi Royz, Assaf Harel, Pavel Yosifovich and Rony Amira. While the firm's sales revenues are unknown, the amount isn't considered to be very high – for now. But its technology is regarded as the missing link in Google's Street View service, used by both Google Maps and Google Earth, which allows users to view photos along numerous streets around the world.

Both Google Israel and Quiksee refused to comment.

Google acquired Israeli startup LabPixies in April for about $25 million.

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All entries received by 3 p.m. on Wednesday, October 20th are eligible. The winning entries will be randomly selected at The CJN offices on Thursday, October 21st. The winners will be notified the same day. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. One entry per person.
The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with contestants.
Email your information to "contest@thecjn.ca" Re: "Lutherans" Contest, or mail to: The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4 or fax to: 416-391-0949.
Employees and family members of The CJN and Teatron Jewish Theatre are not eligible to enter.

Health & Lifestyles

Giving back by running for the cure with L'Chaim

By SHAWNA LOVINSKY TATOR
Special to The CJN

When someone is diagnosed with cancer it's as if a bomb has exploded.

Your whole world changes in an instant. It's all-consuming and overwhelming. Friends and family come together to help, and so does L'Chaim Cancer Support Group for Jewish Women, a project of the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section.

L'Chaim was founded in 2000 by Elizabeth Erlich and the late Marci Tannenbaum, two young mothers who had recently survived cancer, to support other Jewish women facing this disease.

Earlier this year, many attended L'Chaim's community-wide cancer awareness evening, "Women and Cancer." A tribute was made in memory of Marci Tannenbaum, who passed away last year.

We also heard speaker Brenda Baskind, a L'Chaim member, cancer survivor and marathon runner. She was so inspiring. This past summer, Brenda sent out a letter offering to train L'Chaim members for the 2010 CIBC Run for the Cure, which was held Oct. 3. In response, a group was formed whose members woke up early on Sunday mornings and met with Brenda and her husband, Colin. They encouraged us, helped us pace ourselves and ran alongside us.

I really felt ready for the Run for the Cure, and when Elizabeth asked me to be team captain, I said yes. Little did I know that we would end up with 28 members on our team. On Oct. 3, we walked and we ran. We were there together – survivors and supporters, friends and family. Our L'Chaim team raised more than $11,000 for breast cancer research. May we all be healthy and well enough to do it again next year

Our team included several women who have directly benefited from L'Chaim's support while battling cancer.

In my own experience, feeling fearful and confused after I was diagnosed, I received a personal visit from Elizabeth, who had been through the experience herself. She gave me a "welcome bag" containing useful information, such as where to buy wigs, support numbers to call, as well as information tailored to Jewish women, who may be facing unique issues that others don't face.

L'Chaim's co-chair, Marsha Urowitz, also teams up newly diagnosed patients with a member of L'Chaim's network of cancer survivors as "telephone buddies." These volunteer buddies are survivors who have been through the process of chemotherapy, radiation and/or surgery and keep in touch by phone and visit with their new friends. They offer understanding and emotional support.

Newly diagnosed patients also can attend monthly L'Chaim programs where they can mix, mingle and shmooze with other patients and L'Chaim volunteer buddies. These evenings provide a relaxing opportunity to socialize with other Jewish women with cancer. Members support each other and have fun together. They remember to smile, to live, to laugh.

In short, L'Chaim provides support for everything a newly diagnosed patient is anxious about, but can't get from her doctor or existing support network, because its members have been through the experience themselves.

L'Chaim readily gives much-needed emotional and practical support to women facing life-threatening illness, including many who have nowhere else to turn. It has become an essential part of our community's support network.

To find out more about L'Chaim's services, call the L'Chaim confidential hotline at 416-630-0203, or e-mail lchaim@ncjwc-ts.org.

Genetic mutation linked to mental disability, epilepsy

BE' ER SHEVA — A research team at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and Soroka University Medical Center in Be'er Sheva, Israel, has detected a genetic mutation resulting in a progressive disease of severe mental disability and epilepsy beginning in infancy. The research was just published in the American Journal of Human Genetics.

The team, led by BGU Prof. Ohad Birk of the National Institute for Biotechnology in the Negev, determined that the defect is associated with the production of the 21st amino acid, selenocysteine (SEC), which leads to progressive brain atrophy.

According to Prof. Birk, "One out of every 40 Jews of both Moroccan and Iraqi ancestry may be carriers of this mutation. As the disease is both severe and common, testing for these mutations is expected to become a routine prenatal genetic screening test in these two populations, enabling prevention of future cases."

It is believed that further research will identify other mutations in the same gene as the cause of mental disability with epilepsy in other communities. As the disease is progressive, elucidation of its molecular mechanisms might open new venues to treatment, preventing disease progression.

The human genetic code, as deciphered some 50 years ago, encodes 20 amino acids which are the building blocks of all proteins in the human body. However, in recent years it became apparent that a 21st amino acid exists: selenium, entering the body in food, is incorporated in the human tissues into what is known as selenocysteine.

This 21st amino acid is unique in that it is encoded by what is normally a stop codon - that is, a DNA sequence that normally instructs the protein building system to end the chain of amino acids, terminating the generated protein. In contrast with most genes, some 25 genes have a unique component that manipulates the stop codon so that instead of terminating the evolving protein chain, it inserts at that point an SEC building block.

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Festival offers a taste of modern Israeli cinema

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

This year's Israel Film Festival in Toronto offers viewers an eclectic program of feature films and documentaries, Oct. 24 to 28, at the Sheppard Grande Cinemas.

One of the films scheduled to be screened, *A Green Chariot*, is directed by Gilad Goldschmidt.

Released in 2005 and set in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, it is a drama about identity, belonging and romance.

The central character, Yair (Vitali Freedland), a 22-year-old new Russian immigrant, yearns for acceptance as an Israeli. Such is his desire to fit in that he diconnects himself from his father and his circle of Russian secular friends, finds a modern Orthodox girlfriend and joins a religious nationalist youth movement, Bnei Akiva.

But on the eve of his wedding to Dafna (Daniela Wirzer), his world is upended and his new life is jeopardized.

Rummaging through a package sent by his aunt, Yair, known in Russian as Sasha, discovers a crucifix. His father assures him that his late mother was thoroughly Jewish, but admits that his maternal grandmother was a Christian.

For Yair, who has adopted Orthodoxy and is engaged to be married to an Orthodox woman, the revelation is troubling, to say the least.

Should he tell Dafna? Should he convert? Should he cast off his past completely? Should he return to it?

Forced to make life-changing decisions, Yair confronts his situation with a mixture of confusion and resolution.

The issue that Goldschmidt raises through Yair is relevant to contemporary Israeli society. Since the late 1980s, approximately one million immigrants from Russia and the former Soviet Union have poured into Israel. Since many have been of partial Jewish or Christian ancestry, the Israeli government has encouraged them to submit to formal conversions to Judaism.

A Green Chariot, whose title derives from a Russian folk tale, is a worthy and timely addition to the pantheon of Israeli cinema.

Goldschmidt exerts a firm grip on the proceedings and coaxes credible performances from his actors.

* * *

Apart from *A Green Chariot*, the festival is screening the following movies:

FOLK AWARD NOMINATIONS: Toronto klezmer folk band Beyond the Pale has scored four Canadian Folk Music Award nominations. Previous winners of best instrumental group at the CFMAs, the group is again being recognized for that award. It also has nods for world group, ensemble of the year and an award for "pushing the boundaries" which recognizes innovation for its album *Postcards*. The awards take place Nov. 20.

Daniela Wirzer and Vitali Freedland in *A Green Chariot*.

Avi Nesher's *The Matchmaker* is a coming-of-age story, set in Haifa in 1968 and 2006, about a young man and the mysterious Holocaust survivor who gives him an unusual summer job.

The Assassin Next Door, by Danny Lerner, is about domestic violence, the sex trade and a new friendship.

Precious Life, a documentary by Shlomi Eldar, focuses on an Israeli physician and a TV reporter who help a Palestinian mother from the Gaza Strip save her infant son's life. He is doomed to die unless he receives a bone marrow transplant in a Tel Aviv hospital. Should she co-operate with the enemy?

A Matter of Size, a comedy by Sharon Maymon and Erez Tadmor, is about a group of overweight people who use their size to advantage and find love and self-acceptance in the process.

A Film Unfinished, a documentary by Yael Hersonski, rigorously examines a Nazi propaganda film made in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942 and exposes its venality, heartlessness and cynicism.

Haim Tabakman's gay love story, *Eyes Wide Open*, takes place in Jerusaldem's closed and insular haredi community.

Wasserman – The Rain Man, by Idit Shechori, revolves around a Jewish farmer and atheist who stumbles into a personal conflict, as well as a quandary, when a drought occurs.

For further information about the festival, call 416-239-8668 or click on www.israelfilmfestival.ca.

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

DARK COMEDY *LENIN'S EMBALMERS* OPENS OCT. 30 AT MILES NADAL JCC

The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company presents *Lenin's Embalmers* by Governor General's Award-winning playwright **Vern Thiessen** that the *New York Times* described as "a spunky, dark comedy with wit and verve."

The play is based on a true story as related in the book *Lenin's Embalmers* by **Ilya Zbarsky** and **Samuel Hutchinson**, about the two Russian scientists chosen to embalm Lenin after his death in 1924, who used a process that was hailed as a scientific miracle to restore the body to a life-like appearance. Because of this significant contribution, the two gained such prestige and influence that they were seen as a threat by a paranoid Stalinist regime, with fatal consequences.

Lenin's Embalmers previews at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Al Green Theatre, on Oct. 30, opens Nov. 2, 8 p.m. and continues until Nov. 21. $40.50 to $64.50. 416-366-7723, www.stlc.com

* * *

Names in the News: Israeli writer **David Grossman**, whose latest novel *To the End of the Land* came out in the summer, was awarded the $40,000 Peace Prize at this year's Frankfurt Book Fair "for his commitment to building bridges between Israel and the Palestinians," according to the German Publishers and Booksellers Association. **Joachim Gauck**, a Protestant pastor and human rights activist, called Grossman a "symbol of the peace movement" in Israel. In accepting the prize, Grossman said Israel should learn from its tragedies and make a fresh start, according to news reports.

Grossman's new book was written during a heart-wrenching personal experience – the death of his 20-year-old son Uri, staff sergeant in an Israeli armoured unit, by an anti-tank missile during the Israel-Lebanon conflict in 2006. The author is in Toronto this week as the headliner for the opening of the Toronto Jewish Book Fair. Admission $25. Beth David Synagogue, Saturday Oct. 23, 8 p.m.

The book fair runs Oct. 23 to 31. Visit www.koffleraarts.org for full details.

Speaking of winners, British-Jewish author **Howard Jacobson** won the Man Booker Prize for Fiction for a comic book about what it means to be Jewish today.

The book, *The Finkler Question*, is about "love, loss and male friendship, and explores what it means to be Jewish today."

The 68-year-old author was considered an outsider for the $80,000 prize, which had six books on the shortlist.

* * *

An Evening with Sondheim: Considered by many to be the most important artist to work in the American musical theatre over the past half-century, 80-year-old composer-lyricist **Stephen Sondheim** is making a rare appearance in Toronto to publicize a new book and an upcoming production.

David Mirvish presents *An Evening with Stephen Sondheim*. The theatrical legend will be engaged in conversation with journalist **Robert Cushman**. The event coincides with Sondheim's new book, *Finishing the Hat – Collected Lyrics (1954-1981)*, and the Toronto presentation of the revival of his musical *A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum*.

Sondheim is expected to reminisce about his career (including his collaborations with **Leonard Bernstein**, **Jerome Robbins** and **Tim Burton**), his predecessors (including his mentor **Oscar Hammerstein II**), the state of the musical theatre, the differences between film and theatre, and his own creative process on works such as *Gypsy*, *West Side Story*, *Company*, *Follies* and *Sweeney Todd*. Princess of Wales Theatre, Monday, Dec. 6, 8 p.m. $22 to $69. 416-872-1212, www.mirvish.com

* * *

Paper Clips in London schools: The London Jewish Film Festival's South Western Ontario Outreach Program is bringing its message of tolerance to a record-number of school children from Oct. 25 to Nov. 2.

The award-winning 2004 Holocaust education film *Paper Clips* will be shown to an estimated 4,000 students in London, St. Thomas, Strathroy and Woodstock, Ont.

Peter and Dagmar Schroeder outside the transport car.

Paper Clips chronicles the efforts of a Grade 8 class in Whitwell, Tenn. to understand the enormity of the Holocaust by collecting six million paper clips to represent the Jews murdered in Nazi extermination camps.

German-born journalists **Peter** and **Dagmar Schroeder** will make their fourth trip to London to share their experiences documenting the students' efforts.

The couple wrote the book *Six Million Paper Clips – The Making of a Children's Holocaust Memorial* and tracked down and purchased the German transport car which is now the centrepiece of the Whitwell Children's Holocaust Memorial.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• **Safam**, a six-person band from Boston famed for its "Jewish-American sound," has an extensive live-concert touring schedule that will bring them to Toronto's Beth Tikvah Synagogue on Oct. 31, 7:30 p.m. The band has produced many Jewish-themed hits such as *Leaving Mother Russia*, *Amnesty* and *Just Another Foreigner*. Band member **Joel Sussman** grew up in Edmonton.

• Toronto-based Yiddish maven **Michael Wex**, whose book *Born to Kvetch* became an international bestseller, has been confirmed as a speaker at this year's International Festival of Authors, set to run Oct. 20 to 30 at Harbourfront. www.readings.org

New solo exhibition features colourful mixed media

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Artist Frank Glazier has taken a 180-degree turn since his last exhibition of paintings in 2004.

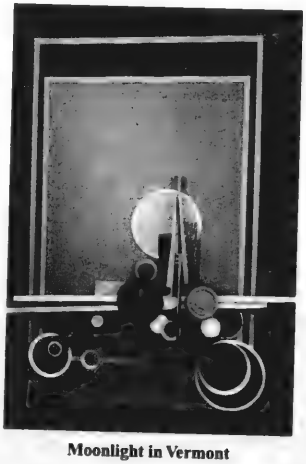
The retired architect has his fourth solo exhibition Oct. 31 to Nov. 4, where he presents his mixed media show "Out of Left Field" at the Cedar Ridge Studio Gallery in the Cedar Ridge Creative Centre, 225 Confederation Dr.

Glazier's previous exhibitions were nostalgic and whimsical paintings of landscapes, urban scenes and people.

"It had become no longer a challenge and I needed a diversion – and mixed media provided it," he says.

"In this technological age, the ever-expanding array of new and readily available materials makes for limitless possibilities that go well beyond the traditional realm of applying paint to canvas.

"This new exhibition is my personal expression of some of those possibilities."



Moonlight in Vermont

Glazier says the variety of materials used is more readily found in garbage pails and recycling bins than on gallery walls.

"The work might, with reason, be characterized as recycling at another level. It is not conventional stuff."

There are 57 vibrant, coloured and animated three-dimensional works included in the exhibit. Titles include *Traffic light triptych*, *Moonlight in Vermont*, *Flowers (6)* and the *Red Sea (post partum)*.

Glazier was born in Toronto, attended Forest Hill Collegiate and graduated from the University of Toronto's school of architecture in 1957. He retired 12 years ago.

His busy career forced him to put his painting on hold, and after his retirement, he presented his first solo exhibition of watercolour paintings at the Edwards Gardens Civic Garden Centre in 2001.

The opening reception of Glazier's new exhibition will be held Oct. 31, 1 to 4 p.m.

Frank Glazier can be reached at 416-444-4208, or call the Cedar Ridge Studio Gallery, 416-396-4026.

Red Sea

Israeli indie musician makes Toronto his home

By JORDANA DIVON
Special to The CJN

By the time the 100th Qassam rocket whistled past his head, Ofir Gal knew two things: one, that he had to get out of Sderot; and two, that music was the only thing he wanted to do with his life.

It was 2002, just a year into the first missile onslaught from nearby Gaza Strip. The 21-year-old had left his native Be'er Sheva to study sound engineering in the western Negev town. His classes were great, but his anxiety was greater.

"At my school we had rockets landing in the parking lot about 50 metres away from us," he recalls. "Destroyed cars. Damage to property. I lived on a kibbutz, and we had a couple of rockets land there as well. It was pretty intense."

Because the rockets were a fairly recent development, the town had yet to set up an alarm system. And while locals appeared to be taking the assault in stride, the lanky, dark-haired youth was having trouble just shrugging everything off.

"There are always risks living in Israel, so people tend to block things out and that's the way for them to cope," he says. "And for me, I can't block things. I try to see things as they really are."

From the time he was very young, Gal had suffused himself in music as a way of coping with these feelings. His tendency to practise guitar with what he describes as an "OCD-like" drive made him the unusual one in a family of scientists, and his preference for 1960s Brit rock separated him from the mainstream.

Before he left for the army, the teen had also picked up drums, bass, piano and composition. It was to songwriting he also turned when the conflict around him became too stressful.

"If I try to associate any of my music to that time, it would be my song *Pigs*," he says. "It's kind of a happy, easy-listening tune, but I wrote it after a triple suicide bombing at the resort I was staying on a vacation in Egypt. I guess it comes out in the lyrics."

Ofir Gal

Within a few years of graduation, Gal had positioned himself as a full-time musician, writing and producing for film and television out of his own studio. Still, he wasn't happy.

"I didn't feel the [Israeli] industry had the right opportunities that I wanted," he said.

When it came time to move, there was one place the talented songwriter had in mind: Vancouver. He had travelled there years earlier and thought the laid-back vibe and thriving indie music scene would take his career to the next level.

But like most of the best-laid plans, you can probably guess what happened next.

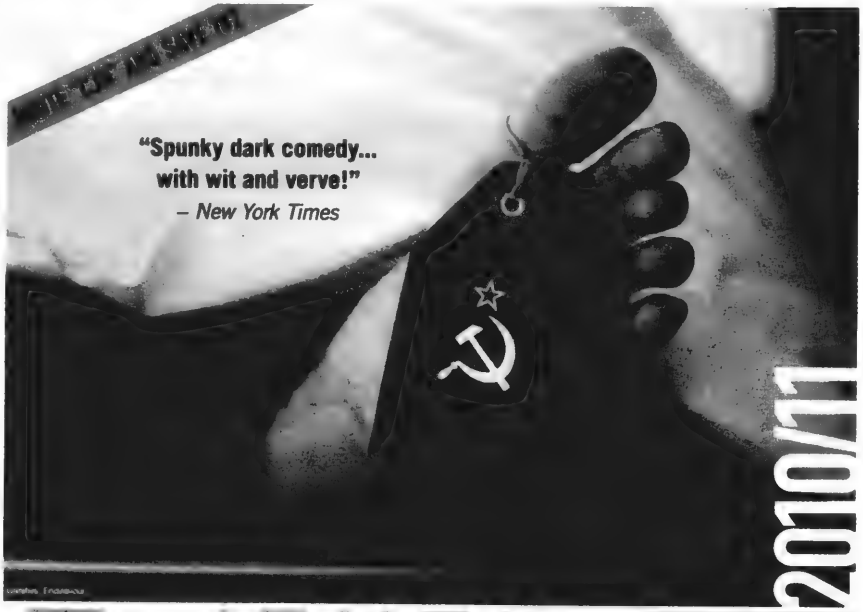
"Before my flight from Israel, my parents told me to check out Toronto on my way to Vancouver. So I thought, OK, I'll go to Toronto and I'll be there for two weeks and once it gets too cold, I will fly away," he says with a smirk.

Within two weeks, Gal had already met the musicians who would form his band, and in a matter of months, was booked for gigs at venues such as the Drake Hotel and Lee's Palace.

Two years later, the musician is building a steady fan base online through his website, ofirgal.com, where he's offering his debut album, *Panic*, for free.

Although he realized he'd have to start over after everything he'd built up back home, the 29-year-old welcomes the challenge.

At the very least, he's bound to get some great tunes out of it.



LENIN'S EMBALMERS

From one of Canada's most produced and award-winning playwrights comes an absurdist, dark comedy spun from a true story. *Lenin's Embalmers* tells the captivating tale of Boris Zbarsky and Vladimir Vorobiov, two scientists chosen by The Committee for Immortalization to embalm Vladimir Lenin after his death in 1924, a time when communism and Soviet power were on the minds of many.

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The past can be revisited in literature

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

On the several occasions when I've enrolled in creative-writing or memoir-writing workshops, usually with the aim of finishing a particular story that I've written, I've always been struck by the wealth of literary talent seated around the table.

This has generally come as a pleasant surprise, since I've also observed that few people possess the discipline to become a good writer. Yet it seems that people with good stories inside of them often find the drive and determination to get those stories out into the world.

Nochim Mayer Shaikevitsch

Years ago, Fannie Silver, a would-be memoirist in Brooklyn, enrolled in a creative writing workshop while working on a series of sketches about herself and her family. One day she read a story to the class about her father's experiences in a Kishinev pogrom, and her reading gave the tale a remarkable postscript.

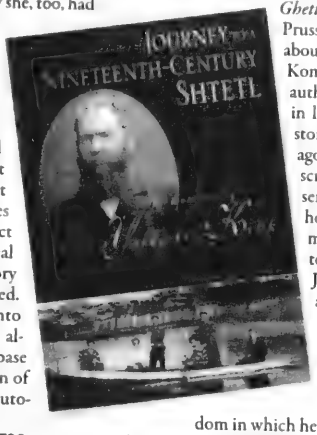
Her story told of how, one Passover night, the Cossacks forced the Jews out of their homes and out of the town altogether. Silver's father, a boy of 10, was holding the hand of his six-year-old sister but somehow lost her in the turmoil. Tragically, neither he nor anyone else in his family ever saw her again. Forever after, even long after he had come to America, he would ask everyone he met, "Do you know Deena Rosenstein from Kishinev?"

"When I finished reading, the silence in the classroom was disrupted by a man's voice calling out, 'It's unbelievable! It's unbelievable,'" Silver wrote in her story collection *Better Than Gold: An Immigrant Family's First Years in Brooklyn*, which was posthumously published in 1997.

"I thought he wanted to criticize my story, but he continued in a trembling voice, 'I'm stunned by this story. It's unbelievable, but it's true. My mother was Deena Rosenstein!'" Then the man told the story of a mother torn from her family as a girl during a pogrom, and how she, too, had never stopped searching for her family for the rest of her days. Incredibly, his mother had been the very same Deena Rosenstein.

Such a spine-chilling coincidence seems too extraordinary to be real, and so incredible that no novelist would dare attempt to present it as fiction. The episode serves to illustrate how much the act of writing an autobiographical story or sketch of family history can be a transformative deed. Writers transform history into literature and legend just as alchemists tried to transmute base metals into gold. What follows is a discussion of some of my favourite Jewish memoirs and autobiographical works.

Writing in Yiddish from 1689 into the 1720s, the famed Gluckel of Hamelyn penned the first known autobiography by a Jewish woman, but her warm account of her family and commercial affairs over many years was never meant for publication. Like Anne Frank's legendary diary, Gluckel's compelling *Life* falls into a category of literature defined as "unconscious autobiography," written for the edification of the author and perhaps children and grandchildren. First published only in 1896, it has rarely been out of print since; the Jewish Publication Society produced a new edition earlier this year.



Dating from the auspicious year of 1848, *Aus dem Ghetto* is a collection of stories by Prussian writer Leopold Kompert about life behind ghetto walls; Kompert is regarded as the first author to treat the Jewish ghetto in literature. I read some of the stories in translation some years ago, but still remember his description of the exhilarating sense of freedom and release he described when, as a boy, he momentarily escaped the ghetto and ran up the hill above the Judengasse despite the stern advice of family members to return immediately.

The narrator of the lovely memoir *The Journeys of David Toback* records a similar giddy sense of freedom in which he, a shtetl dweller in Ukraine, rides a horse at full gallop across the open plain, his first time in the saddle. That's one of many worthy episodes in his remarkable narrative. Toback came to America and became a butcher; late in life, he traded his apron for the writing desk and penned a Yiddish memoir that was published posthumously in English.

Generations of once-famous Jewish writers are now forgotten; consider the once-popular Yiddish novelist Nochim Mayer Shaikevitsch (Shomer), who was once a household name. In 1939, his daughter, Miriam Shomer Zunser, wrote a worthy family narrative for her children that was published as *Yesterday, A Memoir of a Russian Jewish Family* in 1978. Its first sentence is unforgettable: "Your great-grandfather had 24 children, all by the same wife." So, too, are the many stories of shtetl life that follow.

Perhaps the most memorable shtetl memoir yet to come to my attention is Yehezkel Kotik's narrative *Journey to a Nineteenth Century Shtetl*, originally published in Yiddish in 1913 and later in English translation. Like Zunser, Kotik had the remarkable ability, although three generations removed, of telling gripping handed-down stories about his great-grandparents, full of drama, intrigue and human interest. Reading this book about Kotik's tiny native village of Kamenets gives one the sense that the past is not lost, but easily revisited in literature. A good writer – in partnership with a good reader – can seemingly bring a whole world back to life.

Perhaps my favourite book of family history was written by Burton Bernstein, the brother of composer-conductor Leonard Bernstein. Burton's *Family Matters: Sam, Jennie and the Kids* appeared in two huge instalments in *The New Yorker* in 1982 and soon afterward was published as a book. In it, his celebrated brother is featured as a late-blooming appendage on a family saga that began a century before in Russia. Burton relates family history par excellence, then shares his experiences with us as the kid brother of a famous composer. *Family Matters* is an endearing and intimate portrait of a close-knit Jewish family that remains a pleasure to read.

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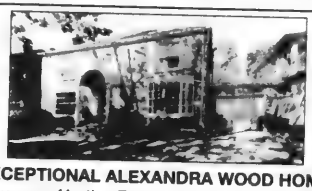

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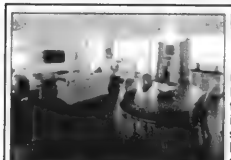

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Phillies' Amaro has rest of league saying 'Roy Vey'

By ROB CHARRY
JTA

PHILADELPHIA — As the son and grandson of professional baseball players, Ruben Amaro Jr. was as good a candidate as any to become a baseball lifer. Yet soccer was actually his "first love" as a kid, and he was good enough at the sport to qualify for a youth team travelling to play in Germany.

But his Jewish mom nixed the idea – for Holocaust-related reasons.

To whatever degree that decision helped steer Amaro toward the family business, Philadelphia fans should be thankful.

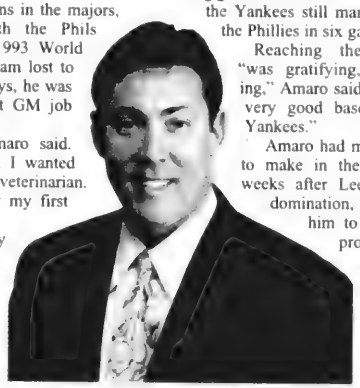
In a decade as assistant general manager of the Phillies, he helped build a squad that would win the 2008 World Series – only the second championship in the team's 126-year history. Days later he was promoted to general manager, a perch he has used to orchestrate a string of high-profile trades and signings that have the Phillies, historically baseball's losingest franchise, looking like a dynasty rather than a one-year wonder.

In 2009, Amaro's first as general manager, the team made it back to the World Series, losing to the New York Yankees. This season the Phillies finished the regular season with the best record in the big leagues and are well positioned, as the playoffs kick off, to become the first National League team since the St. Louis Cardinals in 1944 to reach three straight World Series.

Amaro was new to the job, but not the sport. He has spent the majority of his 45 years in and around baseball – ultimately not a surprise given that his father, Ruben Amaro Sr., spent 11 seasons in the majors, including six with the Phillies, and his grandfather, Santos, was a Cuban-born legend who starred in the Mexican Leagues in the 1940s.

In the early 1960s, Amaro Sr. would marry Judy Herman, a Jewish girl from Philadelphia, and stick around the Phils' organization long enough to acquire a World Series ring as first base coach in 1980. Amaro Jr. was one of the batboys. He went on to star at Stanford University, helping the school win the College World Series in 1987.

After eight seasons in the majors, including five with the Phils and a trip to the 1993 World Series, which the team lost to the Toronto Blue Jays, he was offered the assistant GM job in 1999.



Ruben Amaro Jr.

"It's funny," Amaro said. "When I was little, I wanted to be a doctor or veterinarian. Soccer was actually my first love."

"We had a very diversified family," he said, referring to his Jewish mother and Catholic-Hispanic father. "We did Passover, Yom Kippur, Chanukah. We were exposed to both faiths pretty equally."

Growing up in northeast Philadelphia, Amaro never had a bar mitzvah. But, he recalled, "I had a lot of friends who were bar mitzvahed and went to a lot of them."

Though his wife is Catholic and raising their children in that faith, Amaro said that "We go to seders all the time. For the New Year, we were hanging with my Aunt Linda."

He adds: "I think in the Jewish faith there's an emphasis on family, and the closeness of the family is something that really appeals to me."

Just a few months after becoming general manager of the Phillies, Amaro was inducted into the Philadelphia Jewish Sports Hall of Fame. If performance is a measure, Amaro has lived up to the honour.

Shortly after taking the reins, Amaro would make the first of several great moves, letting longtime left fielder Pat Burrell walk as a free agent and replacing him with Raul Ibanez, who would carry the team with his bat for the first two months of the 2009 season. His biggest successes, however, have involved bringing top-flight hurlers to town.

In 2009, with the pitching staff struggling, Amaro signed 37-year-old Pedro Martinez. He pitched well, but the bigger move came soon after, on July 29. After being rebuffed in his attempt to acquire Roy Halladay – perhaps the best pitcher in baseball – from Toronto, Amaro outmaneuvered a number of veteran GMs to land the 2008 American League Cy Young Award winner, Cliff Lee, in a trade with Cleveland for four prospects.

Lee's spectacular debut in San Francisco two days later and stellar showing the next two months was surpassed only by a near-perfect post-season, in which he went 4-0, and became a certified Yankee killer, winning games 1 and 5 of the World Series. But the Yankees still managed to dethrone the Phillies in six games.

Reaching the World Series "was gratifying, yet disappointing," Amaro said. "We didn't play very good baseball against the Yankees."

Amaro had more big decisions to make in the off season. Six weeks after Lee's World Series domination, the Phillies sent him to Seattle for three prospects. The same day, he traded three other prospects to Toronto for Halladay, the pitcher he had really coveted that summer.

The Phils immediately signed Halladay to a three-year extension and the right-hander was dominant from the start of the season. But Amaro would spend the next several months fending off critics who wondered why the Phils couldn't have kept Lee along with Halladay.

The team got off to a hot start in 2010, but cooled due to a host of injuries. By mid-July, in third place and barely above .500, Amaro began looking for another starting pitcher. One year to the day that he had managed to pry Lee from Cleveland, Amaro outbid several contenders for Houston's Roy Oswalt.

"We had a lot of internal discussions about doing a number of things," Amaro said, including "breaking up the club."

"We felt if we were going to make any move, it would have to really move us forward."

The trade has been a home run: Since arriving in Philadelphia, Oswalt went 7-1 with a 1.65 ERA.

For those keeping score, that's three times in a row that Amaro outmaneuvered the rest of his colleagues to acquire the best starting pitcher on the market.

With Halladay and Oswalt leading the way, it's been "Roy Vey" for the rest of the league. The Phillies finished the season with a 49-19 stretch run that produced their fourth straight division title and the best record in baseball.

The defending NL champs beat the Cincinnati Red in their best-of-five playoff series and moved on to face the San Francisco Giants. How confident was the GM prior to facing the Reds?

"We haven't had the kind of offensive season that we've had in the past," Amaro said. "We're going to have the pitching, but we're going to have to swing the bats better."

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Future Party funds a playground in Israel

By CARA EDELL
Special to The CJN

Hundreds of people between the ages of 23 to 45 gathered at the Thompson Hotel in Toronto recently for the Jewish National Fund's first Future Party.

JNF Future, a branch of the Jewish National Fund, strives to engage young professionals through programming and fundraising events that support projects in Israel. This year's Future Party committee has chosen to use the evening's proceeds to build a playground for the children of Moshav Rehov in Israel's Beit Shean Valley.

Darren Slavens, JNF Future Party co-chair and Jessica Fenton, JNF Future co-chair

Moshav Rehov is an impoverished area with little infrastructure that relies heavily on farming. Currently, there are no recreational facilities for children and very few meeting points in the community.

"Moshav Rehov is an area heavily populated by new immigrants to the state. The people that populate this area are starting out new lives in a new country. If we can take any little burden off their lives and provide their children with an area to play in, that is pretty great," said Darren Slavens, a Future Party co-chair, along with Michael Kimel, Alana Konopny and Candace Zwicker.

The Oct. 7 party featured musical guest Max Weinberg of Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band, as well as appetizers and desserts and a live auction. Items up for bid included backstage passes for a Bruce Springsteen concert, a guitar signed by members of the group Down with Webster and a painting made during the evening by Melysa Gorlicky.

Slavens said the event was an essential fundraiser, especially for the younger Jewish demographic in Toronto. "We need to be involved with our community and promote a strong, safe State of Israel because no one is going to do it for us. We are losing a PR battle on a massive scale, and it's important that we be proud to be Jewish and proud of Israel. That means the next generation has to get involved."

Jessica Fenton, a JNF Future co-chair, said JNF has so far been "fairly low profile" among young professionals. "With the Future Party and other events going forward, we are hoping to create a younger, savvier image for JNF Toronto. It is our ultimate goal to attract and retain a new generation of supporters and donors."

Fenton said she takes pride in knowing that while young Toronto Jews are out partying and having fun, they are also supporting a community in Israel. "That's the best part about JNF – all funds go directly to Israel. Get ready, Toronto – this is just the first of many Future parties to come!"

Fenton said JNF Future's next event will be the JNF Hoops Classic Five-on-Five basketball tournament on Nov. 28 at the Hoop Dome.

Visit http://toronto.jnf.ca/ for more information.

APPLE TOFFEE CRISP

5 EACH (large) peeled & sliced Granny Smith and McIntosh apples
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1 1/4 c flour, divided
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1 c uncooked rolled oats
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp baking powder
1/4 tsp baking soda and 1/4 tsp salt

Heat oven to 375°. Grease 13"x 9"x 2" baking pan. In large bowl, toss apple slices, 3/4 c sugar and 1/4 c flour, coating apples evenly. Spread in bottom of prepared pan. Dot with 1/4 c butter. Stir together toffee bits, oats, remaining 1/2 c sugar, 1 c flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, salt. Melt remaining 1/2 c butter; add to oat mixture, mixing until crumbs are formed. Sprinkle crumb mixture over apples. Bake 40-45 min or until topping is lightly browned and apples are tender. Serve warm with whipped topping or ice cream. Cover; refrigerate leftovers.

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REMEMBERING OUR YESTERDAYS

By BILL GLADSTONE

TEMPLE SINAI UNDER CONSTRUCTION, 1956

The bulldozer and piles of concrete blocks stand on the site of what would soon become Temple Sinai, Toronto's second Reform congregation after Holy Blossom Temple, located on the north side of Wilson Avenue between Bathurst Street and Avenue Road. The congregation was founded in 1954, and the ground-breaking took place in 1956. In 1955, Rosh Hashanah services were held at Bathurst Heights Collegiate and Yom Kippur services in the Glendale Theatre. Founding Rabbi Jordan Pearlson, who died in 2008, was the Temple's spiritual leader for some 40 years. The cars in the background are flowing along Highway 401.

Toronto's Jewish community is changing

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

Changes are afoot in the Toronto Jewish community.

Over the last few years we have become less concerned with the collective and more so with our own individual needs. This is a consequence of our being a more comfortable community that's no longer as reliant on our neighbourhood.

This change in our communal character is reflected in the kinds of shuls many of our members are now considering.

While the Ashkenazi community member of old was interested in the larger edifices built upon the awe-inspiring European culture of spiritual service, including rabbinical speeches and cantorial weavings, his/her desire in a shul today is for one that is more intimate, less hierarchical, and has a particular spiritual bent. (Sephardi spiritual needs have not changed as dramatically).

More Jews are now showing they want to belong to a shul tailored to their spiritual needs, such as an egalitarian Orthodox shul, one with a gay-positive environment or a local Conservative synagogue offering environmental tours and hikes predicated on Jewish texts.

Evidence of this change can also be found in large shuls hosting break-off minyanim.

A spiritual flavour exists for everyone, and if the shul you want does not, someone will build it.

Fundraising in our community does not look like it used to either. Tzedakah-times are a-changin'.

In the old days, donors would give vast sums of money without asking questions about how it was to be spent. Today, more philanthropists are earmarking funds for projects of their choice, with the expectation that the recipient/charity will listen to their instructions, not the other way around. The donor gets to sit by the window.

Israel is not what it used to be as far as our giving. Not so long ago it, it received most of our funds and adulation. Today, it does not have the Jewish fan base of old and receives less Diaspora tzedakah.

It will be fascinating to watch these changes and see the new Toronto Jewish community dance.

I will guess most of the gigantic synagogues will shrink in membership, making way for small to mid-size shuls.

Those that survive will do so because of their leaders' adeptness at choreographing the role of the shul in a society questioning the essence of religion and its application to the individual.

Prayer and how it is taught will mature, as will female participation in the services.

I think the large will have to work harder to maintain their broad base through creative fundraising and a kinder, gentler face.

Boutique charities will benefit from the change of donor character.

I am hoping, as the individual's needs trump the collective's, that our community embraces creative Torah study, and launches Jewish art galleries, mentorship programs, a greater selection of journals and newspapers and more Jewish theatre.

While money talks in this community and the wealthy are the dignitaries and stars, I believe the struggling artist, the Jewish teacher and even the mechanic will be recognized for their contribution, as they used to be. Sometimes going forward means going back.

I believe, with a rise in anti-Semitism, Israel will become in vogue again, but until that happens, much of our community will take it for granted and lose sight of its importance in our lives.

There are many changes going on around us. The Toronto Jewish community is growing into a place where individualism is on the rise. While this movement ensures that community members will have a wealth of character, we should always remember the importance of the collective and that things can change in a moment with our people.

Go to http://avrum.net to comment.

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Peace out of reach, Israeli vice-premier says

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israel's vice-premier and minister of strategic affairs, Moshe Ya'alon, strongly doubts whether Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) can reach a peace agreement in the foreseeable future.

Ya'alon, former chief of staff of the Israeli armed forces and a member of the Likud party, says the land-for-peace formula that enabled Israel to sign a peace treaty with Egypt in 1979 can't be applied on the Palestinian front at present.

In an interview last week with three journalists reporting for the Jewish media in Toronto, Ya'alon suggested that the latest incarnation of the peace process is doomed to fail unless the PA recognizes Israel as a Jewish state and the state of the Jewish people.

Portraying the Palestinians as hard-core rejectionists, Ya'alon said they rebuffed Palestine partition plans presented by the Peel Commission in 1937 and the United Nations in 1947.

Moshe Ya'alon in Toronto
[Sheldon Kirshner photo]

To the PA, Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory began in 1948 rather than in 1967, he said.

"For the Palestinians, the conflict is not about borders but about Israel's very existence."

"I supported the Oslo idea of territorial compromise as the right way to reach peace," said Ya'alon, who was chief of military intelligence when the Oslo peace process was in full flight in the mid-1990s.

But once he concluded that the then president of the PA, Yasser Arafat, was unwilling to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, he was no longer convinced the land-for-peace formula could be applied to the Palestinian track.

Arafat's successor, Mahmoud Abbas, holds similar views, he noted. "He says he'll never recognize Israel as a Jewish state."

Ya'alon acknowledged that the PA recognized Israel as the Oslo peace process got under way in 1993.

Continued on page 25

Solemn ceremony 15 years later

Israelis from all walks of life commemorated the 15th yahrzeit of the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin last week on 12 Cheshvan. Seen here are youngsters who took part in a memorial ceremony at the president's residence. *[Israel Sun photo]*

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Netanyahu urges Palestinians to return to direct talks – please see page 42

The News in Brief

Canada

Mandel Wins Again

EDMONTON — Stephen Mandel, Edmonton's first Jewish mayor, won a third consecutive term last week. He received 55 per cent of the vote, while rival David Doward got 30 per cent.

New 'Buycott' Website

TORONTO — The Buycott Israel campaign unveiled a revamped and expanded website last week – buyisraeligoods.org – that provides a North American database of places to buy Israeli goods. The campaign aims to fight the boycott, divestment and sanctions drive against Israel by promoting Israeli products.

Jews Mull Meeting

CALGARY — Jewish leaders here say they'll canvass community opinion before deciding on meeting with the young neo-Nazi who went on an anti-Semitic graffiti spree last fall. Adam Springer, president of the Calgary Jewish Community Council, said there are pros and cons to meeting the man, now 18, who can't be named because he was 17 when the crimes were committed. He pleaded guilty to spray-painting graffiti on a number of Jewish facilities, including a shul. The idea for him to meet privately with community leaders came from a probation officer and is endorsed by the Crown, judge and defence lawyer, who said his client is open to the idea. The case is adjourned to Dec. 9.

JNF To Fete Melnick

WINNIPEG — The Jewish National Fund of Canada's Manitoba and Saskatchewan branch has announced that Manitoba Water Stewardship Minister Christine Melnick will be its 2011 Negev Dinner Honoree. The word came as Melnick, a longtime supporter of Israel, was in Israel for the signing of an agreement between the province and the Jewish state on ecotourism, birding and the environment.

World

Charges Dropped

CHICAGO — A Chicago man who took his daughter to church despite a restraining order by her Jewish mother was cleared of contempt of court charges last week. Last winter Joseph Reyes took his daughter Ela, 3, to church, accompanied by a TV news crew, despite a restraining order filed by his estranged wife that barred him from exposing the girl to any religion but Judaism. He was cleared because the girl's couldn't be seen in the TV footage.

Rabbis Send Letter

SAN FRANCISCO — A group of North American rabbis launched an online drive to urge Israel to protect women who want to pray at the Western Wall with Torahs and prayer shawls. The 28 rabbis, calling themselves Rabbis for Women of the Wall, sent a letter last week, signed by the heads of the Reform, Conservative, Renewal and Reconstructionist rabbinical associations, to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin, opposition leader Tzipi Livini, Jewish Agency chair Natan Sharansky and Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz, rabbi of the Western Wall and holy sites. The rabbis want other rabbis to sign an online petition.

Canada Denies Dubai Arrest Claim

OTTAWA — Canadian officials have denied arresting a suspect in the assassination of a Hamas official in Dubai.

The denial, published Oct. 20 in the *Globe and Mail*, came a day after Dubai's police chief told several news outlets that a Canadian security official told him that an arrest had been made over the summer in last January's murder of senior Hamas leader Mahmoud al-Mabhouh in a Dubai hotel room.

Dubai police have pointed to the involvement of 33 conspirators, who allegedly used fake passports from England, Ireland, France, Australia and Germany in order to enter the United Arab Emirates. The suspects were placed on Interpol's Most Wanted list.

Israel's Mossad spy agency has been widely suspected as being behind the killing, but Israel has neither confirmed nor denied any involvement.

Mabhouh co-founded the military wing of the Islamist Hamas movement and allegedly was in Dubai to conclude a weapons deal when he was killed.

One arrest has been made in the case. Uri Brodsky, who reportedly has many aliases, was arrested at the Warsaw airport last June and extradited to Germany to face charges of illegally procuring a German passport. Brodsky returned to Israel after a German court released him on bail with a guarantee he'd return if he is sentenced to jail.

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Haitian relief efforts to be honoured

Israeli medical staff helping spread joy at a field hospital in Haiti.

Israeli, Canadian teams recognized by Canadian Friends of Meir Medical Centre

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Israeli and Canadian relief efforts in the aftermath of last January's earthquake in Haiti are being heralded by a Toronto-based charity.

Canadian Friends of Meir Medical Center, which supports the innovative Israeli hospital associated with the Sackler Faculty of Medicine at Tel Aviv University, will host a Nov. 14 gala at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue honouring the Israel Defence Forces' (IDF) Medical Rescue Team and Canada's Disaster Assistance Relief Team (DART) for their work to aid the people of Haiti.

The charity will award its annual Humanitarian Awards of Distinction to both teams, as well as symbolically to the people of Canada and Israel for their financial donations to relief efforts.

MP Peter Kent, minister of state for foreign affairs, will accept the award on behalf of Canada and DART, and Israel's ambassador to Canada, Miriam Ziv, will accept the award for the IDF and Israel.

Keynote speakers will be MP Laurie Hawn, parliamentary secretary to the minister of national defence, and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto president Ted Sokolsky.

Arie Raif, the charity's president and a former Israeli diplomat, told *The CJN* that he's proud of both countries' dedication to tikkun olam.

"How many other armies in the world would send their personnel to Haiti to save lives and rebuild?" he asked, adding that the Canadian people demonstrated "they care" about the sanctity of life.

Continued on page 24

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Remembrance through learning

From the editor's desk...

If a Jewish child of Europe had been 15 years old at the end of World War II, in May of 1945, a young survivor indeed, he or she would be 80 years old today.

And if the child had been 15 at the start of the war, he or she would be 86 years old today.

Increasingly, alas, the victims – the witnesses – of the Nazis' atrocities, are passing from this world. But passing from this world does not, nor can it ever mean, passing from our lives or from the lives of the generations who will, in their own time, take their place after us in the long line of Jewish history.

Through us, the survivors and their testimonies will be remembered, even as our own forebears, in turn, remembered the men and women who carried the line forward to them.

The line must not break.

Memory guarantees it will not break.

If memory guarantees the unseverability of that line, then education – in its many, diverse, wide forms – guarantees the sustaining strength of memory.

That is why, for example, each year at this time, to coincide with Kristallnacht Nov. 10, 1938, communities throughout Canada undertake programs of Holocaust education.

We learn about the Jewish life in Europe that was destroyed; where possible, the individual human beings who comprised that very large life and, of course, how such destruction happened.

The photo inset is of the Great Synagogue of Poland that once stood on Tlomackie Street in Warsaw. The Nazis brought it to rubble by blowing it up after the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, on May 16, 1943. Not one brick or scraping of mortar remains today from the synagogue. Where it stood is a tall, multi-storey office building of glass and steel.

However, the building immediately adjacent (on the left side of the photo) remains as it was in 1939. Although they set fire to it, the Nazis considered it of such undeserving stature, they left it standing. It stands today on the very same spot. The floor still bears the seared and scorched residue of the fire that consumed so much of this building's interior.

The building houses and stands for the very essence of the prewar Jewish life in Europe that we promise, and try with all our heart, to remember. It is now called the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute. Emanuel Ringelblum was a Jew of Poland who organized, oversaw, participated in and ultimately ensured the retrieval of the chronicling of Jewish life in the Warsaw Ghetto under German occupation.

On Jan. 1, 2009, the Polish minister of culture and national heritage, conferred official status on the building as an institution of Jewish culture of Poland named in honour of Ringelblum. The newly granted status of the institute into the broader Polish pantheon of cultural institutes was but a formality, for it has always been a place and an institute of Jewish history.

Earlier this month, during a visit to the building, *The CJN* was told by an institute employee that there are four reasons that make the building a very special place.

- The structure is the original pre-World War II one, built in 1936;
- It was "Jewish" before the war and was situated inside the ghetto during the earlier period of the war. It housed the Institute for Judaic Studies. Yet, so zealous were the Germans in their campaign against Jewish life, they closed the institute's library in October 1939, merely one month after they invaded Poland, and carried away all the material there.
- The plans for the violent resistance against the Germans were conceived and debated here. As well, the "passive" resistance of documenting everything was carried out here, too. Ringelblum's 60-person team of chroniclers and observers was based here. The project was called Oneg Shabbat. Of the 60, three survived the war.
- It was here that survivors gathered after the war to make their decisions about the years to come. Some left. Some remained. Those who remained would have to deal with Soviet fascism, which was as unfriendly to the Jewish soul as Nazi fascism was to the Jewish body.

On Sept. 19, 1946, the first part of the Ringelblum archive was unearthed in the rubble of the ghetto. One year later, in 1947, the building once again became a Jewish institute of study.

Today, it is a busy research and cultural centre. It is also the beating heart of the efforts of the small remnant of Polish Jews and some fellow Jews who have joined them from other parts of the world, to revive Jewish life in Poland.

We owe a great debt to the countless individuals, lay and professional, here and abroad and in Europe especially, who make Holocaust education programs possible.

Let us learn. For that is how we will always remember and play our part in holding and strengthening the line. –

MBD

SeeJN

ETHIOPIAN JEWISH SIGD FESTIVAL

Israeli President Shimon Peres recently greeted a delegation of Ethiopian Israelis in his official residence during a ceremony that commemorated the Ethiopian Jewish Sigd festival. The annual Sigd holiday symbolizes the acceptance of the Torah. Approximately 100,000 Ethiopian Jews live in Israel. Many of them arrived in massive rescue airlifts in 1984 and 1991.

[Flash90 photo]

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Gaza blockade group raises $100,000

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The project to raise funds for a boat aimed at breaking the Israeli blockade of Gaza has reached $100,000 – one-third of the way towards its goal of $300,000.

In a release, Sandra Ruch, a spokesperson for Canadian Boat to Gaza (CBG) said, "It is important to challenge the blockade and send a clear message of Canadians' commitment to human rights and the protection of civilians living under military blockade as mandated by the Fourth Geneva Convention."

Israel has maintained a blockade of the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip in response to repeated rocket and mortar attacks. Last May, a flotilla attempted to run the blockade. When Israeli forces boarded the ship, they were attacked and in the ensuing melee, nine Islamists were killed.

Israel came under intense international criticism as a result of that incident.

Meanwhile, in Geneva, Switzerland, last week, national representatives of "boat to Gaza" projects from a half-dozen countries met to discuss sailing together to Gaza as Freedom Flotilla II (FF2). Plans are for that flotilla to sail in the spring of 2011, a release stated.

CBG is a Canadian initiative supported by more than 100 Canadian organizations, most of them Arab or Muslim, as well as religious organizations, trade unions and political parties.

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee, said outfitting a Canadian-owned ship to run the blockade was nothing more than "a PR stunt that has as its goal not the delivery of aid but isolating Israel in the international community."

Israeli authorities are permitting all manner of goods to enter Gaza, so much so that the smuggling tunnels into the Sinai "are going out of business," Fogel said.

"The blockade is there to prevent Gaza from becoming again a platform for the launching of missiles into Israel," he added.

Fogel contrasted the $300,000 that organizers are attempting to raise with the "desperate need in other parts of the world – Africa. It's impossible to believe that it's being driven by legitimate humanitarian relief."

Magazine's photo essay called anti-Semitic

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A photo essay in a West Coast magazine that compared Gaza to the Warsaw Ghetto has Canadian Jewish Congress fuming.

"When we saw it, it was outrageous," said Congress CEO Bernie Farber. "This to us is anti-Semitism. It meets the test of anti-Semitism as defined by the European Union – comparing the Jewish state to Nazism."

The photo essay appeared in Vancouver-based *Adbusters* magazine. It features three Holocaust-era photos alongside three photos, ostensibly from Gaza. In one, slain resistance fighters from the ghetto are depicted alongside a photo of three black-clad Palestinians – there's a red beret with a gold decal next to one body – one of whom has blood coming from a headwound. In another, flames are burning down a Warsaw building while in the corresponding photo, firefighters are said to be putting out a blaze at a medical warehouse ignited by Israeli bombs.

In the third, young Jewish boys are shown trying to scale a wall around the ghetto to get food while the corresponding photo shows a man accompanying a sheep through a smuggling tunnel.The collage comes under the headline, "Truthbombs on Israeli TV."

Shimon Fogel

Farber said the photo essay "is absolutely a comparison of the depravity of the Warsaw Ghetto to Gaza. That can be viewed as nothing else but anti-Semitism… It is really a lie. There are no death camps in Gaza. It is an absurd and obscene comparison that inflicts pain in our community."

At its peak in October 1940, 400,000 Jews were crammed into the ghetto. Starvation and disease were rampant, as were random killings, leading to the deaths of 100,000 Jews – far more than the total death toll of Arabs and Israelis in all the region's conflicts since 1948.

Between July 23, 1942, and Sept. 21, 1942, some 250,000 to 300,000 ghetto prisoners were sent to the nearby death camp at Treblinka and murdered.

The first resistance took place in January 1943, and in April 1943, on the eve of Passover, a full revolt took place. It was suppressed after about a month of fighting, and according to the official Nazi report, at least 56,065 people were killed on the spot or deported to death camps.

Continued on page 36

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Trash offered as truth

Skilled in the ways of constantly bemoaning to a blindly receptive world their wounded status as blameless, perennial victims, Palestinian spokespeople astutely know how to sell prevarication as truth. Lies, falsehoods and deceptions are the staple products offered by Palestinian leaders in the marketing campaign against Israel that the Jewish state, alas, long ago lost.

Few people examine the product. Fewer still hold Palestinian leaders to account for offering trash as truth. An eye-popping example of this overwrought, false posturing occurred on the weekend. In an interview with the London-based newspaper *Al-Hayat*, PLO executive committee secretary Yasser Abed Rabbo threatened that the PA is considering abrogating the Oslo Accords.

"There are agreements between the PLO and Israel. One party cannot continue to be committed to these agreements forever while the other party violates them," Rabbo whined. "There may come a time, if the Israelis continue in the same policies, *to reconsider these agreements*," he added (our emphasis). Rabbo was complaining that Israel had not agreed to extend the construction freeze in the West Bank. He also abjectly rejected the Netanyahu government's request that Palestinians recognize Israel as a Jewish state. Can anyone of fairness, good faith and conscience seriously believe that the PA has not already effectively abrogated the Oslo agreements?

The following are the third and fourth clauses in a letter to then-Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin signed by then-PLO chairman Yasser Arafat on Sept. 9, 1993 that accompanied the adoption of the Oslo principles. "The PLO commits itself to the Middle East peace process, and to a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two sides and declares that all outstanding issues relating to permanent status will be resolved through negotiations.

"The PLO considers that the signing of the Declaration of Principles constitutes a historic event, inaugurating a new epoch of peaceful coexistence, *free from violence and all other acts which endanger peace and stability. Accordingly, the PLO renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence* and will assume responsibility over all PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance, prevent violations and discipline violators" (our emphasis).

Not long after he signed the documents, the PLO leader was scheming his next terrorist subterfuge. His treachery has been documented. For example, Mahmoud al-Zahar, Hamas foreign policy adviser, recently told the world that Arafat gave "the green light" to Hamas launch terror strikes in 2000. Similarly, Palestinian Authority Communications Minister Imad Al-Faluji also recently stated that the terror against Israel was as a result of a "strategic decision" by Arafat. Arafat's signature on the Karin-A ship's manifest of heavy armaments and weaponry merely proved what most already knew: the PLO effectively abrogated the Oslo Accords soon after they were signed. Someone should tell Abed Rabbo. He, the PLO and the PA should sit down with Israel and do the courageous and hard thing. Negotiate.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The Toronto Vaad Harabonim and B'nai Brith Canada told a parliamentary justice committee that Canadian divorce laws should be changed to prevent a Jewish spouse from withholding a *get* in order to extort a favourable financial settlement or custody of children in a civil divorce. They proposed changes that would prevent a court from granting a civil divorce until both spouses remove all barriers to each other's remarriage.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
IN 1947 THE U.N. CALLED FOR DIVIDING PALESTINE
INTO A JEWISH STATE AND AN ARAB STATE
1947
BUT THE ARAB RESPONSE WAS
NO TO A JEWISH STATE!
IN 2010 NETANYAHU CALLED FOR PALESTINIAN
ACCEPTANCE OF THE TWO-STATE SOLUTION
2010
BUT. . .
NO TO A JEWISH STATE!

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Sources of Orthodox feminists' innovations

I enjoyed and learned a lot from Rabbi Martin Lockshin's thoughtful article on halachic views on women reading Torah "Torah reading by women poses dilemma for modern Orthodoxy" (Oct. 14). In it, he notes that many Orthodox shuls now permit women to do things such as recite *Mourner's Kaddish*, call their coming of age a bat mitzvah and observe it in shul, serve as president of a shul, dance with the Torah or teach Torah to men, which were not permitted 100 years ago. He then credits the efforts of lay people working with their local Orthodox rabbis as the catalyst for this change. The origin of all of these practices, as well as baby namings for girls and Rosh Chodesh groups, starting almost 90 years ago with the first in-shul bat mitzvah, was in non-Orthodox synagogues. It was not merely their secular feminism that motivated lay people to press their rabbis to approve more ritual participation for women, but the power of seeing the roles permitted their non-Orthodox sisters. The great strides that Orthodox feminists (male and female) have made should allow them the strength to acknowledge the sources for their innovations.

Aurora Mendelsohn
Toronto

* * *

The Torah and homosexuality

In a recent letter to the editor, I was accused of judging who can be called an Orthodox Jew ("Not up to us to judge others," Sept. 29). Orthodox Judaism believes the Torah is the word of God, and I merely reiterated what the Torah says about homosexual behaviour. Don't blame the messenger. Furthermore, the letter writer implied that I violated the laws of the Torah by speaking ill of others. He is referring to my comments concerning gay rights advocate David Brody, who gave a lecture at Congregation Shaar Hashomayim in Montreal on the topic of "Being Orthodox and Gay." In my original letter, I argued that the two terms are mutually exclusive. I did not write badly of Brody's personal orientation, nor did I exclude him from our religion by questioning his Jewishness. I only took issue with Brody's attempt to have others think that one can be both Orthodox and gay. The suggestion that Orthodox Judaism gives its imprimatur to homosexual behaviour had to be rebutted. It is indeed correct to say that it is not up to us to judge our fellow human beings. Only God has that right. And He has spoken, loud and clear.

Rabbi Mordechai Bulua
Montreal

* * *

Primrose Club founders' aims clarified

Thank you for your coverage of the University of Toronto's Faculty Club, formerly called the Primrose Club, receiving a Heritage Toronto plaque in honour of its 50th anniversary ("U of T club gets Heritage Toronto plaque," Sept. 29). However, information given to the reporter needs clarification.

In 1920, Jewish men who loved to socialize and play cards wanted a place of their own. They had no desire to go elsewhere or apply anywhere else. They acquired land at 41 Willcocks St. and hired Benjamin Brown, one of the city's first successful Jewish architects, to design the building. In 1959, the building was handed to U of T for $1 by club members.

My late father, Edmond Creed, was a member of the Primrose Club.

Estelle A. Creed Kaufman
Flint, Mich.

* * *

Adele Wiseman's contributions

It was encouraging to read the article "A mainly forgotten writer" (Rosh Hashanah supplement, Sept. 8) by Merle Gould, because Adele Wiseman was certainly one of the greatest Canadian writers who deserves to be ever recognized and appreciated. One of Wiseman's important contributions to Canadian literature was sadly omitted from the article, namely her powerfully energetic, sensitive encouragement and support of both emerging and established writers and the stimulation of post-secondary students to an interest in contemporary Canadian literature. She accomplished this through her positions as director of the writing program at the Banff School of Fine Arts for many years and as writer-in-residence at many universities and colleges from coast to coast.

Shieky Brownstone
London, Ont.

* * *

Debate about Israel's boundaries

The writer of the letter "Negotiating territory away" (Sept. 29) should re-read the early history of Mandate Palestine. Britain received the mandate at the San Remo Conference in April 1920, but boundaries and terms were not approved by the League of Nations until July 1922 and came into effect September 1923. The text clearly set out two separate areas – Palestine and Transjordan. Further, the Balfour Declaration did not apply to Transjordan. This stipulation was also approved by the league. Finally, the map submitted to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference by the Zionist delegates excluded almost all of Transjordan.

Bernard Katz
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1587

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

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Perspectives

Building meaningful connections at home and abroad

"*Yisrael arevim zeh l'zeh*" – being responsible for one another – is one of the principal values that guides communal work in Canada. It propels us to act on behalf of those who may not be able to act for themselves and to support strong collective Jewish communal organizations so that as many voices as possible can be heard.

Our sense of responsibility for one another begins at home and then extends more broadly, on many levels, to a larger social enterprise to help build rich Jewish identity and commitment to a sense of belonging to the Jewish People. Thus, we are simultaneously local and global.

In Canada, community building takes place on three levels: locally, nationally, and internationally, particularly in Israel.

In most large Canadian communities, there is a well-developed communal infrastructure that consists of synagogues from all denominations, Jewish day schools along the full ideological spectrum and secular social-service organizations that serve the vulnerable, the aged and the sick. The possibilities to affiliate and to become Jewishly literate are diverse. Yet we know even in large communities, some segments of the population feel isolated and marginalized due to the barriers to participating in communal life such as cost, access, status and motivation.

The challenges are even more daunting in a community with fewer than 1,000 Jews, where there is little or no formal Jewish infrastructure and services.

There are 40 regional communities in Canada with an approximate total of 22,000 Jews. There are also communities with a Jewish population of fewer than 5,000 people, totalling 13,500 Jews.

Many of the Jews in these small communities are committed to maintaining their Jewish identity and affiliation, but their respective community capacities are such that they can no longer do so alone. Most of these regional communities are not projected to increase in Jewish population, with a few notable exceptions such as Kingston and Kitchener-Waterloo.

Sadly, however, the ability of these communities to sustain an active and vibrant Jewish life, to educate their children Jewishly and to maintain a Jewish infrastructure that cares for the members of the community throughout the life cycle is increasingly limited. The ability of small communities to attract educational and religious leaders who will permanently provide Jewish education and preside over ritual prayer services is slight.

Because of this, we must develop new ways to create and sustain relationships with Jews and help deliver services to them in small communities.

Larger Canadian Jewish communities need to provide assistance to the smaller ones to ensure that there is an adequate Jewish "safety net" there. We need to make certain that there is a well-developed Jewish educational system that includes both formal and informal experiences, and we need to develop a strong and effective cadre of leaders for the future.

It is therefore time for us to create a forum to think of new possibilities and new models to make this happen. For example, perhaps there are opportunities to tap into the talents of local students and faculty as sources of new energy and expertise?

But this is only part of the equation.

We must try to make sure that Canadian Jews feel connected to and can participate in discussion surrounding political and social issues that are part of the larger national and international environment.

Failing to do so weakens us all.

This summer, for example, two different issues surfaced that called for a coordinated, collective response from Jewish communities in Canada. Both issues, one emanating from Ottawa, the other from Jerusalem, had far-reaching consequences for the Jewish communities of Canada.

By Linda Kislowicz

The first issue involved the government's decision to eliminate the long form of the census. As everyone knows, it has been the practice in Canada to survey the general population every 10 years in order to collect personal and family data that will be useful for both government departments and NGOs that are required to predict social and economic trends and the consequences of these trends. This data is vital to knowing the demographic profile of the population to enable the appropriate planning for future financial supports necessary to underpin welfare, health care, educational, pension, housing, employment and other needs.

The decision to eliminate the long census form was of major consequence to the Jewish communities of Canada since the data collected has always been the basis for specific community analysis and strategic planning.

In the case of the census, organizations from a variety of sectors expressed their concerns to the government. The data generated by the use of the new form will be inadequate for communal purposes. Moreover, meaningful comparison with previous census data will no longer be possible.

What started as a few voices soon swelled into a great many from various sectors, cultural communities and government departments that use census data for urban planning. While the federal government did not ultimately change its position regarding the legislation, the negative reaction from so many sources forced the government to take heed and to deliberately and precisely respond to the concerns voiced.

Speaking out with one voice against the proposed census change allowed the large diversity of our voices to be heard more vociferously without regard to community size and influence from Toronto and Montreal, as well as Moncton, Thunder Bay and Victoria.

It was equally important for the Jewish communities in Canada to join forces with other Canadians about a matter of wide national importance.

The second issue is the conversion bill that was tabled in the Israeli Knesset. While the original intention of the bill was positive in its goal of facilitating the conversion in Israel of immigrants from the former Soviet Union, a number of related issues arose from the language of the bill that had the potential to create a rift with the wider Jewish world.

As concerns regarding the potential impact of the bill on Diaspora Jewry were clarified, it became important to find a collective way to express the opinions of Canadian Jewish communities.

It was important for Jews of all denominations and parts of the country to understand the potential divisiveness of the bill and the harm that could result in the relationship between Jews in the Diaspora and Jews in Israel. Engaging in a dialogue with peers across the country was critical to developing a successful advocacy strategy on the issue vis-a-vis the Israeli government and its final intentions for the bill.

There are many reasons why these two examples are important.

It is vital to make common cause with other concerned Canadians on issues of national significance. We must always find ways to become involved in such issues to demonstrate our deep commitment to the larger society in which we live. The census issue was relevant to our needs much in the same way as it was to every other ethnic community and their respective institutions. Speaking out collectively strengthened us all.

Similarly, being part of a coalition of Diaspora Jewish communities that is concerned about the far-reaching Diaspora implications of legislation in Israel is an important expression of our commitment to the future of the *entire* Jewish people, in Israel and in Canada.

We believe it is important for all of our voices to be heard on issues of national and international concern, that it is imperative to sustain the quality of Jewish life in Canada where Jews live regardless of community size. We also believe that connecting these communities to the larger Jewish world is a collective responsibility.

We must therefore reaffirm our commitment to national collective responsibility in Jewish Canada.

Linda Kislowicz is CEO of United Israel Appeal Federations Canada (UIAFC). UIAFC represents 10 Canadian federations and four regional councils, each of which raises and distributes funds annually for social welfare, social services and educational needs in Canada, Israel and overseas. For more information about UIAFC, visit www.jewishcanada.org.

The United Israel Appeal Federations Canada's Aviva Barth High School Outreach program is for post-bar/bat mitzvah teens from small Ontario Jewish communities. Through the program, recent participants, above, learned about Israel and Jewish history, culture and identity.

Opinions

What are the odds?

"What are the odds?" should be the Jewish motto. Amid the highs and lows of Jewish history, Jews have become aficionados of "mazel," acutely aware of life's possibilities and vulnerabilities. We cherish good luck, and wish others "mazel tov." And we certainly know what bad luck looks like. I don't need to recite the annals of Jewish suffering, from Nebuchanezar to Nasrallah, to remind you of Jewish bad luck.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

Today we live in an era of good and bad luck. Undoubtedly, the American dream has been a Jewish dream too. An exchange during the confirmation hearings for Elena Kagan underlines just how mainstream Jews are. Senator Lindsey Graham was questioning Kagan about the Christmas Day bomber, and started by asking "Where were you on Christmas Day?" After a short aside, Kagan answered with a laugh, "You know, like all Jews, I was probably in a Chinese restaurant." The Senate filled with laughter. Jews are very much at home in North America.

But as I pointed out in my last column, with this success comes rampant assimilation. In the United States, there are fewer Jews today than there were in 1960. What are the odds that the best time in Jewish history would also be the worst time in Jewish history?

However, it's a mistake to give up on the Jewish future. The Jews are what Simon Rawidowicz called "an ever-dying people." Every time we're down, we beat the odds.

And we beat the odds because it takes only one committed person to ensure the Jewish future.

Rabbi Akiva had 24,000 students who perished. Yet Rabbi Akiva soldiered on, and with five students rebuilt the Jewish tradition.

I've always wondered what it must have been like for Rabbi Akiva. Here was a man used to lecturing in packed auditoriums who was reduced to teaching in a broom closet. How do you not lose your faith in the future?

But Rabbi Akiva persevered because he understood that if statistics mattered, the Jews would have disappeared a long time ago. For the Jewish mission to continue, all you need is one devoted teacher, or one devoted matriarch such as Yitta Schwartz.

Yitta, a survivor, lost two children during the Holocaust. When she died last year at 93, she left behind 2,000 living descendants. What are the odds of that happening?

But that's precisely the point. The Jews should have disappeared long ago, and we face major challenges in our future. But we're here now because Jewish survival is not about statistics, it's about committed people.

And if you asked Rabbi Akiva and Yitta Shwartz, the odds for Jewish survival are very good indeed.

Were we punished for supporting Israel?

Canada's failure to win a seat on the UN Security Council has triggered a predictable debate – with a surprising twist. Predictably, most have seen the move as a rejection of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's muscular, pro-western, pro-Israel, anti-terrorism foreign policy.

But the columnist David Frum has injected a fascinating perspective. After actually doing some research, Frum suggested that the vote had more to do with European power dynamics, western rivalries, and the peculiarities of the UN regional voting bloc system. Outsiders will have a hard time figuring out who is correct. Hopefully, historians in the future will be able to sort it out. Still, the debate about the failure illustrates some enduring anomalies regarding how we discuss foreign policy, Israel and the United Nations itself.

Gil Troy in Montreal

For starters, the central assumption guiding the partisans in the debate is depressing. The most passionate talk has focused on whether Canada was being punished for supporting Israel. We are at a dangerous moment here. We are starting to take Israel's toxicity for granted. Why should support for Israel bear such a price? Israel's enemies have been so successful in maligning Israel and elevating Israel into such a powerful symbol that where a country stands on Israel risks defining its entire foreign policy.

As we approach the 35th anniversary of the General Assembly's despicable "Zionism is racism" resolution, Israel's adversaries are poised to enjoy a double victory. The anti-Israel package they sell involves both demonizing Israeli actions and exaggerating Israel's centrality in the Middle East, and world politics. The Palestinians' ultimate conceit traditionally has been to make everything about Israel be about them, pushing a perspective suggesting that no conversation about the Jewish state should be about anything but the Palestinian issue. Now, the Palestinian conceit – fed by the UN – is even more grandiose, suggesting that the Palestinians' problems are not just the most significant in the world today but the key to world peace. It is extraordinary how many foolish diplomats, politicians, academics, students and activists.

Amid all the hysteria, Frum's alternative perspective noting that Canada was boxed out because the European bloc secured seats for Germany and Portugal was doubly welcome. First, both pro-Israel and anti-Israel partisans need to remember that not everything is about the Palestinians and the Jews. At the end of the day, the Arab-Israeli conflict is a minor regional conflict. Even if some peace agreement could be signed, Iran would still be trying to go nuclear, North Korea would remain a bad citizen of the world, Islamist terrorists would still target westerners – and their own people – the economy would waver, the environment would be at risk, etc. Pro-Israel forces also have to be careful not to see everything through the Palestinian-Israel prism. We should remember that it is not helpful to jump at every attack on Israel.

Frum's perspective also reminds us how complex, political, and bureaucratic the UN has become. The high hopes of the 1940s continue to mislead most of us when we talk about the UN. Even after decades of watching it degenerate into the Third World dictators' debating society, we still want to see it as the biggest do-good organization in world history. Even when the UN is not being corrupt, or not being obsessive about Israel, politics rules. Regional rivalries are only one of the many distracting side shows that stop the UN from fulfilling its main mission to advance the causes of peace and justice throughout the world.

Getting a seat on the Security Council is not an award for doing good – or much of anything else. It is one of many privileges and responsibilities constantly doled out, periodically in play, in the world organization. Of course, it was delusional to expect that the UN would be politics-free. But rather than having Canada's loss trigger yet another round of pro-Israel versus pro-Palestinian fireworks, perhaps it is time for all of us to start learning about how the UN functions, what is does right, where it goes wrong, and how it can improve.

Driving Jewish values

I was driving to work the Monday after Yom Kippur. It was a beautiful day, and I was feeling good: our sukkah was built, and on Canadian Thanksgiving, all three of my kids were coming home, so I was planning the vegetarian "tofurkey." (In our family, on Thanksgiving, even the turkeys have something to be thankful for.)

I felt the beauty of autumn approaching, and I was contemplating how the High Holidays have stirred in me a real desire for change, renewal, compassion and atonement. I was thinking about how to be better this coming year, how to be kinder in the coming year – in short, how to manifest all the themes of the holy days in my daily life.

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein in Toronto

Darn! A driver cut me off getting onto Allen Road in Toronto. The nerve, edging up alongside the crawling line on Eglinton Avenue and manipulating his way in! Just because his car is bigger than mine, what makes him think he can do that? I moved forward to lean on the horn, annoyed and impatient. But wait a minute! Wasn't I just trying to manifest Jewish values in my daily life?

Driving may seem like a small thing; after all, it's just how we get from point A to point B. But the way we drive says so much about the way we live – fast, anonymous, self-absorbed and utilitarian. Few people smile while they're driving. Many of us consciously move up bit by bit so that the car trying to get in, to make a left or to enter a driveway can't do it until we pass, until we cross that coveted green light. "Oh no you don't," we seem to say. "Don't even think of getting your car into my lane."

In Tom Vanderbilt's New York Times bestselling book, *Traffic: Why We Drive the Way We Do* (and What It Says About Us), he quotes a bumper sticker he once saw – "Horn Broken: Watch For Finger." How many people who would normally never curse in front of their kids have no problem "giving the finger" out the window while their kids play in the back car seat?

Vanderbilt writes, "We are how we move. Something deeper and more transformative happens when we move from people who walk to people who drive… Frustrated by our inability to communicate, we gesture violently or we honk."

Have you ever talked to the driver in front of you? "Hey darling, move. The light's green. Helllooo? Can't you see? Can we move pleeezzzz?" There's an asymmetry in being seen but not being heard. We spend much of our time looking at the backs of people's heads or the rears of their cars. It's not easy to humanize the experience. Why not cut that driver off? You likely don't know them and won't ever see them again. Freed from our normal identity, we're rendered mute, autonomous beings in control of a machine. In our climate-controlled bubble, we can say what we like or do what we like with few social consequences.

But on that Monday, I made a conscious decision. I'm going to drive my Jewish values. I'm going to let in every driver who tries to get in before me. I'm going to let every pedestrian cross before trying to make that turn. I'm going to let cyclists turn right before I do. I'm not ever going to honk unless it's an emergency. I'm going to wave cars in, give the "thank you" sign to those who let me in, and not get angry at those who don't. I'm going to smile while I drive.

It may not change a single other driver, but it will change me. It already has. I like driving now. And my High Holiday resolutions are closer to reality, even if only for 15 minutes going west on Eglinton.

The Kirshner File

Iran consolidates its influence in Lebanon

On a state visit to Lebanon in mid-October, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was greeted effusively as a hero by local Shiites and accorded five-star treatment by Lebanese politicians ranging from Prime Minister Saad Hariri to Hezbollah's secretary general, Hassan Nasrallah, who emerged from his bunker to meet him at Iran's embassy.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Visiting Israel's northerly neighbour for the first time since his election five years ago, Ahmadinejad, representing the supreme Shiite power in the Middle East, was in Lebanon to consolidate Iran's growing influence there.

Contrary to media speculation, he neither ventured right up to the Israeli border nor, as the Palestinian American activist Edward Said in the wake of Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000, contemptuously threw stones into Israel.

Starting his tour in Beirut, he went as far south as Bint Jbail, a town only four kilometres from the frontier. It was an apt choice. Bint Jbail was the scene of fierce fighting during the 2006 Second Lebanon War, which pitted Hezbollah, Iran's client, against the Israeli army. After the three-week war, the rebuilding of Bint Jbail, a Hezbollah stronghold, was partially financed by Iran.

Ahmadinejad wasted little time in provocatively attacking his nemesis and arch enemy, Israel.

Praising Bint Jbail as a bastion of resistance to Israel, he ritualistically called for "the Zionists to be wiped out" and predicted that Israel would "eventually disappear."

From afar, Israel watched the spectacle with equanimity, though Arieh Eldad, a right-wing parliamentarian known for his extremist views, urged Israel to assassinate the fiery Iranian leader.

In response to his verbal barrages, Israelis released blue and white balloons at the Lebanese border, and in a subtle but telling rejoinder, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu delivered a speech in a Tel Aviv building in which David Ben-Gurion declared statehood in 1948, saying that Israel "will continue to build our country and... defend it."

The timing of Ahmadinejad's trip was politically inspired.

Later this year, the International Court of Justice, based in The Hague, is due to release a long-awaited and potentially damaging report concerning the assassination of the former Lebanese prime minister, Rafiq Hariri, in 2005.

The tribunal's prosecutor, Daniel Bellemare, a Canadian, may yet indict Iran's regional allies, Syria and Hezbollah, both of which were probably involved in Hariri's death.

Hariri, a pro-western politician who played a major role in rebuilding Beirut after the interminable civil war, opposed Syria's high-handed domination of Lebanon. Hezbollah, the single most powerful military and political force in Lebanon, is aligned with Syria and does its bidding.

Claiming that Bellemare's investigation imperils Lebanon's fragile stability, Syrian President Bashar Assad has called for an end to his probe. Syria's foreign minister, Walid Moallem, has disparaged it.

Hezbollah, meanwhile, has blamed Israel for the massive car bombing that killed Hariri and declared it will not accept an indictment of any of its members.

Apart from providing moral support for Syria and Hezbollah, Ahmadinejad went to Lebanon to achieve two overlapping objectives: bolstering Iran's already considerable influence in Lebanon and currying favour with the Shiites, who comprise approximately one-third of its overall population and who, until quite recently, were an economically disadvantaged, if not an oppressed, minority.

Two months before Ahmadinejad's visit, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, a Sunni Muslim, turned up in Lebanon, which has long been a cockpit of regional rivalries. He was accompanied by none other than Bashar Assad. Analysts regarded the king's visit as a move to counter Iranian influence in Lebanon and an implicit endorsement of Syria's traditional role there.

In the aftermath of Hariri's death, Syria, branded as the instigator of Hariri's assassination, was forced to withdraw its military garrison from Lebanon. Syrian troops were dispatched to Lebanon under an Arab League mandate shortly after the eruption of the 1975 civil war. The vacuum was filled by Iran, which has been Syria's foremost ally since the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s.

But in the past two years, the Syrians have gradually rebuilt their position in Lebanon, which was once part of greater Syria.

Syria's dominance is such that Saad Hariri, Rafiq's son, has been forced to bury his resentment of Syrian machinations since becoming prime minister at the head of the anti-Syrian March 14 movement in 2009.

Hariri, in the past year, has gone to Damascus several times, in an unmistakable sign of Lebanon's subservience to Syria.

Ironically, Hariri needs Syria to fend off the challenges of the March 8 alliance, a coalition of 12 pro-Syrian parties spearheaded by Hezbollah, Amal (Hezbollah's Shiite rival) and the Syrian Social Nationalist party.

Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri

Given Lebanon's dependence on Damascus, Syria has begun to reassert its singular role as the kingmaker of Lebanese politics.

In addition to his acceptance of Syria's renewed role in Lebanon, Hariri has had to come to terms with the presence of Hezbollah ministers in the Lebanese cabinet.

Hezbollah, which emerged following Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, has morphed into a formidable force since the second war in Lebanon, and has not hesitated to assert its power.

In the spring of 2008, Hezbollah seized control of much of western Beirut, in the city's worst bout of violence since the bad old days of the civil war.

The fighting was touched off after Hezbollah rejected demands by the Lebanese government to disarm, as mandated by United Nations resolutions 1559 and 1701, and to shut down its illegal telecommunications network.

With these demands impinging on its independence, Hezbollah revolted. As a result of the unrest, Hezbollah's right to carry arms as an armed militia was enshrined, as was its right to operate an independent communications network. Last but not least, Hezbollah gained veto power in the Lebanese cabinet.

Hezbollah's rise to primacy in Lebanese politics has occurred as Iran has correspondingly deepened its influence in Lebanon.

Hezbollah, which models itself after Iran's Revolutionary Guards, receives weapons and training, as well as financial and diplomatic backing, from Iran.

Like Iran, Hezbollah – which is linked to the 1983 bombings of the American Embassy and U.S. marine barracks in Beirut – is committed to Israel's destruction.

Hezbollah's armed wing was instrumental in Israel's decision to withdraw from southern Lebanon unilaterally. Its social services arm runs mosques, schools, hospitals and clinics. Hezbollah has thereby ingratiated itself with the Shiites, who are concentrated in southern Beirut, southern Lebanon and the eastern Bekaa Valley.

With Hezbollah's and Syria's consent, if not encouragement, Iran has heightened its profile in Lebanon through bilateral agreements with the Lebanese government. But due to Lebanon's time-honoured confessional political system, the 1943 National Pact, which guarantees representation for all its religious and ethnic groups, the Lebanese government has refrained from officially joining the regional axis led by Iran and Syria. Nonetheless, judging by Ahmadinejad's triumphant trip to Lebanon, Iran continues to build and reinforce its base in Lebanon.

For Israel, this ominous development will be a continual source of concern.

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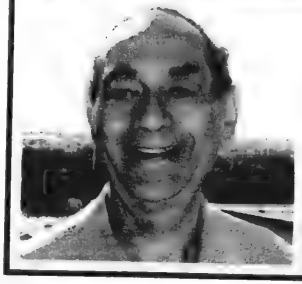

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Modern Orthodox rabbis meet in Toronto

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, standing, left, hosted rabbinic colleagues for a conference in Toronto this month.

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, of Toronto's Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, hosted about two dozen of his modern Orthodox rabbinic colleagues for a two-day conference earlier this month.

West Coast Rav, originally a group of young rabbis on the west coast of the United States and Canada, started about nine years ago and has expanded throughout North America, Rabbi Strauchler told *The CJN*. The group meets once a year to talk shop and meet with mentors.

A former age limit was lifted, and now the conference is geared to "rabbis who still see themselves as developing... There's no limit on that."

Along with Rabbi Strauchler, participants from Canada included Rabbi Andrew Rosenblatt of Vancouver and rabbis Joe Kanofsky and Rafi Lipner of Toronto.

Among other issues, the rabbis discussed connecting with their congregants and the wider community through Twitter and Facebook. Rabbi Strauchler hasn't used either with his congregation, but for the past two years he's been e-mailing weekly personal reflections and divrei Torah through an e-mail service that maintains a list of contacts.

"It's a means of touching more people... and it's a vehicle for teaching as well," he said. There are 700 addresses on his list.

As well, the rabbis discussed how to protect their personal prayer and study time, Rabbi Strauchler said. He noted that, when teaching Jewish text, there's a greater push toward having students more engaged in the learning.

The role of women in Orthodoxy wasn't an official agenda item, but is "something we're thinking a lot about as rabbis now," he said.

"The ability to come together and share experiences strengthened us all," said Rabbi Strauchler.

He said it's "a useful model" for the Jewish community to see rabbis – of all denominations – as people. "I don't think that's intuitive for our community."

Seeing rabbis as real people is better because "the truth is always better," Rabbi Strauchler said. "Rabbis are going to make mistakes, be human. If you expect them to be something other than human, it can cause problems of faith. [This way,] rabbis are able to connect better and do their job better."

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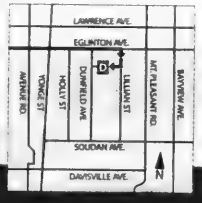

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Greater Toronto Area

Peter Van Loan spoke at Yad Vashem during his visit to Israel earlier this month. *[Sasson Tiran photo]*

Van Loan impressed by first trip to Israel

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Although Minister of International Trade Peter Van Loan only made his first trip to Israel earlier this month, he already knew a lot about the country.

Growing up in Toronto's York Mills area to an Estonian family that fled persecution in Europe, Van Loan said he felt a kinship with his Jewish peers and had been "immersed" in the politics and history of Israel.

"It was very much what I expected. But the one surprise was I'd had so many people drill into my head how small Israel was that I was surprised at how big it [felt]," he said.

While in Israel, he paid a visit to Yad Vashem, which he said was "very well done and moving. I wish I had more time to be there."

He added: "Much of my family died at the hands of the Soviets. I grew up with friends and classmates who were a product of the parallel experience being Jewish and Holocaust victims from World War II. So I was very much sensitive and aware of what [dictatorial] ideologies like that can do to humanity and the need to be vigilant about it."

Van Loan said he has been taken aback by how it seems the Holocaust and World War II are now "drifting into the past and do not represent more immediate history for the newer generations… [and] perspectives that are anti-Israel, anti-Jewish are achieving an acceptance that would never have been tolerated when I was growing up. That underlines the importance of something like Yad Vashem."

As reported in *The CJN* last week, Van Loan and his Israeli counterpart, Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, minister of industry, trade and labour, have agreed to conduct "exploratory" talks on how best to expand and modernize the existing Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA), which came into force in 1997.

Those talks are ongoing.

"We're negotiating other free trade agreement expansions with the EU, Colombia… and there is a gap in [CIFTA] in terms of the breadth and scope of what is covered" between Israel and Canada versus other agreements, he said.

Greater Toronto Area

Novopharm founder to be honoured

By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN

Leslie Dan is still not crazy about public kudos, even though the honours keep coming.

The humble Hungarian-born philanthropist and business mogul is a member of both the Order of Canada and the Order of Ontario. In 2006, the University of Toronto completed the Leslie L. Dan Pharmacy Building. He's received honorary doctorates from Dalhousie University, the University of British Columbia and the University of Toronto.

The most recent accolade came on Oct. 15, when Dan received another honorary doctorate, this one from York University.

In Jerusalem, the new $20 million Aish HaTorah World Center, which takes up some 40 per cent of the land adjacent the Western Wall and Temple Mount, bears the name, "The Dan Family of Canada Building."

His name also adorns the sign outside Leo Baeck Day School in Thornhill.

The latest garland comes from the Canadian Centre for Diversity (formerly the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews), which will present Dan and his wife, Anna, with its 2010 Human Relations Award at its 63rd annual gala Nov. 3 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

Co-honorees will be Earle O'Born, president and CEO of the Printing House Ltd., and his wife Janice, who heads the company's charitable arm.

"I prefer not to be honoured," the taciturn Dan told *The CJN*. "But they were insistent."

Anna and Leslie Dan

Apart from the millions he gives to Jewish causes and to programs that ship medicine overseas, Dan is best known as a leader in the pharmaceutical industry. As the founder of Novopharm (now Teva Canada), he built one of the country's largest manufacturers of generic drugs.

By the time he sold Novopharm in 2000 to Israel-based Teva Pharmaceuticals, annual sales were $750 million and it employed 3,000 people in Canada, the United States and Hungary. Among potential buyers, Dan settled on Teva because it was "a very competent, stable organization. It was a good strategic fit for both partners."

Dan also founded the Canadian Medicine Aid Programme (CAN-MAP) in 1985, which to date has shipped some $50 million worth of life-saving medicines and other aid to the Third World.

Dan now owns and operates a biotech company called Viventia, which owes its origins to research conducted by his son, Dr. Michael Dan, a neurosurgeon who also has a PhD in science. The company's focus is solely on developing better medicines for cancer, particularly in the bladder, head and neck. To date, some $220 million has been invested in the company's quest.

Dan was married to his first wife, Judith, for 37 years. They had three children, Michael Dan; Aubrey Dan, a businessman and arts impresario; and Andrea Dan-Hytman. In 1996, he married Anna Mirkina, a patron of the arts whose involvement extends to the Toronto Symphony and the Canadian Opera Company.

Dan operates on clearly defined principles both in business and his approach to charitable giving.

In business, "be absolutely honest and upright in all dealings. This is important, because if you look at the dealings happening in the States, it's a little bit discouraging."

Regarding philanthropy, "there are a lot of people who are fortunate to do well in this economy and they should share it. I'm not any smarter than anybody else. I'm just perhaps lucky that I'm in pharmaceuticals and not something else. The important thing is that we should remember those who are not as fortunate as we are."

As for supporting causes across the Jewish religious spectrum, "I don't believe we should in any way discriminate. We all have to stick together."

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New head says kolels 'shape' communities

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Mordechai Lebhar, the new rosh kolel of Kollel Yismach Moshe – The Sephardic Outreach Centre, says he wants to provide as many learning opportunities as possible for people at all levels of religious observance.

The 35-year-old Montreal native moved to Toronto from Los Angeles to replace former Rosh Kollel Rabbi Eliyahu Attias at the beginning of September. Rabbi Attias retired and made aliyah.

Rabbi Lebhar, who received smichah from the chief rabbi of Jerusalem 15 years ago, served most recently as rosh kolel at the Los Angeles Intercommunity Kollel in Westwood, Calif.

"There is a movement like a silent revolution of kolelim sprouting all across North America," he said, citing examples in cities as diverse as Las Vegas, Seattle, Phoenix, and Calgary.

Kolels – Torah learning centres, often for married Orthodox men – "shape a lot of Jewish communities," the rabbi said. "The kolel is a place where young Torah scholars are able to build themselves more, like on a post-graduate level. They spend most of their day learning and researching and developing themselves more, until they move on to positions in the community."

His priority, he said, is ensuring kolel classes are stimulating and challenging so that students at all levels can make Torah part of their lives.

"Any change – even one that looks like a micro-change – that makes a person smile at his neighbour, say a kinder word, be honest in business, or make an extra tfillah, is a gain for the Jewish community and the world at large."

Among the classes offered at Yismach Moshe – a 10-year-old institution located on Bainbridge Avenue near Bathurst Street and Sheppard Avenue – are philosophy, halachah, Gemara and ethics. Separate classes are offered for men and women, taught by an all-male faculty of six full-time and four part-time staff.

Rabbi Mordechai Lebhar

Although Yismach Moshe welcomes everyone, it's geared to the Sephardi community, said Rabbi Lebhar.

Rabbi Yaron Razak, principal of Or HaEmet Sephardic School, and Rabbi Shmuel Pinto of Magen David Sephardic Congregation are among Sephardi community leaders who have studied at the kolel, Rabbi Lebhar said. "This is all a ripple effect and a way to build the community."

Rabbi Lebhar, who has written a book on Moroccan Jewish customs, said that he is heavily rooted in Sephardi tradition despite having studied in Ashkenazi yeshivot, including the Telshe Yeshiva in Chicago. He also spent 10 years studying in Israel, and taught Halachah (Jewish law) at Yeshivat Darché Noam/David Shapell College of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem.

In Los Angeles, he was rabbi of a Sephardi minyan in an Ashkenazi kolel, an arrangement he described as very harmonious.

It's "a mistake" to put everyone in one minyan, he believes. He likens the situation to marriage.

"Each person retains their individuality, and then they find common ground," said the married father of seven. "Taking away someone's individuality is not the healthiest approach. Each one has a beautiful culture and heritage."

The Torah binds the two communities, he said. "The Torah is the same."

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APPLE PICKING: Jonah Grunberg picked an apple to eat and two to take home when Robbins Hebrew Academy kindergarten students went apple picking this month.

Morah Kate hadn't considered a career in education

By Frances Kraft

Kate Sable, a Grade 5 teacher at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School, feels very lucky to be doing the work she does.

At the suggestion of her husband, Jordan, a teacher at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Sable began to consider a career in education after moving to Toronto in 2000.

Volunteering in a couple of schools gave her "a sense that it was the right thing for me."

When the couple met, Kate, a native of Des Moines, Iowa, was working for a non-profit in North Carolina, and Jordan, who is from Toronto, was in graduate school there.

She has helped research the effects of domestic violence on children, and taught violence prevention programs in the Durham, N.C., school system. In Toronto, at first, she worked as a violence prevention counsellor for women and children.

A graduate of the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Sable, 39 – "Morah Kate" to her students – also has a bachelor's degree in biology from Yale University.

Her work as a Grade 5 core teacher at Penna, where she has been teaching since 2002, is "incredibly stimulating," she said.

In the classroom, she strives to be warm, firm, excited and caring – and to set a high standard, she said.

Sable especially loves teaching math. For practice in computation, she likes to use "$1 words." and her students seem to enjoy the exercise as much as she does. A monetary value is assigned to each letter of the alphabet ("a" equals 1 cent, "b" equals 2 cents, and so on), and the students have to try to find words that add up to a dollar.

Although Sable wasn't specifically looking to work in a Jewish school, she found the environment comforting, having lost her father shortly before she began working there.

"Finding this school has been incredibly special. It's been deeply gratifying to me… It just felt like a very safe and nurturing place."

Kate Sable

A LESSON FROM THE TEACHER

"Even though it's my fourth year teaching Grade 5, it still stays new. I have 16 kids and there are 16 different brains trying to learn new information… Each kid is like a puzzle you have to figure out."

As well, she noted, she and Jordan have chosen to send their two sons to the school. "My husband's family – his grandfather, his father and mother – have provided a great model for commitment to Jewish education… My husband and I have tried to follow that model in some small way."

And yes, she said, she does talk shop with her husband – as well as with his brother, Josh, who is also a teacher at TanenbaumCHAT, her in-laws (a teacher and a former teacher), and her sister-in-law, who works in the school system, too.

"I really love what I do," she said.

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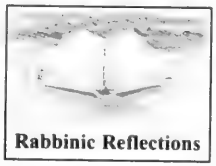
Jewish Life

Finding value in the land

By RABBI ROY D. TANENBAUM

In this week's parshah, Chayei Sarah, Abraham pays top shekel for the first purchase of Israeli land. Surprised? Don't be. Ask any good businessperson why he might not want to scoop up every shekel on the table. He might want to keep a deal from unravelling. She might want to cement a relationship with a supplier or a purchaser. Only that particular land parcel might do. Maybe he wanted to create a loyal employee. Or maybe he just wanted an eight-cow wife.



Rabbinic Reflections

Johnny Lingo was known as the go-to man on the islands. If you wanted to know the best fishing spot or the best place to get pearls, you went to Johnny. If you needed the best negotiator for a prize gift to take back home, Johnny was your man. If you wanted the best price for something you were selling, once again, Johnny was the agent you wanted. Yet, mention "Johnny Lingo" and, underneath the admiration, you might catch a smirk.

You see, on the islands, if a woman were of average appearance and beauty, it was the custom to offer two or three cows as dowry to the father of a potential new bride – if less than average, fewer cows. If a particular young woman were extremely beautiful and talented, a young man might pay as high as four cows. In rare situations, he might offer as many as five.

The intelligent, savvy, sharp trader Johnny Lingo had paid old Sam Karoo eight cows – eight cows! – for a plain, stoop-shouldered, mousey woman afraid of her own shadow, when even one cow would have been a lot. Everyone on the islands talked about it behind his back.

When six months after the wedding, a visitor to Johnny's house caught sight of a woman setting out dainties in the adjoining room, he couldn't believe his eyes. The lift of her shoulders, the tilt of her chin and the sparkle in her eyes all spelled self-confidence and pride – not an arrogant and haughty pride, but a confident inner beauty that radiated in her every movement. Was this the woman that everyone was talking about?

"There is only one Sarita," Johnny said, surmising his thoughts. "Think about how it must make a girl feel to know her husband paid a very low dowry for her? It must be insulting to her to know he places such little value on her. Think about how she must feel when the other women boast about the high prices their husbands paid for them. It must be embarrassing for her. I would not let this happen to my Sarita."

"Then you paid eight cows to make your wife happy?" he was asked

"Well, of course I wanted the woman I loved to be happy – but more than that, too. Many things can change a woman. There are things that happen on the inside and things that happen on the outside. What I wanted was an eight-cow wife."

Imagine the implications for us today if we knew Abraham had bargained Ephron the Hittite down to the lowest price, if we knew the Land of Israel was had for a song. Rashi says that when Abraham paid top shekel for the first purchase of Israeli land, he raised the land up. Thank God for Abraham the businessperson.

Rabbi Roy D. Tanenbaum is rosh yeshiva of the Canadian Yeshiva and Rabbinical School and dean of the Institute for Jewish Liturgy and School for Shamashim. (The original Johnny Lingo story, from which this story is derived, was copyrighted by Patricia McGerr in 1965.)

Celebrating the knowledge of Chanukah

Believe it nor not, we're on the verge of Kislev, the month of Chanukah. It has arrived so quickly. The days are shorter and the darkness is getting longer, and it all happened so quickly.

We're familiar with Kislev as the month that ushers in Chanukah. We sing songs and light the chanukiyah, and somehow it speaks to us of heroism, warmth and light. But Kislev ushers in more than Chanukah. It ushers in a new Jewish perspective that's nuanced through Chanukah. Occurring in Jewish history, the events of Chanukah sit outside the prophetic era and just before the exile that will last 2,000 years. It's the historic bridge between old and new.

MIDRASHIC MOMENTS
By Rachael Turkienicz

The Hasmoneans were a family of priests and there was never any suggestion they were prophetic. They accomplished what they did through intense passion and human vision of what things ought to be, not what they were. They rallied the nation together under a common cry of monotheism. They accomplished the seemingly impossible by defeating an empire and regaining religious autonomy. Yet never do they speak God's words – they're not prophets.

Prophecy has long ceased to be the effective expression of Jewish spirituality. It's the passion of the Maccabees, the vision of the soul shining through a united nation, that speaks most strongly to us.

The Hasmonean leadership corrupted as time progressed, and Jewish history shows us an honest portrayal of this unfortunate legacy. With that said, the end of the Hasmonean era ushers in the beginnings of what will be a thriving new Jewish world. The rabbinic era will continue the vision of building Judaism through human innovation, passion and vision. Completely removed from searching for prophecy, the brilliance of the sages shape Judaism by searching for creative knowledge rooted in divine wisdom.

In today's Jewish world, we celebrate the heroism of the Maccabees and we certainly need to celebrate Jewish warriors. As Kislev begins, we look forward to Chanukah and lighting the candles, which we connect with the candles of the menorah that the Maccabees lit. Yet we ignore the symbolism of our actions.

How interesting that candles in Judaism symbolize knowledge, and yet we don't speak of the knowledge that Kislev ushered in. Perhaps we need to step back and take a much broader view of Jewish history.

Kislev brings us the holiday of Chanukah, and it also brings us the beginnings of a new Judaism that we all take for granted. The knowledge of the candles could be seen as the knowledge of a new system that the sages will teach us. The knowledge of each individual's understanding of Judaism and Torah. The knowledge we achieve when we listen to each other rather than straining to hear the voice of a prophet long gone. We are the candles, and our Jewish identities seek knowledge.

There's no doubt that Kislev reminds us that Chanukah is fast approaching, and soon the excitement of Chanukah will take over. But as Kislev begins, we can take a moment and remember the new age it ushered in and the knowledge we gain when we stop and listen.

The brilliance of this symbol is said beautifully in the midrash when it states, "Many candles can be kindled from one candle without diminishing its flame."

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

Jewish Life

The Patriarchs revisited

Past Forward
By Alex Gropper

Why are the Patriarchs a source of fascination for us? There are many answers to this question. They are our forefathers, after all. They are also the fathers of other nations, most notably the Arabs, who are descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's first-born.

An element of romance is associated with the Patriarchs. They were nomads who were free to roam, picking up their tents at a moment's notice.

There is also an exotic element to the Patriarchs. Abraham originally came from the fabled city of Ur, one of the birthplaces of civilization. It's no wonder then that archeologists have been fascinated by the Patriarchs. It's a fascination that stretches back to the beginning of so-called "biblical archeology," a term that has fallen out of favour.

The American scholar William Foxwell Albright, who died in 1971, was the father of biblical archeology and played a major role in looking for the historical background of the patriarchal stories. His student, John Bright, wrote what was the definitive Albright-inspired history of ancient Israel based on the archeological evidence amassed by Albright and his disciples. These students played a major role in educating generations of biblical scholars at universities in North America and Israel.

Albright was most sympathetic to Israel and Jews. A number of prominent Israeli scholars either studied with him or were influenced by his ideas. Among them was Eliezer Sukenik, the father of the legendary Yigael Yadin, who would become one of the first professors of archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. (It was Sukenik who would be one of the first scholars to see the Dead Sea Scrolls and realize their importance, while Albright was one of the first to verify the authenticity of the scrolls.)

Archeology became a national pastime in Israel in its early days as we wanted to show the world our connections to the land. Archeology gave us a tangible link to our past, starting off with the Patriarchs.

Albright had placed the Patriarchs in the first part of the Middle Bronze Age, which has been dated from 2000 to 1500 BCE. That period seemed to fit with the stories of the Patriarchs as nomads in a land that was sparsely settled. Both Israeli and American archeologists began to excavate sites associated with the Patriarchs. The Americans began a long-term excavation at Shechem in the late 1950s, while the Israelis excavated sites such as Be'er Sheva.

I remember once listening to a tour guide tell his awe-struck charges as they stood in the middle of the ruins of the Middle Bronze gate at Shechem that Abraham himself had crossed through its portals. It was a very effective speech, and the tourists stood mesmerized as they listened to him.

The kind of certainty the tour guide had no longer exists. The further back we go in time, the more murky and cloudy our tangible evidence about the Patriarchs becomes. And yet for me, the Patriarchs transcend archeology as the fathers of our faith. It is a faith that by its very definition goes beyond material evidence.

It is not so much the historicity of the Patriarchs that is important, but the message that they represent. That message, which has resounded across the millennia, can never be undermined by the haphazard nature of archeological discovery.

Amazing young people

Jewish & Digital
By Mark Mietkiewicz

At the best of times, planning a bar or bat mitzvah is a joyful – and stressful – event for everyone involved. But if the child preparing for the big day also has special needs, it can make the celebration daunting. Today, I would like you to meet some amazing young people, who along with their dedicated families, found ways to celebrate their Jewish coming of age.

In "A bat mitzvah for Jenny," Marlena Thompson tells of the challenges of being the mother of an autistic daughter – while coping with a system that only made things harder for them. Thompson realized that having a standard ceremony with Jenny being called up to the Torah would have little meaning for her daughter. She felt it would be more appropriate to celebrate during the *Havdalah* ceremony marking the end of the Sabbath. The light of the candle, the taste of the wine, the aroma of the spices would be just right to inspire Jenny. But when their rabbi refused to be part of the unconventional ceremony, Thompson planned one herself in a local hotel. **[http://bit.ly/mitz01]**

"Gazing at my daughter's lovely face, luminous with the joy of achievement, and hearing her remark, 'Being Jewish smells like oranges and cinnamon,' I had no doubt that [the prophet] Elijah had indeed made his way to our self-styled sanctuary. His presence would be a fitting tribute to the sanctity of innocence and my unwavering belief that, differences and disabilities notwithstanding, God simply does not make mistakes."

Rabbi Julian Shindler says, "According to Jewish tradition, a boy becomes bar mitzvah upon reaching the age of 13 years and one day, a girl becomes bat mitzvah at 12 years and a day. This occurs automatically upon reaching the prescribed chronological age. It is totally independent of the means by which this is celebrated... It follows that if a child has special needs to the extent that he/she cannot celebrate his or her bar/bat mitzvah in the conventional way, while this is understandably disappointing, it does not affect his/her Jewish status, neither does it violate any Jewish law." **[http://bit.ly/mitz03]**

Speech therapist Leslie Kessler says families considering a special ceremony should also ask themselves this question: "'What's best for the child, or do I really want this for me?' because many of these children can't tell you if they don't want this. Parents need to take a very careful inventory of their child's abilities." **[http://bit.ly/mitz04]**

But when the conditions are right and the community is supportive, the results can be rewarding. That was the case for Benny Ellenbogen **[http://bit.ly/mitz05]**, Jesse Martinez **[http://bit.ly/mitz06]** and Chaim Goldman. **[http://bit.ly/mitz07]** If you've never attended this type of ceremony, you can get a taste of one from the video *Nes Gadol* (*Great Miracle*). **[http://bit.ly/mitz08]**

After viewing the video, you'll understand why one visitor to the site was moved to add this comment: "This is what God bestows upon us to help anyone who has the soul, respect and dignity to take upon a challenge such as in preparing for a bar/bat mitzvah. What you did for these two special young men is beyond a mitzvah. You prepared them to succeed in this challenging world. Mazel tov!"

Next time, advice for planning your special celebration.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based website producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be contacted at highway@rogers.com.

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Pardes Chaim officially opens to community

Will accommodate between 70,000-90,000 burial plots

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Toronto Hebrew Memorial Park (THMP) officially opened its second cemetery, Pardes Chaim, at a community event held Oct. 10 at the cemetery.

More than twice the size of THMP's original cemetery, Pardes Shalom, Pardes Chaim sits on 200 acres at 11818 Bathurst St. in Vaughan, and will accommodate between 70,000 to 90,000 burial plots.

William Draimin, a lawyer, and president of THMP for the past 20 years, said that the new cemetery became necessary because Pardes Shalom is fully allocated by 75 organizational members, including synagogues, landsmenshaft and mutual benefit societies. (It also has a community section for the unaffiliated.)

At the Oct. 10 event, Draimin credited Sidney Freedman, founder and honorary life president of THMP, for being the "person behind the initial vision of THMP. He studied the needs of the community and found the required lands."

Freedman, a lawyer and land developer, said that it has been 45 years since he started this "adventure, and it is a legacy I will always carry with me."

He said that THMP came into being in 1965, when, as a 39-year-old, he realized that a newly structured cemetery operation could be the vehicle for his ongoing contribution to the community.

"It could be run in an entirely new way, in a way that to my knowledge had never been attempted or achieved by any major Jewish community. It could be run as a business by a corporation, but it could be owned by the whole community in all its diversity."

Sidney Freedman, founder of Toronto Hebrew Memorial Park

His aim, he said, was to produce a new model in cemetery usage, and in its administration. "It would set new standards for beauty, for service and for the correction of abuses. The time had come to make the vision a reality."

In 1970, he said, he bought the land, which became Pardes Sholom, and began the process to rezone the land for cemetery usage. "By November 1972, when some of the approvals had been received, I gifted both the property and the business to the community."

Freedman said that with careful planning and with building the cemetery in stages, Pardes Shalom "was not a financial burden to community coffers from the beginning. I am gratified that [UJA Federation of Greater Toronto] has never had to invest a penny toward the establishment of the cemetery, its operation or its growth."

He said that there is no reason that cemeteries have to be "forbidding, ugly places which people are reluctant to visit. There is nothing in Halachah that constrains the beautification of a cemetery. Quite the contrary.

"I had at the beginning determined that our cemeteries would be beautifully landscaped and maintained."

A survey of the treed areas at Pardes Shalom was recently completed, he said, and "I am proud to report that we are third in the variety of tree species of institutional grounds surveyed in Toronto. We are surpassed only by Mount Pleasant cemetery and the University of Toronto grounds. Both of these institutions predate us by more than 110 years."

Pardes Chaim will eventually be landscaped and maintained to a similarly high standard, he said.

Also speaking at the opening, York Centre MPP Monte Kwinter called it a "very special day in the community. This location offers serenity for remembering and mourning, [where] we can experience nature and spirituality together."

Peter Shurman, MPP for Thornhill, said that most people have negative thoughts when they think of cemeteries, "but cemeteries are also for the living. The beauty that [THMP] has created helps us to reflect on the good times."

Also speaking were York Region Chair Bill Fisch, Vaughan Mayor Linda Jackson and Alan Winer, chair of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

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December 5 / 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
THE DECEMBER DILEMMA: DEALING WITH CHRISTMAS & CHANUKAH
Presented in partnership with the Downtown Jewish Community School and Miles Nadal JCC Sundays on Bloor
How do you handle social events, decisions about which holidays to celebrate and how family gatherings, and those awkward questions from children? What other issues come up? How do you find resources in the community and become part of Jewish life? This is an opportunity for participants to discuss these questions within a safe, like-minded group. Instructor: Alena Strauss.
FREE/ Miles Nadal JCC / Room 124

December 6 / 8-9:30 p.m.
WHO IS A JEW? / Rabbi Michael Klein-Katz, Jerusalem
Through our examination of how a formula for Jewish status affects Israeli citizenship and Diaspora conversions, intermarriage and intra-faith Jewish relations, assimilation and synagogue membership in North America, we shall come to a working definition that will shed light upon the meaning of being a Jew in our time. FREE/ Prosserman JCC / Room 124

December 13 / 7:30-9:30 p.m.
THE FEMALE RUSE: STORIES OF WOMEN'S DECEPTION IN GENESIS
Rabbi Elyse Goldstein and Dr. Rachel Adelman, Jerusalem
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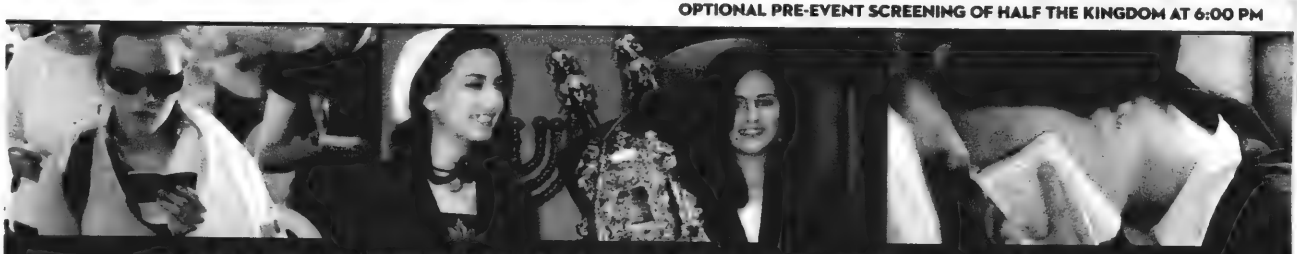

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Vote says more about UN than it does about Canada

Never before, it appears, has a vote at the United Nations concerning Canada resulted in such an avalanche of domestic media attention.

News reports and commentary ran non-stop for several days after Canada lost its bid to Portugal for a two-year term on the UN Security Council.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Since the vote for the seat, one of five up for grabs, was conducted by secret ballot in the General Assembly, the analysis of why Canada lost was filled with speculation. Quite a lot of it pointed to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's support for Israel as a key factor in the defeat.

But substantial amounts of commentary placed the blame directly on dysfunction and lack of principle at the UN.

In its Oct. 13 editorial, the *Globe and Mail* wrote: "Under the Conservatives, Canada has maintained its position of global leadership. It led at the G20/G8 this summer… It may hedge on an issue like climate change, but has enunciated an unambiguous message in terms of human rights and democratic principles. It has aligned itself squarely with countries, such as Israel, which respect such principles. If Canada's failure to win a Security Council seat is a result of Conservative foreign policy, then it says more about the UN than it does about Canada."

The following day, the *National Post* weighed in: "According to various media reports, we lost because Ottawa refused to sell off bits of its principles to satisfy the UN's various special-interest blocs. The best way for Canada to have guaranteed itself a Security Council seat, diplomatic insiders say, would have been to bash Israel, align more closely with China, sign on to fashionable climate-change initiatives and spread aid money thinner in order to bribe the largest possible number of countries."

In the same issue of the *Post*, David Frum argued that while "[a]nti-Israel voices inside the Canadian civil service have murmured to friendly journalists that Canada was punished for Prime Minister Harper's staunch support for the Middle East democracy," the real reason lay elsewhere: the structural nature of the Western European and Others bloc, which, along with Germany and Portugal, also includes Canada. The "internal politics" of the European Union strongly favoured Portugal over Canada, Frum said, even if the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) also voted for Portugal.

Speaking of which, in the Oct. 25 issue of *Maclean's*, Andrew Coyne concluded his review of what led to Canada's loss with the following: "Ah, Israel. According to former UN ambassador Paul Heinbecker, Canada's current 'pro-Israel' stance probably cost us votes among the UN's 57 Arab and Muslim members. I've no idea if that's true, but if so, we should wear our defeat like a badge of honour."

* * *

There's another way of evaluating the importance of this "honourable defeat." Consider this: there's growing attention being paid in media circles to the Palestinian threat to (once again) declare unilateral statehood, this time along the 1967 "borders" and get it adopted in a UN Security Council resolution.

In an Oct. 20 opinion piece in the *Wall Street Journal*, John Bolton, the former U.S. ambassador to the UN, warned that if the Obama administration doesn't veto such a move, "[a] Security Council resolution fixing the 1967 lines as borders would call into question even Israel's legitimacy, dramatically undercutting prospects for security and defensibility."

What must not be forgotten is that UN Security Council Resolution 242, adopted in 1967 (and bound in 1973 by Resolution 338) remains the bedrock of the "peace process." It calls specifically for a *negotiated* resolution of the Mideast conflict based on the "right of all states to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries." Resolution 242 deliberately left open a modification to the indefensible "ceasefire" lines of 1949.

Any attempt by the Palestinians to circumvent negotiations, which require compromise, would violate the centrality of these resolutions and be threat to peace and stability. Canada's presence on the Security Council at this time would have provided a crucial voice on this matter, if it's needed.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

The Executive Committee, The Board of Directors and the staff at Israel Cancer Research Fund deeply mourn the passing of a committed friend, supporter, Board member and Women of Action 2009 Honouree

Vicki Campbell ז"ל

Her leadership in the community and her connection to ICRF will always be remembered.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to her husband Henry, her children Jon, Elliot, Leanne and Jordan and the entire Campbell family.

May her memory be a blessing to those who were fortunate to have known her.

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Greater Toronto Area

'As Jews, we have to save lives wherever they need saving'

Continued from page 3

He said all proceeds from the gala will go to the Meir Medical Center for its work as a medical technology innovator and hospital for more than 700,000 people in the Tel Aviv region.

"As Jews, we have to save lives wherever they need saving," Raif said, adding that the hospital, which is roughly the size of Toronto's Sunnybrook Hospital, is on the leading edge of life-saving technology and improvements to quality of life.

In a statement, Dr. Asher Elhayany, the hospital's CEO and chief of staff, said he "salutes" all the award winners and is proud that his staff members were "among those outstanding individuals in Haiti." He will also attend the gala.

Elhayany called his hospital "a highway junction for the meeting of Arab and Jewish populations … [that] serves as a local symbol of Arab-Jewish coexistence in Israel."

Raif noted that Meir Medical Center doctors recently announced three "major" breakthroughs in medical technology.

The first was the discovery that IDF flight simulator technology could be tweaked for use in detecting fetal abnormalities in pregnant women. The technology began its testing phase two years ago and is now being exported for use around the world, Raif said. Secondly, Meir Hospital staff have developed a microchip that can be implanted under the skin of Type 2 diabetes patients and submit real-time insulin levels for monitoring purposes.

Lastly, the hospital recently developed a new "mini-surgery" cataract procedure that greatly reduces the amount of cutting needed on the eye of a patient, making it less intrusive and lengthy.

Part of Israeli field hospital

"We believe we are on the vanguard of making contributions to humanity," Raif said. "We are proud of what we've done. I'm not saying we're the only [Israeli] hospital making innovations, and I tip my hat to all the others… but we believe the centre has value."

Raif said he hopes the Jewish community will respond "with donations and support" and come to the gala to let the IDF, DART and Meir Medical Center teams know that their work is appreciated.

For more information on the gala, visit www.meirfriends.com

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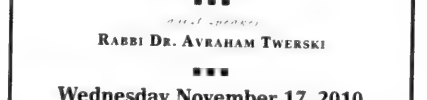

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יידערע וועלטער נעבן אמת צו אַ מאָמענט אין דער נעשיכטע פון צוויציקסטן יאָר הונדערט וואָס אונדזערע קינדער און אייניקלעך זאָלן וויסן וואָס יידן האָבן געליטן בעפֿעלקערונג געפֿינען היימען נאָר אין ביכער. אין א צייט וועו ראַסן האַס איז נאָך אלץ א קראַנקייט מיט אַן א מערצין איז וויכטיק צו לאָזן וויסן וואָס דער קאָסט איז געווען און קען נאָך וויסער זיין וועג מען לאָזט דעם סם פון האַס זיך קאָכן.

איינע פון די פֿראָגראַמען איז געווידמעט וילנע – אינדזער ירושלים ד'ליטע. די כעפּיע וועגן וילנע וועט פֿאָרקומען דעם אָטן נאָוועמבער, זיבן אין אָוועגס, אין זאָל פון אריינ, די היסאַניסטישע קאָנגרעגאַציע, 18 וועקאָרד דרייוו. מיר וועלן וויזין א פֿילם וועגן לעבן אין וילנע אידער דעם רייטישען איבערפֿאַל. נאָכן פֿילם וועט פֿאָרקומען א דיסקוסיע וועגן די יונג וילנע שרייבער מיט רעציטאַציעס פון ווייַר פֿאָעזיע אין יידיש און אין ענגלישער איבערזעצונג.

יונג וילנע איז געווען אַן איינגאַרטיקע סאָלאָנטירטע גרופּע פֿראָוויינקער און פֿאָעטן. זיי זענען געווען אַנערקענט וויי א וואָגאַרד פון דער מאָדערנער יידישער ליטעראַטור. צווישן די שרייבער האָט מען געפֿונען חיים גראָדע, שמערקע קאַטשערגינסקי, אַבֿרהם סוצקעווער, לייזער וואָלף, שמשון קאַהאַן, משה לעווין, פרץ מירענסקי און הירש גליק. זייער נעזאַנג איז פֿאַרשפּילט געווארן וועג דאָס ליכט פון יידישקייט אין פֿאָלקסן נעווארן אין די פֿאָגאַרט תעלדער און אין די אוועגס פון טרעבלינקע. אייזיקע פון די פֿאָעטן זענען אַדרעס פון וילנער גטאָ און האָבן זיך נעראַטעוודט אין די וועלדער מיט די פֿאַרטיזאַנער אָדער אין ראַטן פֿאַרבאַנד.

אַבֿרהם סוצקעווער, וועמען די וועלט האָלט וויי איינעם פון די דעהרויבענע פֿאָעטן פון צוואַנציקסטן יאָרהונדערט, איז מיט א יאָר קריק נעשטאָרבן אין ישראל. פרץ מירענסקי, אַנאַרקעט וויי א וועלט באַרימטער משלים שרייבער און פֿאָעט האָט אויסגעלעבט זיינע פֿורכטבאַרע, נאָך מלחמהדיקע יאָרן אין מאָנטרעאָל און אין סאָראָנטא.

פֿאַרוואָס האָט מען נעדרוקן וילנע ירושלים ד'ליטע? וילנע, פון היבעזטן יאָרהונדערט אָן איז נעווען א ויכטיקער צענטער פון יידישער ויסנשאַפֿט. וילנע איז נעווען די היים פון דעם וילנער גאון. ער האָט נעזען חסידות וויי א הערזעיע און ער האָט נעשטעלט די חסידים אין חרם. וילנע איז אויך נעווען דער צענטער וווּ די מאָדערנע יידישער קולטור און פֿאָליטיק איז נעלעגן אין קימפּעט. דער בונד איז נעגרינדעט נעווארן אין וילנע. די מזרחי און תּורה- ציון זענען אויך אָנגעשטאַנען אין וילנע. דער יידישער ויסנשאַפֿליכער אינסטיטוט – ייווא- איז נעגרינדעט נעווארן אין וילנע. וילנע האָט נעהאַט זעקס יידישע און העברעישע טאָג צייטונגן, די סטראָשון ביבליאָטעק, און די באַרימטע וילנער טרופּע. וילנע איז נישט נעווען אַזוי גרויס וויי וואַרשע, לאָדש אדער קראַקע – אָבער גלייך מיט אין איר קולטורעלער און פֿאָליטישער אינפֿלוס אויפֿן לעבן פון יידן.

אויב איר האָט נעראַטקעווען וועגן אונדזער וויקל שרייבערס דורך פּאָסט אָדער בליץ-פּאָסט info@thecjn.ca

Ya'alon calls for different approach to peacemaking

Vice-premier favours 'bottom up' process

Continued from page 1

But he noted that Abbas' Fatah faction denies the linkage between Jews and Israel, remains committed to the concept of armed struggle and has yet to amend its national covenant calling for Israel's destruction.

Ya'alon, who was chief of staff during much of the second Palestinian uprising, added, "We don't have a Palestinian leadership willing to recognize Israel as the state of the Jewish people."

Claiming not a single Israeli cabinet minister believes a peace accord with the Palestinians is achievable today, he said the PA's real objective is to eliminate Israel by incremental means.

Calling for a different approach to peacemaking, Ya'alon said it should be a "bottom-up" process by which the PA promotes peaceful coexistence with Israel, gives up all claims against Israel, reforms its vital institutions, builds a vigorous economy, roots out corruption, and improves security in co-operation with the Israeli army.

"This should be a performance-based process," said Ya'alon, a 60-year-old sabra who divides his time between his weekend getaway in Grofit, a kibbutz in the Negev Desert; his residence in Modi'in, a town midway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv; and his office in Jerusalem.

Asked why the Israeli government agreed to open talks with the PA early last month when the prognosis appears to be so grim, Ya'alon replied, "We manoeuvre politically."

Israel is under internal and external pressures to keep negotiations with the PA going, he explained. "Both sides are pushed by the United States. The White House is pressing for a final political settlement. It won't succeed."

Echoing a recent comment by Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, Ya'alon declared, " I can't see a final political settlement in my generation."

He said his vision of peace will take many years to implement.

Ticking off a list of peace talks with the Palestinians that have faltered since the Camp David summit in the summer of 2000, Ya'alon predicted that the current effort, promoted by the United States, would be a failure as well.

Urging caution, he said Israel should invest its energy in conflict management rather than in conflict resolution.

He conceded that progress might be made if the PA accepts Israel as a Jewish state. But, dashing that scenario, he said, "There's no chance this will happen."

Coming out against an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, he said it would bring Hamas to power there.

Ya'alon said the land-for-peace formula is only applicable to sovereign states.

Asked whether Israel should pull out of the Golan Heights in exchange for a peace treaty with Syria, Ya'alon said Syrian President Bashir Assad is not ready to commit to a peaceful resolution of Syria's conflict with Israel.

Assad is neither prepared to distance himself from his ally Iran, nor is he ready to work for the disarmament of Hezbollah. "He prefers to be a leader of the resistance camp."

Describing Iran as "the main instigator of instability" in the Middle East, Ya'alon called on the international community to impose "crippling" economic sanctions on Tehran to pressure it to stop its nuclear program.

But the military option should always be kept on the table. "I don't want to elaborate," he added.

Iran's Islamic fundamentalist regime should be toppled by the Iranian people, not by external powers, he said.

Moshe Ya'alon as Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defence Forces. ***[File photo]***

Asked if he expects a second round of warfare pitting Israel against Hezbollah, he replied, "Hezbollah [has been] deterred from initiating a new wave of hostilities." Hamas, too, has been deterred since the Gaza war, he added.

He said Israel should neither apologize nor pay compensation to Turkey over an incident last May in which Israeli commandos killed nine Turkish activists aboard a Turkish vessel trying to break Israel's siege of Gaza.

"The flotilla was led by a Turkish jihadist group and was supported by the Turkish government. Turkey used to be [Israel's] important ally, but the [Turkish government] decided to change policy, to go east rather than west."

He accused Turkey's prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, of promoting an Islamist ideological agenda and cozying up to Iran and Hezbollah.

Before visiting Toronto, Ya'alon met MP John Baird, the Conservative party leader in the House of Commons, in Ottawa. "Israel appreciates very much Prime Minister Stephen Harper's very positive role," Ya'alon said. "Canadian policy is based on values, principles and moral clarity."

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Survivor, researcher take journey into memory

By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN

Memory – its slipperiness, its accuracy, its toxicity – is the unusual theme of the opening program of this year's Holocaust Education Week.

Entitled "The Void: In Search of Memory Lost," the Nov. 1 evening will explore what the program calls "a terrifying empty space."

But in the hands of Stephen Smith, the memories of Pinchas Gutter, while the stuff of nightmares, glow with warmth and humanity.

The evening will feature more or less a conversation between Gutter, a local Holocaust survivor, and Smith, director of the University of Southern California's Shoah Foundation Institute, founded by director Stephen Spielberg.

Between Gutter's tortured memories of death camps and the Warsaw Ghetto, and Smith's sometimes laborious but ultimately rewarding attempts to extract them, the two men, despite being a generation apart – and one Jewish, the other Christian – have formed a deep bond.

"We are going to be exploring Pinchas' journey as a Holocaust survivor," Smith told *The CJN* in a phone interview from Los Angeles. "The underlying message is that memory is a very deep and traumatic experience with many layers to it and that we haven't even begun yet to really hear what survivors have to tell us about what it means to survive. We've heard many thousands of testimonies, but behind the life histories is also a life."

The two first met about a decade ago in Cape Town, South Africa, where Smith was taking survivors' testimony for the local Holocaust centre. The Christian son of an English Methodist minister, Smith recalled that "something quite profound leapt out at me."

He was struck by the way Gutter described his pre-war boyhood home in Lodz, Poland. Gutter had come from the Gerer chassidic community, and "the way in which he spoke about the community was deeper and it wasn't as stereotyped [as other testimonies]. He talked about the characters and way in which they went about their lives and the kind of life they lived and values that they had.

Pinchas Gutter

Stephen Smith

"It brought the whole community to life. I realized he was back there when he was talking. And he took me into that community in a way that I'd never really experienced before when listening to a Holocaust survivor. Because he was there, I was back there, too. I felt part of the story.

"I could also see he thought very profoundly about what it meant to be a Holocaust survivor. And I thought to myself, 'I'd really like to talk this man again.'"

For the next five years, the two talked, with Smith collecting 40 hours of Gutter's testimony in Toronto, Cape Town and London. They even travelled to Poland together.

"We spent five years journeying back into his memory and to some degree, recovering that memory," said Smith, the founding director of the UK Holocaust Centre in London, Britain's first dedicated Holocaust memorial and education institution.

Gutter was seven years old when the Second World War began. Having fled Lodz, he and his family were incarcerated in the Warsaw Ghetto for 3-1/2 years until April 1943, the time of the famous uprising.

The family was deported to the Majdanek death camp, where his father, mother and twin sister were murdered. Gutter endured other Nazi camps, including Terezin, and a death march. Liberated by the Soviet Red Army in May 1945, he was taken to Britain and South Africa before coming to Canada.

One part of that tale has gripped Smith.

"He came to visit me in England and told me a very moving story in which he described how he and his sister were going into a selection at Majdanek. He went one way, she went the other, and as she went around the corner, there was her long golden braid, and it disappeared. And only half an hour later did he realize what had happened.

"He looked at me and said, 'She was my twin sister and I have no recollection of her except for long golden braid going around the corner. I can't remember her at all. I want you to help me find my sister.'

"What became clear," Smith says, "is that the past haunts him. Many things came out [about how] deeply traumatized he is, even to this very day."

Through that haze of raw emotions, the two also spoke about religion, forgiveness, love and Poland, and they "try and make some sense of it in a way that is open," Smith says.

"Pinchas is willing to unmask himself, and show how notwithstanding all that confusion and emotion and disarray, somehow this man got his life back together and continues.

"He struggles on so many levels with his identity and spirituality. It was amazing to have observed all that, and for him to allow me in."

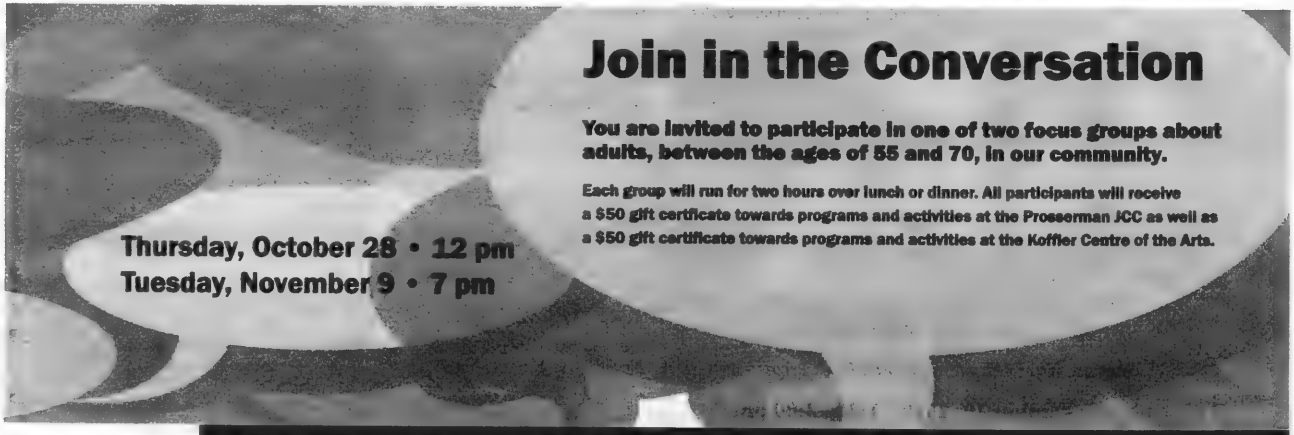
But because memory is fallible, "I don't look for factuality. I look for the person that's telling me their story. With all [their] pitfalls – and there are many – when survivors' testimonies are taken together, there is a lot we can learn from them, because they do corroborate each other and there is an amazing amount of unusual detailed fact in them."

The two are friends now. "We know more about each other than any person in our lives probably," Smith says. He and Gutter are now collaborating on a book on their experience.

Says Smith: "I dared to step into some unknown and difficult territory with him. It's been a really tough journey. And it brought us very close."

The talk will be held at Adath Israel Congregation, 37 Southbourne Ave., at 7.30 p.m.

Watch for more coverage of Holocaust Education Week in these pages and on our website, cjnews.com, in the coming weeks.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On Campus

Program aims to train defenders of Israel

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

A new Canada-wide program is aiming to turn university students into leaders and defenders of Israel on campus

The Israel Ambassador Program, established by the Canadian Network for Israel Affairs (CNIA), offers a select group of students leadership training, networking opportunities and conference calls with Israeli politicians and heads of Israeli and Palestinian organizations.

The response to the program, which began this month, has been overwhelmingly positive, said Sammy Katz, managing director of CNIA.

Turning university students into leaders

"[We] got somewhere between 45 and 60 applicants all across Canada," he said. "When we first developed the idea and put it out there, I didn't think we'd get as many applicants."

The deadline to apply was Oct. 4, after which 20 applicants were accepted. There are now 19 students in the program (one declined due to other commitments). The students live all over the country, including in Winnipeg, Vancouver, Victoria, London, Ottawa and Toronto.

When going through the selection process, the organization looked for students who demonstrated passion and were already involved on campus, Katz said.

"What we were looking for was students who we saw had the potential to be leaders on their individual campuses. Individually, it's the sense you get from somebody – whether they were eloquent, what sort of interest they showed, what they've done so far.

"We wanted to get them interested in Israel on campus before their time is taken up by other extracurricular activities… It was really on a case-by-case basis. Somebody who showed involvement was definitely a plus. Someone who showed interest was definitely a plus."

The program accepted a large number of first-year students in order to get them involved on campus sooner.

"The goal of the program is to take students who are emerging as campus leaders or who have the potential to be presidents or vice-presidents, or at least involved, in the next few years which is why we've taken many first-year students. [We want to] give them the tools they need now and give them an opportunity to get involved today," Katz added.

A major part of the program are the conference calls. The most recent one was held Oct. 24 with Ashley Perry, senior adviser in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Israel. Each call lasts one hour, with the speaker talking for 15 minutes. The students then get 45 minutes to ask questions.

"To turn students into leaders, you have to be able to let them engage and let them take part in the process, which is going to make them much more interested," Katz said.

Another project in the works is to send the students to at least one high-profile community event per semester. As well, they want to get students both in and outside the Ambassador Program understanding and utilizing social media to defend Israel.

"There are at least 100 new forms of social media that [students] don't know about," Katz said.

To help train students in effectively using social media, CNIA is hosting "Israel and the Social Media War," with Neil Lazarus, at 5 p.m. on Nov. 7 at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation in Toronto.

Something else the program strives for is inclusiveness. It is open to all students, regardless of religion, and this year one non-Jewish student was accepted to the program.

"There's a world… outside the Jewish community who support Israel, but the outlets for them are more minimal than other students… The idea is to include these students as well."

For more information on CNIA or the Israel Ambassador Program, visit www.israelnetwork.ca.

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▲ Competitors Larry Tanenbaum and Miles Nadal with Toby Rosner, Executive Director, ICC

◀ Men's 2010 Champ: Michael Kalles with Pro Matthew Baccarani [LEFT]

◀ Women's 2010 Champ: Shari Wilson with Pro Richard Nicolson [RIGHT]

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ROSH CHODESH: **Ulpanat Orot students (and Netivot HaTorah Day School graduates) and their Netivot sisters – from left Shalva and Eliana, Adina and Rivka, and Stephanie and Amanda – took part in a joint Rosh Chodesh celebration at Netivot on Oct. 8.**

[Rebecca Ansel photo]

Rabbi advances in heroes campaign

Compiled by CJN Staff

MONTREAL — Rabbi Yisroel Bernath, director of the NDG Chabad and the Jewish chaplain at Concordia University, is the only Canadian to make the semi-finals of the 2010 Jewish Community Heroes campaign, organized by the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA.)

Rabbi Bernath, 28, finished in 12th place among more than 200 nominees, receiving 7,722 online votes by the time voting closed Oct. 15, after three months.

"I'm shocked and humbled," he said. He was even surprised that he was nominated. "The first time I heard about the campaign is when someone said, 'I voted for you'. I didn't know what they were talking about."

Five finalists will soon be selected from among the 20 semi-finalists by a panel of judges. They will be evaluated on "their efforts to strengthen the Jewish community and uphold the ideals of tikkun olam – repairing the world," according to a JFNA announcement.

The top five will be invited to the JFNA General Assembly Nov. 7-9 in New Orleans, La., where the Jewish Community Hero of the Year will be named and receive $25,000 for his or her nonprofit organization or project. The four runners-up will receive smaller grants.

This is the second year that the JFNA has organized the campaign, which "celebrates the selflessness and courage of those who put others before themselves," especially those who are otherwise unsung.

Anyone could nominate via a special JFNA website anyone in the community, who is a resident of the United States or Canada, 13 years of age or older, and not an employee of the JFNA.

Similarly, anyone could vote online for a nominee. More than 311,000 virtual ballots were cast. (Votes were limited to one per user per hero each day.)

Rabbi Bernath, a native of Chicago, Ill., opened the NDG Chabad in the heart of the fashionable Monkland Village two years ago, and heads the Chabad program at Concordia's Loyola campus.

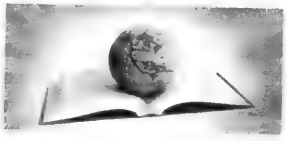
The NDG Chabad, which Rabbi Bernath runs with his wife Sara, has become a centre for young adult educational, community service, and social activities. More than 250 people showed up for its "Sushi in the Sukkah" party last month. He is also quite a matchmaker. "I set up about 25 dates this week [alone.] There's been about 15 marriages in the past two years."

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, is proud to participate in the upcoming Global Day of Jewish Learning.

This worldwide initiative honours Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz's translation of the Talmud into usable, modern English, and the culmination of nearly five decades of groundbreaking work. Toronto salutes Jewish Learning and the Rabbi's tireless efforts.

The Rabbi's mission is based on the belief that the texts of our heritage belong to us all!

For more information about any of these FREE events, please call the organization listed below.



SUNDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2010

10 am | NCJW House, 4700 Bathurst Street
Eilu V'eilu Rosh Chodesh Silent Tefillah followed by Talmud study with Rabbi Ed Elkin.
For adults. For more information 416.505.9324

10:30-11:30 am | Shaarei-Beth El Congregation of Oakville
Jewish views on Life after Death with Rabbi Stephen Wise.
For adults. For more information visit www.sbe.ca

2:30 pm - 5:00 pm | Miles Nadal JCC
An afternoon of Jewish dialogue and exploration with Rabbi Ed Elkin, Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, Rabbi Michael Stroh, Annie Gilbert, Rhonda Rosenheck, and many more.
For adults. For more information 416.924.6211 x 154 or visit www.milesnadaljcc.ca

3:00 pm | Dufferin Clark Library, 1441 Clark Ave., W, Vaughan
Interactive storytime with PJ Library on the theme of sharing and tzedakah.
For children ages 3-6 with their parents.
For more information 416.621.5675 or visit www.pjlibrary905.ca

3:30 pm | Beth Tzedec Congregation
Test The Jewish Nation. A multi-synagogue, multi-generational Trivia Extravaganza.
All ages. For more information 416.781.3514

4:30 pm | Second Cup Kosher, 441 Clark Avenue
G-d's "Facebook" Page, with Rabbi David Eligberg.
For adults. For more information 416.458.5507

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Class Acts

REMEMBERING HER SONS: On the 11th day of Cheshvan, the yahrzeit of the matriarch Rachel, students at Netivot HaTorah Day School were reminded how Rachel represents our nation's concern that all her sons, including Gilad Schalit, return home safely. Pictured, from left, are Grade 8 students David, Tamar, Shiraz, Bat-Ami and Raphael. *[Rebecca Ansel photo]*

WASTE REDUCTION: Houses at Bialik Hebrew Day School, which are named after universities in Israel, kicked off Waste Reduction Week with Smart Board presentations to all house members that reviewed proper waste management. Pictured instructing Hebrew University House are captains and vice-captains, from left, Adam Lechter, Evan Krikler, Rikki Blankenstein (obscured) and Hannah Wulfsohn.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov
The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov
to
JUDY KATZENBERG & JORDAN SILVER
on their recent engagement!

***LOVE FROM** Your parents,*
Israel and Mila Katzenberg
Sheldon and Carol Silver.
Delighted grandparents,
Alexander and Eva Sokolovsky,
Beverley Levman and Anita Silver.

Mazel tov Alex Bisgould!
You did an amazing job at your bar mitzvah and we're all so proud of you. Love, from the Bisgould and Elgin families.

Mazel tov Rose & Ralph Etigson on your 70th anniversary. Continued good health and happiness. Love, your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Natalie & Lorne – You're 'over the moon.' We're ecstatic! Mazel tov on your engagement! Love, Brenda & Rick Bornstein and Sandra & Myron Rapkin.

Sharabi/Tobe - Mazel tov, Idan & Sarah of Tel Aviv on the Rosh Hashanah gift, baby girl Yael. Love, Mom, Dad, Ilana, Adam, Josh, Arielle and Jordana.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
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or go online to **WWW.CJNEWS.COM** and
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What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

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Deadline for Nov. 11 is Nov. 1. Deadline for Nov. 18 is Nov. 8. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Oct. 28

THE VOLOZHIN YESHIVA

Aaron Nussbaum discusses "The 1892 Closing of the Volozhin Yeshiva." 7:30 p.m. Beth David. 416-633-5500. Free.

JUDY KLITSNER SPEAKS

Judy Klitsner, senior faculty of Pardes Institute and author of *Subversive Sequels in the Bible*, lectures at Baycrest Terrace. 8 p.m. Minimum donation $18.

Saturday, Oct. 30

SHABBAT SERVICE

Kol Yisroel Congregation Shabbat service at 9:30 a.m. Kiddush follows. No membership fees. Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Beth Tzedec Congregation Little Minyan presents **Abraham Israel**, founder of Hazon Yeshaya, on volunteers in Israel and growing up in poverty. $10 adults; $5 kids under 13. Children under 5 free. RSVP: **Marlene**: mlaba@beth-tzedec.org, 416-781-3514, ext. 234.

SOVIET JEWRY

Beth Tikvah Shabbat morning service includes speaker **Moshe Ronen**. Panel of Soviet Jewry activists follows.

Sunday, Oct. 31

GIFT SHOW

Shaarei Shomayim, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Limited vendor spots available. 416-789-5552.

Monday, Nov. 1

LECTURE SERIES

Temple Emanu-El's lecture series. "Madness, White Nights and a Swamp: The Making of St. Petersburg," with **Julia Zarankin**, assistant professor of Russian at U of T. 2-4 p.m. $10. 416-449-3880.

STOLEN ART

Beth Tzedec Chaverim presents **Bonnie Czegledi**, international art and cultural-property lawyer and author, speaking about stolen art in a Jewish context. 1:30 p.m. $3.

Tuesday, Nov. 2

LUNCH & LEARN

Gerald Ziedenberg, historian and chair of Beth Tikvah's adult education committee, on "The Nobel Prize and the Jews." 12:15 p.m. Reserve: 416-221-3433.

'FOCUS ON ART'

Doug Purdon on "Focus on Art: The Wyeths." 1:30 p.m. Council House, 4700 Bathurst St. $10.

CELLPHONE REVOLUTION

"The Connected Future," with **Gemini Waghmare**. 7 p.m. $15 advance, $20 at the door. Lipa Green Building. RSVP: 416-635-2883 ext. 5244.

Wednesday, Nov. 3

CONTEMPORARY FICTION

Nancy-Gay Rotstein discusses her novel *Shattering Glass* at Beth Tzedec library. 7:30 p.m. Dessert reception follows. $10. Register: 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

Other News

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION WEEK PROGRAMS

Temple Har Zion: Karen Lasky, Toronto Genealogy Society, discusses her trip to Poland in search of her family's roots. **Bernice Eisenstein**, author of *I Was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*, shares her story. A survivor and her children born in displaced persons camps also speaks. Nov. 2.

Continued on page 33

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Shelley Rable
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Sheri Schwartzberg
Julie Steiner
Brenda Weshler

Friday November 12, 2010
Spirale Banquet Hall,
888 Don Mills Road, Toronto
Breakfast 9:15 am, Speaker 10:30 am SHARP

Tickets $75 per person. To order contact Jessica Kassabian 905-764-1081 x 34

What's New

Continued from page 32

Bring lunch at noon; presentation at 12:30 p.m. Members $3, guests $5. "Who Will Teach Them After Me?" with **John Berrys** and **Yael Cohen**. Nov. 4, 7:30 p.m. 905-889-2252.

Beth Sholom: Deborah Lipstadt on "Confronting Holocaust Denial When There Is No One Left to Say, 'I was there.'" Nov. 6, 8 p.m. 416-783-6103.

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism: Screening of *The World Was Ours: Pre-Holocaust Jewish Vilna in Film and Poetry*, followed by a poetry reading by *CJN* columnist **Gerry Kane**. Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. 18 Wynford Dr. RSVP: **Roby**, 416-385-3910.

Beth David: Slide-show presentation and lecture by **Ian Leventhal**: "Art as Witness." Artistic works by Jews and non-Jews portraying their reactions to the Holocaust. Nov. 4, 7:30 p.m. Free.

Adath Israel: Nov. 1, 7:30 p.m. "The Void: In Search of Memory Lost," with **Steven Smith**. Holocaust education advocate, and **Pinchas Gutter**, survivor, sharing how Smith was able to elicit Gutter's Holocaust memories he had suppressed.

Beth Tzedec: Nov. 1-9, *Treasures That Survived*. Rare Judaica objects highlighting the richness of Jewish life in Europe before the Holocaust.

Grace Church on the Hill: Nov. 3, 8 p.m. "Keeping the Music Alive: A Choral Tribute." **Benjamin Maissner** directs and performs musical selections from Jewish communities and composers across Europe. 300 Lonsdale Rd.

Shaar Shalom: Nov. 3, 8 p.m. "Preserving the Message When There Are No More Eyewitnesses." With **Elly Gotz**, survivor; **Sara Horowitz** and **Robert Jan Van Pelt**.

LUNCH ON THE WEB

Rabbi Eleanor Steinman discusses how Jewish tradition impacts food choices. Looking at a variety of sources to consider as part of one's personal food ethic. Nov. 3, 10 and 17. Log on at 12 p.m. or call in to participate. 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net.

FUN NIGHT OUT

Hospice Thornhill is having a cocktail reception, casino and silent auction preview, Nov. 4 at 6 p.m. Dinner and show 7 p.m. $90. Paradise Banquet and Convention Centre. **Joy**: 905-764-0656 ext. 224.

JUDAICA BOOKS

The Art of Writing with many Pens... Holy Works consists of 21 display cubes housing Judaica books dating back to the 1450s. At Adath Israel for the next 12 months.

SATELLITE AT SINAI

Temple Sinai's interactive session with **Alan Dershowitz** and **Bret Stephens**. Nov. 4. Doors 7:30 p.m., program at 8. Members $10, guests $15 at the door. 416-487-3281.

BEETHOVEN CONCERT

Pianist **Stewart Goodyear** performs in an all-Beethoven program. Nov. 28, 3 p.m. Royal Conservatory of Music. $40, includes transportation from Temple Sinai. 416-487-3281.

TOT SHABBAT

Junior Congregation and Tot Shabbat with Pride of Israel. Nov. 6, 10 a.m. A real service with songs and a parashah play.

VENDORS WANTED

Shaar Shalom Religious School's second annual Chanukah Boutique. Nov. 21, 9:30-2 p.m. Shaar Shalom. Early-bird rate for vendors to Oct. 31. 905-889-4975, schoolfundraiser@shaarshalom.ca.

JF&CS GROUPS

Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit jfandcs.com. Registration required.

Widow/widowers 65+ bereavement: For those who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Nov. 2, 1-2:30 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Successful Step-parenting: 6 sessions for couples living in blended families. Nov. 3, 7:30-9 p.m. Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

Living with Teens: 6 sessions for parents with teenagers on how to parent them without losing your cool. Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m. Lipa Green

One Family, Two Homes: 6 sessions for families experiencing separation and divorce. Kids participate in age-appropriate groups. Nov. 4, 6:30-8 p.m. Promenade, Suite 313

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211 ext. 155. Oct. 28, 1:30 pm. "Jewish Canada: Immigrant Toronto, Portrait of a Jewish Past," with **Prof. Harold Troper**. Refreshments, $3.

Connecting the Generations. Meet a student and enjoy a catered lunch. Share in a Jewish heritage visit at the ROM.

Complimentary computer workshop, Nov. 18. Call to pre-register.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. All welcome. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Nov. 17, departs 10 a.m. Hairdresser/barber every other Thursday, 9-11 a.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Do you needlepoint, crochet, etc.? Share your crafts, please call. Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Seniors woodworking: skilled craftsmen, 416-630-6487.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Advanced computer classes, Tuesdays, to Dec. 14. 9-11 a.m. $60 members, $90 non-members. **Dianne**, ext. 128.

Lecture: "Famous Jewish Trials - Alfred Dreyfus." With **Gerald Ziedenberg**. Nov. 2, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 non-members.

30-minute lesson on your own equipment, i.e. camera, cellphone. Fridays, to Dec. 17. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. By appointment. Ext. 128.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Mastering Knife Skills for adults. Are you uncertain as to which knife to use for which food application? Chop your way through a delicious recipe. Nov 1, 1:30 p.m. Members $20 guests $35.

"A Year in Israel: Reflections of an Outsider from the Inside." **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** lived with her family in Jerusalem Aug. 2009-Aug. 2010. Presentation explores the relationship of Diaspora Jews to Israel, including perspectives on religious pluralism, women of the Wall, Arab-Israeli conflicts and Israeli politics. Nov. 2, 8-9:30 p.m. Free, no registration necessary.

Daycare and preschool open house 9:30-11:30 a.m Oct. 29. Ext. 4351.

Register for beginner bridge. Wednesdays, Nov. 3-Dec. 22. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. $45 members, $60 guests.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel services Sundays 8 a.m. and Thursdays 7:15 a.m. Kosher breakfast follows. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

World Music for the armchair traveller. Thursdays, 7-8:30 p.m. Oct. 28-Nov. 18. Register for series, drop in for $18. Ext. 0, music@mnjcc.org.

Harold Green Theatre presents *Lenin's Embalmers*. Oct. 30-Nov. 21. 2 and 8 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $49-$76. (416) 366-7723 for tickets.

The Cinema of Israel: film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** leads discussions with film clips. Nov. 1, religious films: *Kadosh, Va, vis et deveins Ushpizin* and more. 7-9 p.m. $12. Ext. 606.

Four Seasons Lodge – documentary follows Holocaust survivors on what might be their last summer together in the Catskill Mountains. With **Shirley Kumove**. Nov. 7, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $15, $10 ages 18-29 (7:30 screening only). film@mnjcc.org.

Toronto Jewish Film Society renewal subscriptions for 2011. Deadline for members is Nov. 9. Membership: joellem@mnjcc.org. Film: esthera@mnjcc.org.

Global Day of Jewish Learning, Nov. 7, 2:30-5 p.m. With Rabbis **Ed Elkin** and **Michael Stroh**, **Annie Gilbert** and **Rhonda Rosenheck**. $10 suggested. Ext. 154.

Nov. 7, 11 a.m. "Tales of the Shoah," with **Eli Rubinstein**. Free. sharonis@mnjcc.org.

Renee Barda: Life Begins Again! With **Dorothy Krizmanic**, **Gideon Wilk** and **John Lettieri**. Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $22, $18 group. Ext. 0.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

NA'AMAT TORONTO BOOK LAUNCH: Na'amat Toronto held a breakfast program at the Borochov Cultural Centre with Judie Oron to launch her book *Cry of the Giraffe*, based on a true story about Wuditu, an Ethiopian "Beta Israel" Jewish girl, and her terrifying and perilous journey to reunite with her family in Israel. From left are Oron and Wuditu. *[Mollie Rothman photo]*

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Cecile Feldman	Oct 10/10	129 Almore Ave
Bronka Krygier	Oct 8/10	1101 Steeles Ave W
Leon Krym	Oct 10/10	333 Clark Ave W
Gertrude Greenspoon	Oct 9/10	55 Skymark Drive
Irena Goldfinger	Oct 9/10	866 Sheppard Ave
Earl Worth	Oct 10/10	28 William Carson
Charles Feldman	Oct 11/10	330 Spadina Rd
Zofia Pakula	Oct 10/10	66 Munro Bl
Rosa Barnes	Oct 12/10	3560 Bathurst St
Jean Anshan	Oct 15/10	2200 Avenue Rd
Ronald Groll	Oct 14/10	47 St. Clair Ave W
Saul Stockhamer	Oct 17/10	29 Miranda Crt
Sandy Wall	Oct 15/10	5 Old Sheppard Ave

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Orzech, Lloyd Daryl	Oct. 5/10	267 St. George St
Pruskin, Anthony	Oct. 6/10	1131 Steeles Ave. W
Levin, Mordchai Matka	Oct. 7/10	
Gordon, Mary	Oct. 7/10	
Bayer, Anatoly	Oct. 8/10	
Wardinger, Albert	Oct. 9/10	21 Fallingdale Cres
Michaelev, Michael	Oct. 9/10	Private

We would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to all our family and friends who have been so supportive and generous during the difficult loss of our beloved

ELIZABETH SHABES ז"ל

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Jeff, Melissa, David and the entire Shabes family

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Obituary

Journalist was IDF commander in south Lebanon

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Yoram Hamizrachi was one of the most colourful characters to have ever made his home in Winnipeg's Jewish community.

Hamizrachi, who anglicized his name to "East," died on Oct. 13, at the age of 68, of complications from diabetes. He was, by turn, a journalist and author, soldier and counter-terrorism expert, lecturer and community activist, restaurateur, artist and fortune teller. And, in stereotypical Israeli style, he was blunt and direct with his views, letting the chips fall where they may.

Yoram Hamizrachi

Hamizrachi was born in Jerusalem. On his father's side, he was a seventh-generation Jerusalemite. At age 17, he joined the Israeli Defence Force and became a paratrooper After his army duty, he studied at the Bezalel Fine Arts School in Jerusalem and then continued his studies in Wiesbaden, Germany. In 1967, as a reservist, he fought in the battle for Jerusalem, and immediately thereafter returned to civilian life.

He worked for many years as a radio and TV journalist for Israeli and foreign media in Israel and abroad. During the Yom Kippur War of 1973, Hamizrachi covered the war for German TV.

In the late 1970s, he rejoined the army as a colonel for what was supposed to be a year to work with the Lebanese Christians on the other side of the border. He stayed for several years and became the first Israeli officer to work with the South Lebanon Army. After that, he returned to journalism and, in the spring of 1982, he immigrated with his young family to Winnipeg. He had several relatives on his mother's side of the family living here.

In Winnipeg, Hamizrachi continued to serve as a correspondent for Israeli media. He also began writing a regular column in the *Jewish Post and News*, commenting on political developments in Israel. To say that his column was not well received is a bit of an understatement. He was highly critical of the then-Likud government that was led by Menachem Begin. He was also an early advocate for a "two-state" solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In Winnipeg, he quickly became involved in community work, becoming the co-ordinator of the International Centre's multicultural committee. As such, he uncovered a scandal involving forged signatures on application documents for the funding for his position. He pursued the matter through the courts to a successful conclusion.

He subsequently helped found the Manitoba Intercultural Alliance and became the co-director of the Winnipeg-based Counter-Terrorism Centre.

The problem with being a community activist is that it doesn't pay the bills. In the late 1980s, Hamizrachi's wife, Beate, went to work as a school principal in a couple of native communities in northern Manitoba. Hamizrachi went with her.

While in the north, he and his wife separated. He returned to Winnipeg and eventually married again. In recent years, until his health began to decline, he was involved in a variety of ventures, ranging from running a restaurant (where he would tell fortunes using a deck of cards he created that combined elements of tarot and Kabbalah), to lecturing on world affairs at local universities and synagogues, churches, temples and mosques. Later in life, he also resumed painting.

He is survived by his wife, Carol Merhav, two sons, Ron and Dan, daughter Tahl and five grandchildren.

Holocaust aftermath drove Spector to community service

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Norman Spector, who was one of the most visible leaders of the Montreal Jewish community in the 1970s and '80s, died Oct. 20 at age 84.

Spector, an executive in the retail heating-oil business for many years, was the 1975 general chair of the Combined Jewish Appeal and held the top leadership positions in the State of Israel Bonds organization.

In addition to his business and community endeavours, Spector was a pioneer in energy conservation and an inventor, including of an electric car and a garbage-burning furnace.

Two pivotal events in his life motivated him to devote himself to the welfare of Jews here and in Israel.

As a soldier in the U.S. Army during World War II, he witnessed the atrocities of the Holocaust. The New York-born Spector enlisted in 1945 and was sent to Germany with the U.S. occupation forces. He was shocked by what he saw at the concentration camps and took part in the relief effort for the survivors and other refugees.

Another turning point was participating in a mission to Israel in 1968, led by Allan Bronfman, which opened his eyes to what the state meant to the future of the Jewish people.

Spector moved to Montreal with his family at the age of four, grew up in the Jewish district around The Main, and attended Baron Byng High School.

From an early age, he worked alongside his father in his coal-delivery business.

Although never a large man, young Norman daily hauled 100-pound bags to customers, often up the winding staircases typical of older parts of the city.

It was hard, dirty work over long hours, and friend Joe King says Spector never forgot his roots or the people who were good to him before he became a wealthy, prominent person.

"Of course, he would always be covered in black coal dust, and no restaurant would let him in," said King. "But there was one waitress who would serve him from the kitchen back door. Years later, she worked at the Brown Derby and Norm [who held countless meetings at the restaurant] would give her generous tips and all kinds of gifts, including a fridge.

Spector is survived by his wife, Selma, their children, Ivan, Charles and Lisa, and their families.

Wiesel slams Chinese over Xiabo's treatment

Nobel Peace Prize winner remains in prison

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Elie Wiesel severely criticized the Chinese government for the imprisonment of dissident Liu Xiaobo, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize this month.

"I think the Chinese are crazy. They are a great country, I really respect the people, but why do they do that?... Liu should be immediately released and declared a national hero. Imagine the reaction of the world," Wiesel said during a lecture at Concordia University on Oct. 19.

Wiesel, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986, spoke in the main auditorium of Concordia's downtown campus at the invitation of the Concordia Student Union (CSU). It was the same room where current Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was scheduled to speak eight years ago before the event was cancelled because of a massive and violent demonstration.

CSU leaders at the time were among the opponents of the then-former Israeli leader's presence on campus.

By contrast, Wiesel drew a near-capacity audience in the 650-seat hall, mostly students, and was given a respectful reception during his 45-minute lecture, including three standing ovations.

No reference was made in the opening remarks by CSU president Heather Lucas or Adrien Severyns, vice-president for external relations, to the 2002 episode. Wiesel himself hailed Concordia as "a great school."

Answering selected written questions, Wiesel, 82, said he plans to organize some kind of protest on behalf of Liu, for whose safety he fears. "People all over the world should not rest until he is free," Wiesel said, which brought the audience to its feet.

Elie Wiesel signs a copy of his memoir *Night* for a student at Concordia University.

Liu was sentenced to 11 years last December after co-authoring a petition calling for political reform and respect for human rights in China.

Wiesel also defended the cause of Tibetan autonomy led by the Dalai Lama, whom he considers a close friend.

"The Dalai Lama has said he does not want political independence, but only cultural and religious autonomy. What does [Beijing] care for a small, God-forsaken province? [If it extended autonomy], China would have the respect of the world," Wiesel said.

Wiesel's only comment about the Middle East was that Israelis and Palestinians should meet face-to-face to talk peace.

"When two human beings meet, something happens," he said.

Wiesel believes, "like everyone in Israel, even Sharon," in a two-state solution.

"I think all the problems can be solved, including the borders and even Jerusalem, if they start with the small problems first. There's already a lot of co-operation, economic co-operation, even co-operation on security," he said.

Without referring to the Middle East, Wiesel said in his formal remarks: "I believe it is incumbent upon everybody to choose between the deadly war of adults and children growing up without fear, whoever those children are. When a child falls, we should run to him and not check his pockets for identification, just bring him to a hospital."

And also, "I have difficulty living in a world where my hope is someone else's despair."

While Wiesel's appearance was without incident, the campus group Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights issued a statement prior to his visit describing his views as "anti-Palestinian" and the event "partisan." The student newspaper, *The Link*, reported that Wiesel had called the CSU "anti-Semitic" at the time of the Netanyahu debacle, without citing a source.

Wiesel's lecture was only widely publicized less than a week beforehand.

He was invited in the context of the CSU's first ever Peace Week. While free, attendance was by registration, and student identifications were carefully scrutinized before anyone was allowed into the auditorium and security was visible.

Most of Wiesel's lecture was on the importance of memory and the danger of indifference.

He reflected on what he has tried to accomplish since the Holocaust.

If he had not devoted his life to teaching and writing, Wiesel thinks he would have been an orchestra conductor.

On the growing body of Holocaust-themed literature, Wiesel thinks that this is not a subject for fiction. "If a novel is about Auschwitz, it is either not a novel, or not about Auschwitz."

He reiterated that he does not hold post-war Germans responsible for the Holocaust. "I never believed in collective guilt, whatever the situation or conflict, or in collective innocence. Only the [perpetrator] can be judged," he said.

Young Germans should not feel guilty, he said. "We tell them they are victims, too, of their grandparents or the regime."

Wiesel stayed on to sign his books for a long line of students.

At a reception afterward sponsored by David Azrieli, also a Holocaust survivor, Concordia president Judith Woodsworth spoke about what Wiesel means to her personally and, more particularly, to her late father.

Her family had been affected by the Holocaust and her father, whom she described as "a very modest man with a limited education," admired Wiesel as a "landsman."

When Wiesel won the Nobel, he tracked down Wiesel's address at Boston University and wrote him a congratulatory letter. "You replied and he was very touched, and I still have that letter," she said.

After Wiesel published *A Jew Today*, her father, who was ill, wrote, "My God, let Elie Wiesel live long and be well." He passed away two months later in 1990.

Woodsworth gave Wiesel a copy of his letter to her father and of her father's notes on *A Jew Today*, as a thank-you gift.

"My father would have been so proud that I was standing with you here today," she said.

Alexis Wronzberg undergoes treatment

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Alexis Wronzberg – the 27-year-old with acute lymphoblastic leukemia who is getting potentially life-saving treatment at Tel Aviv's Ichilov Hospital – received a bone marrow and stem cell transplant from her mother Debra last week.

The haploidentical transplant followed six days of chemotherapy aimed at reducing the level of the disease, which recurred for the second time Sept. 28.

The $300,000 cost of the treatment was raised through an urgent fundraising campaign by family and friends, and doctors at Toronto's Princess Margaret Hospital provided the treatment necessary for her to fly to Israel.

Alexis Wronzberg

Alexis is expected to have to remain in Israel for a total of three months.

"All is moving along," her father Rick told *The CJN* in an e-mail from Israel, where he joined his wife and daughter last week. "Next is waiting for engraftment over next few weeks and avoid infections."

Coast to Coast

Manitoba and Israel have 'sister' marshes

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — A recent agreement will link environmental experts who work to preserve Israel's Hula Valley in the Upper Galilee with their counterparts in Manitoba, who are responsible for the Oak Hammock Marsh.

Manitoba entered into the partnership agreement with the Jewish National Fund (JNF) on Oct. 18.

"Thanks to strong partners such as the Jewish National Fund and Ducks Unlimited, we have reached a 'sister' marshes agreement that will allow both countries to share their expertise on protecting precious wetlands," said Manitoba's minister of water stewardship, Christine Melnick, in a statement.

Melnick and Efi Stenzler, world chairman of JNF-Keren Kayemet LeYisrael (KKL), signed the agreement at the Hula Valley Nature Reserve.

In addition to sharing expertise on wetland science, the agreement will promote environmental stewardship and ecotourism, and provide the opportunity for the development of educational materials.

In a telephone interview, Erez Rotem, JNF emissary for Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, told *The CJN* that to kick off the partnership, JNF is "looking into inviting staff personnel from Oak Hammock Marsh to Israel in the winter and then Israelis from Hula Valley will visit Oak Hammock Marsh during the summer."

Rotem said that wetlands are important to both jurisdictions as they "act as a filter for lakes, and remove phosphates and improve the water we drink and air we breathe."

Mel Lazareck, president of the JNF, Prairie region, said that after the signing ceremony in the Hula Valley, the group

Christine Melnick, Manitoba's minister of water stewardship and Efi Stenzler, the world chairman of the Jewish National Fund-Keren Kayemet LeYisrael

"got a tour of the site and saw all of the pelicans and cranes in the Hula. It was fabulous."

Israel's Hula Valley was once an important resting and "refuelling" place for migrating birds on their annual trip from Europe to Africa and back. Shortly after the establishment of the state, the Hula swamp and lake was drained to turn it into arable land. However, a lake was kept as a nature reserve.

Tens of thousands of birds of over 200 species, including cranes, storks, pelicans, cormorants and egrets, stay in the reserve, knowing they can find an abundance of food. The reserve is also the home of some rare aquatic plants.

Manitoba's Oak Hammock Marsh is an important staging area for hundreds of birds that stop and feed there, building up fat reserves before continuing on their journey. Approximately 90 per cent of the birds found at the marsh migrate south, anywhere from the southern United States to the south tip of South America.

Melnick, who has been to Israel five times, was instrumental in bringing about the first-ever Manitoba-Israel Water Symposium hosted by Manitoba in August 2008 and the second Manitoba-Israel Water Symposium hosted by JNF-KKL in January 2010. During those symposiums, attendees from Manitoba and Israel learned that they had a common interest in preserving and protecting wetlands.

The new partnership agreement for wetlands comes on the heels of an agreement relating to birding, bird migration and ecotourism that was signed several days earlier, between Manitoba and the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel.

Images obtained from Holocaust museum

Continued from page 6

The images *Adbusters* employed were obtained from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. They were provided about 1-1/2 years ago for another story and were intended for one-time use.

"Our lawyer has sent a desist notification demanding the magazine remove the images from their website," said museum spokesperson Andy Hollinger.

He said comparing the Warsaw Ghetto to Gaza is a "wildly inaccurate misrepresentation of the facts and offensive to victims of the Holocaust.

"We never would have provided the images if we knew they would have been used in this fashion," he said.

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee, said the European Union "has put into place criteria that confirm that this kind of comparison amounts to explicit anti-Semitism."

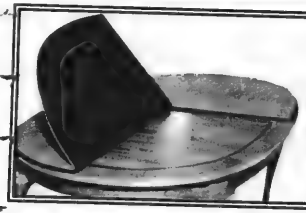
[The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights defines anti-Semitism, in part, as "Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis."]

"*Adbusters* is an anti-establishment magazine, and in the case of Israel and Jews, in 2004 came out with an article that U.S. intervention in Iraq was at the behest of a Jewish cabal in Washington and set out who is Jewish," Fogel said.

"There is a pattern of hostility to Israel and Jews, in the magazine, so we should understand where it's coming from."

Congress and Honest Reporting Canada are asking supporters to avoid purchasing the magazine and to inform store owners where the publication is carried that the content is offensive, Farber stated.

Adbusters did not respond to a request for comment.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Coast to Coast

Free Thinking Film Festival planned for Ottawa

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A few years ago, Fred Litwin was eager to see a documentary by an American filmmaker that took to task Academy Award-winner Michael Moore. Coming out shortly after Moore's *Fahrenheit 9 11*, *Fahrenhype 9 11: Michael Moore Hates America* intrigued Litwin, but when he approached a local theatre about bringing it in, he was turned down flat.

Fred Litwin

In fact, he noticed that few documentaries from a conservative perspective were being screened in his hometown, Ottawa.

"It hit me that to see the films I wanted to see I'd have to bring them in myself," Litwin said.

He did just that in January 2007. Almost 200 people turned up to see *Obsession, Radical Islam's War Against the West*. Soon afterward he created the Free Thinking Film Society

From Nov. 12 to 14, the society will host its first annual Free Thinking Film Festival at Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa. The festival opens with *Kalifornistan*, a satiric exploration of a terrorist plotter, and concludes with *The Stoning of Soraya M*, the story of an Iranian woman falsely accused of adultery who was put to death.

Altogether, 19 films will be shown, including *Reclaiming Pride*, a film by Toronto lawyer and gay activist Martin Gladstone about the anti-Israel controversy surrounding the 2009 Toronto Pride Parade; *Crossing the Line: The Intifada Comes to Campus*; *Katyn*, the story of the mass murder of Polish officers by Soviet forces during World War II; *The Cartel*, an exploration of the U.S. educational system; *Decryptage*, a look at the way the media portrays the Arab/Israeli conflict; *Atomic Jihad*, about the Iranian pursuit of nuclear weapons; *The Battle Over Durban II* and *Conflict: The Power of Propaganda*, a look at media bias against Israel.

Other films address the environmental movement and profile one-time presidential candidate Barry Goldwater, as well as one that documents the current financial meltdown. Speakers and panel discussions are also on the agenda, highlighted by a debate between Conservative commentator Ezra Levant, author of *Ethical Oil: The Case for Canada's Oilsands*, and Elizabeth May, leader of the Green Party. Also on tap is a lecture by French media analyst Philippe Karsenty, who exposed "the Mohammed al-Dura fraud," in which Isareli soldiers were falsely accused of killing an unarmed Palestinian teenager at the onset of the intifadah.

Litwin believes there is a large market for films of a conservative or libertarian slant, but it's a demand that local cinemas seem to be ignoring. Worst, they seem to be intimidated by naysayers who want to see some of the films barred. Two weeks before *Obsession* was slated to be run at an Ottawa movie house, "an ex-professor at Carleton University sent a letter to the theatre saying the film maligns Muslims. They cancelled," Litwin said.

Since *Obsession* ran, Litwin has brought in films every two or three months, with 200 to 300 spectators attending on average. "I've shown a lot of stuff of interest to the Jewish community," he said, pointing to *The Case for Israel: Democracy's Outpost*, with Alan Dershowitz, as well as speakers Bruce Bawer, author of *Surrender: Appeasing Islam, Sacrificing Freedom* and Bat Ye'or, an Egyptian-Jewish author who writes about minorities in Middle Eastern countries.

"We've always done a lot of stuff in support of the Jewish community and Israel," said Litwin, who is Jewish. "Last year, we said, why not do a film festival?"

Many of the films are an antidote to the one-sided sort of documentaries that are often screened, he continued. "Theatres don't bring in many documentaries to begin with, and by and large, there's a ton of great documentaries people will never see unless I bring them in. You don't see the mainstream films about radical Islam. People on the left do not want to rock the boat," he said, attributing that in part to "fear, cowardice."

Being gay, he continued, "is one of the main reasons I worry about radical Islam.

"There are a lot of gay activists on the left and a lot of gay media on the left. You don't hear the voices of gay activists who are conservative."

"I'm a conservative. I'm not a social conservative, but a fiscal conservative. I'm an anti-fascist, and I see a major problem out there being radical Islam and the delegitimization of Israel. A lot of it is being driven by the postmodern left which has made common cause with radical Islam."

Tackling "irrational leftism is an important part of what we do. I want to take on political correctness, irrational leftism and be anti-fascist," Litwin said.

Visit www.freethinkingfilmfest.ca for more information.

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Coast to Coast

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Seminar on kashrut planned

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Organizers are hoping to attract as many as 40 Manitoba food processors to a free seminar on kashrut in Winnipeg next week.

The Nov. 2 event aims to give the companies an opportunity to learn about the process of obtaining a hechsher and the potential benefits to their businesses of kosher certification.

The seminar is being jointly sponsored by the federal government, the government of Manitoba, the Manitoba Food Processors Association and the Orthodox Union.

Rick Stokoloff, a Winnipeg-based marketing associate for the OU, said the genesis of the seminar was a study released during the summer by the provincial government's Manitoba Agriculture Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) that looked into opportunities in the kosher and halal markets for Manitoba meat processors.

"This seminar seemed like the next logical step," Stokoloff says.

The seminar is scheduled to start with an overview of the specialty foods market, presented by an Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada representative, and the MAFRI halal and kosher study. That will be followed by an explanation by an OU representative of what kosher certification entails.

A subsequent "health break" will feature kosher food products.

The second part of the seminar will include a presentation by the Manitoba Food Development Centre – located in Portage La Prairie, about 100 kilometres west of Winnipeg – explaining kosher product and process development.

It will also include a talk by Shaun Crew, president of Winnipeg-based Hemp Oil Canada, which is under OU supervision, about the challenges and benefits of being a kosher food producer, and it will give seminar participants the opportunity to receive feedback from the presenters on their products.

The OU assumed responsibility for western Canadian kosher certification at the beginning of this year through its association with New Jersey-based Rabbi Dovid Jenkins, who purchased Winnipeg-based Winnipeg Kosher and its WK hechsher in August 2008.

All WK clients are switching to the OU certification as packaging expires, Stokoloff reported.

Orthodox group criticizes anti-veil bill

Bill 94 creates 'hierarchy' of rights

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — An Orthodox Jewish group has expressed serious reservations about proposed Quebec legislation on reasonable accommodation that would ban face coverings in provincial public institutions.

The Orthodox Jewish Council for Community Relations of Quebec appeared Oct. 20 in Quebec City before public hearings of the National Assembly committee studying Bill 94.

The presentation was made by Rabbi Moshe Glustein, head of Yeshiva Gedola Merkaz Hatorah in Montreal, and lawyer Lionel Perez, a board member of the school.

They described the council as having been founded in 2003 and now representing 10,000 Orthodox Jews in Quebec.

As it's now written, the bill would be open to constitutional challenge, which could lead to "an aggravation of social tensions," Perez said.

While Article 6 of the bill, which deals with face coverings, does not directly affect Orthodox Jews, Perez said, such a law would have far-reaching implications both legally and in everyday relations.

Perez pointed out that the bill is aimed at the approximately 100 women who veil their faces in public out of a provincial population of eight million.

"The council questions whether the state should make a law to target a group of people causing a certain difference, that could degenerate towards a road we would all like to avoid."

He stressed that there is no need for this law, because conflicts that arise over reasonable accommodation can be resolved under human rights charters of Quebec and Canada.

"[I]t should be underlined and repeated that there is no accommodation crisis, religious or otherwise, contrary to the idea that is spreading in public opinion and overblown by the media in Quebec on these questions," he said. "Consequently, there is no need to see a serious threat weighing on the foundations of Quebec society."

He also said the state should not dictate how a person looks in order to deliver or obtain government services.

"The fact that someone belongs to a religion and wears an outward religious sign should not automatically [prevent him or her] from working in the public service or receiving government services," Perez said.

"Religion is a part of the identity of a person… And it's not for the state to set out what that person should do. The choice should be the citizen's."

Wearing a religious symbol does not impinge on the principle of state neutrality, he said.

Rabbi Glustein, who introduced himself by saying "Je suis québécois," noted that it was the first time the Orthodox community had participated in this type of public debate, and that it had never before submitted a brief on a Quebec bill.

Perez said the council is concerned that Article 4 of Bill 94 creates a "hierarchy" of rights that would give primacy to gender equality above all other rights. The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms does not subordinate one right to another, he added.

While the council isn't opposed to the equality of men and women, he suggested, a law such as this one could make everyday situations that can be worked out more complicated

He gave the examples of a hospital patient wanting to be cared for by a person of the same sex or a person taking a driving test asking to be served by a license bureau staff member of the same sex.

He noted that although the media played it up, there were only six such latter requests among 25,000 driving exams last year, two of which came from Jewish people.

"There must be a certain proportionality," he said. Most accommodation requests are reasonable, he said, and there's no need for excessive constraints.

Bill 94 might also be interpreted so as to prevent a girl from wearing a head scarf or hijab at a public school, which conflicts with her legal right to a public education, he added.

Requiring a person to show their face for reasons of security or identification is reasonable, but the bill's inclusion of "communication" with a government employee is too broad, the council believes.

"[W]e have profound reservations… because this term could be considered too vague by the courts, raising serious doubts regarding its validity in accordance with the charters," Perez stated.

The main community organizations that speak for the Jewish community, Quebec Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith Canada, chose not to participate in the public hearings on Bill 94, which is entitled An Act to Establish Guidelines Governing Accommodation Requests with the Administration and Certain Institutions.

The association of Jewish lawyers, the Lord Reading Law Society, did submit a brief last spring that was strongly against the proposed legislation, saying it threatens religious freedom in general.

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Spice of Life

Forget the meat — veggie's the new norm

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

If you're always on the lookout for creative ways to incorporate more vegetarian dishes into your family's diet, search no further. Robin Asbell's cookbook, *New Vegetarian* (Chronicle Books) contains a colourful selection of more than 75 fresh, contemporary recipes for pasta, tagines, curries, soup and stews, and desserts. Asbell is a chef, food writer and cooking teacher based in Minneapolis who specializes in natural foods.

In *New Vegetarian*, Asbell shares a variety of inventive dishes that she has served to passionate omnivores. When served alongside the meat dishes that her guests were certain they preferred, her vegetarian specialties were quickly devoured, to rave reviews. She decided to compile a collection of recipes that any vegetarian can take to a feast where omnivores are present. Each savory recipe makes something that can stand in as a complete vegetarian meal and is certain to be shared by everyone.

New Vegetarian will take your palate on an international tour, with appetizers, soups, main dishes and desserts from Mexico to Greece, dishes rich with the flavours of India, Italy, Vietnam and Morocco. In this treasure trove of recipes, you'll find Greek Vegetable Feta Pie in Phyllo, Szechuan Tofu in Spicy Black Bean Sauce with Whole Wheat Noodles, Spicy Italian "Meat" Loaf, Jamaican Veggie Patties, Mac and Cheese with Hidden Veggies, Big Salad with Caramelized Pumpkinseeds, Pears and Pomegranate, Pecan Shortbread, and Chocolate Cream and Raspberry Napoleons with Walnuts.

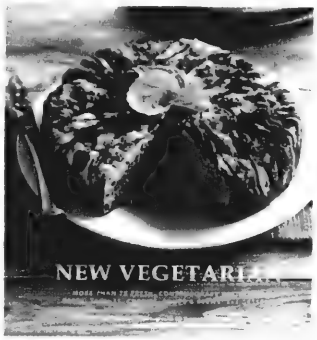
Asbell strongly believes in shopping for foods that are as unrefined and natural as possible. She writes: "Vegetarians, especially vegans, need to eat almost exclusively whole grain, with copious amounts of dark green leafy greens, vegetables, nuts and seeds, and beans in order to get the nutrients they need. Giving up meat is just part of the healthful veg diet – it has to be replaced with the most nutrient-dense plant foods to create the kind of vibrant health you want. Just because potato chips and beer are vegetarian doesn't make them a nutritious dinner."

The following recipe from Robin Asbell's *New Vegetarian* is guaranteed to bring fresh, new tastes to your table! Enjoy…

BAKED CREAMY SQUASH PASTA WITH ARUGULA

Tomato sauce is fine, most of the time. But even tastier is a creamy sauce with squash and chèvre, and serve it in a pasta al forno. This recipe calls for kabocha squash, but butternut or others will do – they are just a little more moist, so use 2 tablespoons less stock with them.

1 small kabocha, red kuri, or butternut squash
1 tbsp. olive oil
1/2 cup onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tbsp. fresh sage, chopped
1/2 cup white wine
2 cups arugula
1/2 cup vegetable stock
4 oz. chèvre (goat cheese), at room temperature
1 tsp. salt
2 cups tubular pasta, fusilli or macaroni
1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
2 tbsp. chopped walnuts



Preheat the oven to 375. Halve, seed, and bake the squash for about 40 minutes, or until tender when pierced with a paring knife. Cool the squash, then purée it, reserving 1 cup for this recipe.

Put on a large pot of salted water to boil for the pasta. In a large sauté pan over medium heat, heat the olive oil and sauté the onion until tender, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and sage, and cook until both are golden. Add the wine and bring to a boil. Add the arugula and toss it in the pan to wilt.

In a large bowl, whisk together the vegetable stock, the 1 cup pureed squash and salt. Add the mixture to the pan. Heat until barely bubbling, then remove it from the heat and stir in chèvre until melted.

Cook the pasta in salted water according to package directions, testing a minute sooner than the package says, to make sure the pasta is just al dente. Drain well and toss with the squash mixture. Transfer the pasta mixture to a 2-quart casserole and top with Parmesan and walnuts. Bake at 375 for 20 minutes. Serve hot. Serves 4.

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author, food writer, culinary consultant and food spokesperson. For more information, visit www.gourmania.com, contact her at goodfood@gourmania.com or call 416-226-2466.

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Killing of nine Turks unavoidable, IDF chief says

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JERUSALEM — Opposition leader Tzipi Livni testified before a commission probing Israel's raid on a Gaza-bound aid convoy in May, telling the panel that Turkey had exploited the event as a provocation against Israel.

"In the absence of a peace process, with Israel's policies toward the Palestinians unclear, Turkey was able to fill a political vacuum by engineering provocations," Livni told the commission, headed by former Supreme Court Judge Jacob Turkel.

Nine Turkish activists were killed when Israeli naval commandos stormed the decks of the Mavi Marmara, the lead ship in the six-boat flotilla, at dawn on May 31. The raid plunged relations between Israel and Turkey, traditionally close military allies, into crisis.

The boats had been trying to break Israel's blockade on the Gaza Strip, imposed in 2007, when Hamas militants seized power from rival Palestinian faction Fatah in a bloody coup, at a time when Livni was foreign minister.

Livni told the commission that many of the prohibitions, eventually eased in response to a wave of international protest after the flotilla raid, had been too harsh. But she denied responsibility for imposing them.

On Sunday Israel Defence Forces Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi testified to the commission for a second time, insisting the killings aboard the Mavi Marmara had been unavoidable.

Ashkenazi said Israeli commandos had fired 308 live bullets aboard the ship to repel passengers who attacked them with lethal weapons.

A top aide to the general told Reuters that 70 of the bullets were aimed to cause injury, while the rest were warning shots.

That appeared consistent with Turkish forensic findings that the nine dead activists were shot a total of 30 times, and there were gunshot wounds among another 24 passengers who were hurt.

Ashkenazi told the panel commission that navy commandos who boarded the Mavi Marmara were equipped with riot-dispersal gear, but quickly switched to live fire to confront armed passengers because "if they had not done this, there would have been more casualties."

In a sometimes testy second round of testimony before the state-appointed inquest, Ashkenazi insisted the navy's killing of nine Turks on the converted cruise ship Mavi Marmara had been unavoidable.

Israel informed the organizers of the six-boat flotilla that the ships would not be allowed to reach the Gaza shores, and soldiers boarded all the ships to compel them to change course.

Ankara, which wants compensation and an apology from Israel, has dismissed the Turkel panel as lacking in scope.

The probe commission has solicited testimony from Mavi Marmara passengers – many of whom insist the commandos' onslaught was unprovoked – and signalled it may probe Israel's navy deeper.

"Those who are asking questions [about tactics] should propose an alternative solution," Ashkenazi said.

Ashkenazi said passengers grabbed three Glock handguns and an Uzi machine pistol from commandos whom they overpowered. The troops had been dropped from helicopters onto the crowded ship as it ploughed through Mediterranean high seas at night.

"We have testimony of one activist running at them [commandos] and firing with a mini Uzi, and them shooting him," he said. "They hit those who were clearly involved in the attack on them, and not those who were not."

Mavi Marmara activists have said any guns taken from the troops were disposed of, rather than used.

Ashkenazi said commandos had fired some 350 beanbag rounds and non-lethal paintballs, all according to "protocol." The navy opted against rubber bullets – a mainstay of Israel's tactics against Palestinian demonstrations on land – because of a lethal risk within the Mavi Marmara's confines, Ashkenazi added.

Ashkenazi, who is scheduled to retire early next year, made it clear that he had returned to testify in order to spare scrutiny from subordinates, including the admiral in charge of the navy.

Bristling at Turkish and other foreign fury over the Mavi Marmara raid yet wary of international war crimes suits, Israel set up the Turkel Commission to help prepare its submission for a separate probe under United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Ashkenazi, a career infantryman, said the commission had received "word for word" accounts from marines, including two who were shot and wounded upon boarding.

Commission members asked Ashkenazi if lowering soldiers into a crowd on the ship's deck was wise. He said there was no better way to stop the ship. "If we had a special trick to stop the flotilla, we would have used it. We maintain intimate co-operation with other armies, and we haven't heard of another solution."

Endorsing the commandos' recollection, Ashkenazi said they were combat veterans who "know when they are being shot at."

But he also seemed to make allowances for the haze of melee.

"I won't take issue with a soldier who might confuse a slingshot, and the whiz its missile makes as it flies past, with a pistol, during nighttime," he said.

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(1925-2010)

Holocaust Survivor & March of the Living Chaperone

"To see the [death camps on the March of the Living], to touch them, reminds me of the tragedy of my people and the Six Million who should not have died, who should not have been murdered. Those we must remember. Every Jewish person, especially the children, must be witness to the truth of this past. The tragic lessons and legacy must be passed on to the children so they can be watchful, so they can be certain the world does not forget." **Bronka Krygier, after the 2004 March of the Living**

Bronka Krygier accompanied the Toronto March of the Living delegation in 2004, 2007 and 2008 to Poland and Israel, imparting the lessons of the Holocaust to some 700 students and chaperones, lessons that will remain with them for the rest of their lives.

May the entire family be comforted among the mourners of Zion.

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The Board of Directors of Weizmann Canada is pleased to announce the appointment of **Alana Silverman** as Director of Development in the Toronto office.

Alana will work closely with the National Executive Vice President, volunteers and other team members to build on the success of the organization as we position for exponential growth in Toronto, Central Ontario, and Western Canada. All development activities support the outstanding research and education programs at the Weizmann Institute of Science.

Alana brings 18 years of fundraising experience to her new role, including senior positions at the Royal Ontario Museum Governors, Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care and the National Ballet of Canada.

As a volunteer, Alana served on the Board at Bialik Hebrew Day School and chaired the fundraising committee.

We are pleased that Alana has joined our dream team and we wish her much success in her new role.

Susan Stern, National Executive Vice President | Catherine Beck, President

Netanyahu urges PA not to declare unilateral statehood

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JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged the Palestinians on Sunday not to take unilateral steps toward statehood, saying Israel is working closely with Washington on ways to restart peace talks.

"We expect the Palestinians to fulfil their commitment to hold the direct talks. I think that any attempt to circumvent them by going to international bodies is not realistic, and it will not advance the real diplomatic process," he said.

Peace talks that began in Washington on Sept. 2 are in limbo over Palestinian demands for a freeze of Israeli construction on land they want for a state and Netanyahu's refusal to reimpose limits on building in settlements in the West Bank after a 10-month settlement construction freeze expired on Sept. 26.

The impasse has raised speculation the Palestinians might abandon negotiations with Israel and launch a diplomatic campaign to seek recognition of a Palestinian state by the United Nations or other international organizations.

Last week, Palestinian Authority spokesperson Ghassan Khatib said that if peace efforts with Israel failed, Palestinian aspirations for statehood should not be "held hostage" to Israeli consent.

"Peace will be achieved only through direct negotiations, and I hope that we will return to this path with full force in the very near future," Netanyahu said, addressing his cabinet in public remarks.

He said Israel was "engaged in close contacts with the United States" aimed at restarting talks the Palestinians suspended when the settlement freeze expired.

'Peace will be achieved only through direct negotations'

Diplomats have said Washington has offered Israel a package of incentives, including ideas on security, to persuade Netanyahu to resume the partial freeze for two months.

"Our aim is not just to restart [talks] but to restart them in a way so that we do not stop in a few weeks or two months," Netanyahu said, calling for a year of "serious negotiations about fundamental issues" leading to a framework peace deal.

Palestinians say they fear settlements that Israel has built on land captured during the Six Day War in 1967 will deny them a viable state. Netanyahu says the settlement issue should be discussed in negotiations and not serve as a condition for talks.

Meanwhile, in related developments, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) said it would consider breaking agreements signed with Israel if the Israeli government continues with its current policies, a PLO official said Saturday in an interview with the Arab newspaper *Al-Hayat*.

"There are agreements between the PLO and Israel. One party cannot continue to be committed to these agreements forever while the other party violates them," said PLO Executive Committee Secretary Yasser Abed Rabbo.

"There may come a time, if the Israelis continue in the same policies, to reconsider these agreements," he added.

In an interview with the London-based Arab newspaper, Abed Rabbo referred to the Israeli settlement policy and said that "any freeze should be total and comprehensive and not limited by time."

"If we start negotiations without clear goals, then two months or two years or two decades will not be enough for the negotiations to reach their goal," he said.

The PLO official accused Netanyahu of "making an alliance with the right wing in the U.S. to weaken the Obama administration."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu *[File photo]*

Israel Briefs

Loyalty oath to be amended

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered Israel's justice minister to redraft the loyalty oath amendment to include Jews. Netanyahu said the new amendment to the Citizenship Act, which requires a pledge of allegiance by non-Jews to the Jewish and democratic state of Israel, should also include Jews seeking Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return. The change approved by cabinet applies only to non-Jews seeking Israeli citizenship. Human rights and political groups in Israel and abroad have criticized the amendment for its selectivity.

Schalit talks resume

Negotiations to release captured Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit from Hamas have resumed, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said. Netanyahu said that Israel has "renewed contact with the German mediator" in order to free Schalit, who has been held in Gaza since he was captured in a cross-border raid in June 2006. But Schalit's grandfather, Zvi Schalit, told Israel Radio he doesn't see any evidence that talks had been renewed and said Netanyahu "is killing" his grandson if he doesn't bring about his release. Hamas seeks the release of 1,000 Palestinians from Israeli jails, including some responsible for the deaths of Israelis.

Soldier jailed for stealing

An Israeli soldier who stole electronic equipment from an intercepted ship bound for Gaza was sentenced to five months in jail. He was also fined, demoted and removed from an officers' course for taking the items from the Mavi Marmara, which Israeli commandos boarded on May 31. Violent resistance on the Turkish ship led to the deaths of nine Turkish nationals, including a dual Turkish-American citizen. The soldier expressed remorse in court and apologized. Three other soldiers are to be brought to trial for the same incident.

Chilean miners invited to Israel

Israel's tourism minister invited the 33 rescued Chilean miners to spend Christmas in Israel. Stas Misezhnikov invited the miners for a one-week, all-expenses-paid trip with their wives to Israel, where they'll tour the country, including Christian holy sites. "Your bravery and strength of spirit, your great faith that helped you survive so long in the bowels of the earth, was an inspiration to us all," the invitation says.

Union leaders to meet

The leaders of Israeli and Palestinian trade unions have agreed to meet to plan joint activity. The heads of Israel's Histadrut and the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions will meet in Berlin in early December, TULIP-Trade Unions Linking Israel and Palestine, said. Histadrut chairman Ofer Eini and Palestinian General Federation general secretary Shaher Sa'ed met with leaders from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which will sponsor the meeting. ITUC is the global trade union umbrella group for 175 million workers in 155 countries. The unions agreed to draft a joint statement promoting regional peace. "The program will contribute to the promotion of peace and will serve as an answer to the unions around the world that promote a boycott of Israel," Eini said in a statement. "The aim of the projects is to promote cooperation between the unions through an understanding that the solidarity between workers on both sides will contribute to the peace process." Eini is vice-president of ITUC.

Bombardier wins contract

Montreal-based Bombardier has received an order worth $185 million (US) from Israel Railways for the delivery of 78 double-deck coaches. Bombardier announced Oct. 22. The vehicles will be made at Bombardier's Gorlitz facility in Germany and in Israel.

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The Officers, Directors and Staff
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Israeli chess grandmaster sets world record

JTA

JERUSALEM — An Israeli chess grandmaster bested an Iranian's world record by playing 527 ranked chess players simultaneously in Tel Aviv and winning 87 per cent of the games.

Alik Gershon began playing the concurrent matches last Thursday morning in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square in an attempt to break the Guinness simultaneous chess world record set in 2009 by the Iranian grandmaster Morteza Mahjoub. Gershon completed the games by early Friday.

The event was sponsored by the Jewish Agency and the Israel Chess Federation to mark the 20th anniversary of the mass aliyah from the former Soviet Union. Natan Sharansky, a former prisoner of Zion and now the head of the Jewish Agency, attended.

Many of Gershon's opponents, who are registered and ranked by the Israel Chess Federation, as per the requirements of the Guinness Book of Records, are immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Gershon, 30, is a native of Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine, who immigrated to Israel in 1990.

Public figures were among those watching the matches, which were under the close scrutiny of a judge representing the Guinness Book of Records. To set the world record, Gershon had to win at least 80 per cent of the games. Mahjoub's record is 500 games.

Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky played a match with Gershon at the beginning of the event.

Gershon began to learn chess at age two and by five was competing. He became an Israeli youth champion, won the world championship in 1994 for youth up to age 14, and became Israeli champion in 2000.

Alik Gershon challenges Tel Aviv to chess.
[Israel Sun photo]

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RHEA TREGEBOV
"The Knife Sharpener's Bell"

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« Va, Moshone »

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by Seymour Mayne

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ALLAN LEVINE
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Prevention looks more promising for ovarian cancer

By LAUREN KRAMER
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — There's good news and there's bad news when it comes to research on ovarian cancer.

The bad news is that this disease, dubbed the "silent killer," is still the leading cause of cancer-related deaths among women, affecting one in 70, with a much larger concentration in women of Ashkenazi descent. The good news is that while the outlook is still bleak for screening and treatment, prevention is looking more promising.

Approximately 50 women gathered to hear this good news at Vancouver's Jewish Community Centre recently, at a presentation delivered by gynecologic oncologist Dr. Sarah Finlayson and gynecologist Dr. Mark Rosengarten.

"I've seen too many of my patients lose a very courageous battle against ovarian cancer," Rosengarten said. "In eastern Europe, we didn't dilute our gene pool enough, which is why Ashkenazi Jews have a higher risk of these cancers."

Rosengarten noted that the disease tends to spread fear and panic in the community, and that until now the only preventative treatment has been removal of the ovaries. "That's not an easy thing to live with and often leaves women a shell of their former selves," he said.

Finlayson, who works at Vancouver General Hospital and the BC Cancer Agency, said that until three years ago, researchers at the BCCA thought of ovarian cancer as one disease and used a single treatment approach. "Today we know there are five subtypes of the disease, and we have a screening test in development," she said.

Each of those subtypes has different etiology, symptoms, treatment and prognosis, but the most common is high-grade serous cancer, also associated with the BRCA 1 and BRCA 2 gene mutations. Those gene mutations are found in one out of every 40 women of Ashkenazi descent.

"In the past, we were looking at the ovary to see where the cancer started, ignoring the fallopian tube," Finlayson said. "When we began looking at the fallopian tube, we started getting some answers. We realized these aren't ovarian cancers at all, they're fallopian tube cancers, and learned that the fallopian tube is the culprit in the majority of these cancers."

Finlayson, and her team have begun a B.C.-wide educational initiative to take their research from the laboratory to the operating room. "We're asking doctors to remove the fallopian tubes at the time of hysterectomy and tubal ligation," she said.

Rosengarten added that it is reasonable for women with a family history of gynecological cancer, for those who are anxious and concerned about getting ovarian cancer, and for those who have tested positive for BRCA 1 or BRCA 2 to consider having their fallopian tubes removed by age 40, provided that they did not intend on having more children. By age 50, he said it is reasonable for women concerned about the disease to have their ovaries removed, too.

"This is important because we're talking about prevention, not screening or treatment, which are still a sad story," Finlayson stressed. "We really believe that by making these simple surgical changes, we could see up to 50 per cent reduction in ovarian cancer deaths in the next 20 years."

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Herzog Hospital program named for CAMH doctor

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Of all the recognition he has received throughout his career, Dr. Paul Garfinkel says the naming of a mental health program in his honour at the Sarah Herzog Hospital in Jerusalem really speaks to him.

Canadian Friends of Herzog Hospital-Ezrath Nashim will announce the establishment of the Dr. Paul Garfinkel Mental Health Program for Israel's Immigrants at a concert featuring Dan Hill and the Frontier Brass Ensemble, Nov. 2 at 8 p.m. at the Toronto Centre for the Performing Arts.

Using the proceeds from the concert, the organization will develop a program to provide psychological counselling geared to the Ethiopian and Russian immigrants in their native languages.

A former president and CEO of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Garfinkel is now a staff psychiatrist at CAMH and a professor in the department of psychiatry at the University of Toronto.

A researcher, clinician and administrator, he's the author and editor of nine books on eating disorders.

He said that he is especially honoured with the tribute "because of the nature of the program, and because Herzog is a remarkable facility."

The story of Israel, he said, is a story of immigration. "Immigrants are the country's strength and pride."

However, he said, they do have problems, particularly "with feeling a sense of belonging, and with a loss of status, occupation and language. I know from studies that Ethiopian males have four times the suicide rate as the general population."

Dr. Paul Garfinkel

In any society, said Garfinkel, most people don't get treated for mental illness. "They may be embarrassed to seek help, or they may [consult] someone who either downplays [the symptoms] or makes a misdiagnosis. In developing countries, it is likely that 90 per cent of the people don't get help for mental health problems."

Even if immigrants get treatment, he said, it's often not beneficial because of the language barrier. "This program is addressing that problem. It will provide training for future practitioners and will hopefully do research as well."

For information on the tribute concert, co-chaired by Dr. Dorothy Pullan and Lena Shugar, call Terry, 416-256-4222.

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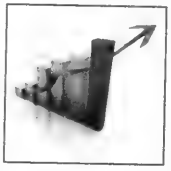
Business valuator sometimes dons detective hat

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Farley Cohen does not wear a trench coat and fedora, and sit in a car sipping stale coffee during an all-night stakeout hoping to catch a bad guy red-handed, though he is a private investigator of a sort.

At times, Cohen does have to don his detective hat – usually to determine the truth about the finances of certain individuals who don't want the truth about their finances known.



It's not exactly cloak and dagger stuff being a business valuator, but Cohen has become adept at appraising the value of businesses and attaching a dollar figure to them. Usually that entails poring over financial statements and economic forecasts, but sometimes it means following a money-trail to its source, often offshore, where some people attempt to hide their business interests from prying eyes.

Cohen, who holds an MBA, also serves as chair of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Business Valuators, an independent industry organization that regulates the profession, trains individuals in the intricacies of valuing enterprises and is seeking to establish standards that cross national borders. It's not as simple as merely studying financial documents, Cohen said. It's "finding its value at a point in time, looking forward."

"You look at more than inventory and receivables," he continued. That includes studying the final product, the size of the market, the price and the prospects for future sales.

"The real skill is in evaluating the goodwill [the value of a business beyond assets and liabilities] and that's based on future profits," he said.

Most of his clients are people involved with private companies, though he has worked for some publicly traded ones. The trick is in being able to value businesses of all kinds for different purposes, and for that he sometimes has to call in industry experts. "We say our business is more than an art than a science. You try to assess the risk of what might happen."

Since he opened his firm, Cohen Hamilton Steger, six months ago, he's employed 13 valuators, most of them chartered accountants, attesting to the value placed on his business by those in other businesses. The firm gets called when business partners can't agree on a price for a buy/sell on dissolution of the business; by those with financial reporting demands; for estate planning; for litigation purposes and to determine damages in patent-infringement suits.

"I usually get involved when owners are arguing among themselves, there's a shareholder dispute or during a divorce," he said.

Sometimes the beneficiaries of a will, who can't agree to the value of an estate asset, call him in to settle matters.

A lot can turn on the figure he comes up with. Cohen recalled a particularly notorious case involving giant steel-maker Stelco. At one point, there was speculation the company, which was in bankruptcy protection and had huge debts, was virtually worthless, but Cohen came up with a figure of $750 million.

Sure enough, after it emerged from bankruptcy, it reached a value on the stock market of $800 million and one year later it sold for $1.2 billion, he said.

In coming up with a number for that company, Cohen relied on outside advice specific to the industry and did his own research that showed steel prices were bound to rise substantially due to increased demand from the booming Chinese economy and a shortage of scrap steel internationally.

Another memorable case came out of a messy divorce in which he was asked to determine the value of a company within a family group. Donning his detective cap and employing the tools of a forensic accountant, he found the profits had been moved to offshore corporations. "I found hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars. It's a bit of a needle in a haystack. Sometimes you're lucky, sometimes you're not," he said.

Farley Cohen

So how do you find money that's been placed offshore?

It can be from the simplest sources, Cohen said, such as a banking statement from another jurisdiction, credit-card charges from abroad or payments to lawyers in other countries.

When you suspect assets have been moved abroad, "you get an authorization letter from the owning spouse to allow you to talkto the financial institution. If they won't sign the authorization, then we know we're on to something" and the next step might be to request a court order requiring the owning spouse to provide the pertinent documents.

Cohen, 53, has been in the valuation business since 1987. He put himself through school by working summers at the Canadian National Exhibition, where he was the man behind the mike for the birthday game. "It was a lot of fun, and I learned a lot about business and how people spent money," he said, recalling it as the most popular game on the midway.

A member of the Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, Cohen also has worked as a volunteer fundraiser for Baycrest's golf tournament, has sat on the Baycrest board of governors and on the advisory board for the Jewish Home for the Aged.

Prior to opening his own firm six months ago, he worked for two large public companies in the same field.

Lately, he's noticed something that should hearten anyone concerned with the economy. Business disputes occur in all environments, he said, but during the slowdown "companies did not want to spend their money on litigation that could be postponed."

Two thousand and nine was slow, but in the last six months, Cohen has quadrupled his staff and "we have lots of clients," he said.

Better times may well be ahead.

ALS treatment shows promise

By LIOR ZENO
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Biotech startup BrainStorm Cell Therapeutics has received clearance from the Health Ministry to begin clinical trials of its NurOwn stem-cell therapy on amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) patients, the company announced recently.

The testing will take place at Hadassah University Hospital, Ein Kerem, whose ethics committee gave its approval for the trials last February. ALS, commonly known also as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a degenerative, disabling and eventually fatal disease that attacks nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord.

The agreement between BrainStorm and Hadassah calls for trials to be carried out in Hadassah's Ein Karem laboratories by a joint team headed by the hospital's Prof. Dimitrios Karussis. The company, which has allocated 5 million shekels ($1.4 million US) to fund the research, estimates that if the therapy is successful, it will open the door to a market estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars in the United States alone.

BrainStorm is controlled by haredi businessman Chaim Lebovits, the company's president, along with Jacky Ben-Zaken. Its shares trade at a market value of $22.8 million (US).

BrainStorm's therapy, based on patents developed by neurologist Eldad Melamed and cell biologist Daniel Offen, involves isolating stem cells taken from the patient's own bone marrow and transforming them in the lab into nerve cells, which are then re-injected into the patient. The treatment is expected to slow – perhaps even stop – the degeneration of nerve cells brought on by ALS.

The onset of the trials awaits a technical validation process of various parameters of the treatment, as required by the Health Ministry, as well as the recruitment of test patients. These steps are expected to be completed within a few months.

"To our delight we have reached the critical stage where we can reach the patients themselves," said Lebovits. "I was warned for years not to invest in ALS, since if the large pharmaceutical companies haven't developed a treatment for the disease, how could we expect to? But I put my faith from the start in our company's scientific team and our technology, which are today the most respected in the world. The greatest satisfaction comes from saving a human life, not to mention thousands of lives. God willing, I am hopeful we can achieve that."

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Therapist uses drumming to bring isolated people together

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Terri Segal's love of music goes back to her childhood.

"I've always been into music, playing guitar and piano growing up," she said.

Today, the 32-year-old expressive arts therapist is the owner and director of Rhythmic by Nature, which holds group drumming and percussion workshops for schools, social service agencies, summer camps and community events, to name a few.

Her passion for playing the drums began when she was a student at McMaster University, where she studied English.

"I started taking my first African drumming classes and more and more workshops. I found that as I started learning, the main passion was to share, so I would start drum circles... at the university," she said. "Wherever I went, I would gather people together in the community to play music on the drums."

Segal is a graduate of the expressive arts therapy program at the International School for Interdisciplinary Studies (ISIS) Canada.

"That is really what informs my practice," she said of the program. "I'm an expressive arts therapist."

Rhythmic by Nature, which Segal established in 2004, offers drop-in drumming sessions open to the public, corporate sessions, beginner and intermediate drumming courses and wellness sessions.

The health and wellness benefits involved in group drumming are numerous, Segal said. They include social, mental and physical benefits, as well as stress reduction.

"It [drumming] builds a group bond and camaraderie. So, for example, for people who are often isolated, they can come and participate and feel an immediate sense of belonging... That's where the more therapeutic benefits come in – like long-term care for people with mental illness or people who are often marginalized and isolated from day-to-day activities. That's a real great therapeutic benefit.

"[It causes] stress reduction because you can't really think about anything else when you're drumming. It's both mental and physical exercise, because you're playing with both hands.

"It does everything that helps stress lower. It gets the parasympathetic nervous system activated... into a more relaxed state."

The hour-long workshops start with a drum call, letting people know the session is about to begin. Segal incorporates rhythm and ice-breaker games to get everyone warmed up and comfortable with playing. There is also an educational component involved.

"[We explore] a bit about the drums we're playing, which come from West Africa, to understand, appreciate and respect the cultures from where they come – the musical traditions that are deeply rooted in the people, the land and the culture, which is also an oral tradition that is passed down one generation to the next."

The workshops also teach basic drumming techniques.

"Even though you can tap a drum and get a sound, there's a right way to play the drum, a technique to play it like any instrument," Segal said.

Rhythmic by Nature takes its drumming workshops all across Ontario, "wherever we're called," Segal said. "I have a branch in Muskoka. We work all over the GTA, and basically all over Ontario, really."

The company has recently undergone an expansion, with associates and lead facilitators working under Segal.

"The expansion now is the associates and lead facilitators. That's basically happened over the last year and a half, where I've been training people, and they're now certified under my guidelines to go out and work for me."

Another area of focus for Rhythmic by Nature is in professional development.

"I offer professional development to organizations, which focuses on implementing their own sustainable drumming programs, including training the staff and purchasing their own set of drums," Segal said. "This has been successful at a number of long-term care facilities and adult day programs."

What she enjoys most about Rhythmic by Nature, Segal said, is getting to work with different people.

"I love working with so many different groups. There's never a dull moment, and it's never the same. How much joy people get from it – that's really fulfilling – and the transformations that happen, small or large or subtle, that happen within the hour.

"I love drumming. I'm a student of the drum. I take classes. It's my passion, my hobby. As I teach, I'm always learning as well," she said.

In order to participate in the drumming circles, being musically inclined is not necessary, Segal said. Anyone can participate.

"You don't have to have any previous musical background, and that's what is so accessible with the way I facilitate the program. Anyone can come up to a drum and tap it and get an immediate sound. Therefore, they can be part of the group – they can contribute. Whether they feel like they have rhythm or not, everybody kind of lands in the same boat. It brings everybody together."

Rhythmic by Nature's next community drum circle is Nov. 21 at 25 Cecil St. in downtown Toronto. The cost is $10 suggested, or pay what you can.

For more information on Rhythmic by Nature, visit www.rhythmicbynature.com or call Segal at 416-662-6488.

Expressive arts therapist Terri Segal

Biblical history of Jews covered with drama and song

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The Covenant, The Story of My People, an upbeat road show that touched down at the Toronto Centre for the Arts three years ago after a swing through Israel, Europe and the United States, is back in town – this time on TV.

On Wednesday, Nov. 3, at the ungodly hour of midnight, when most viewers are sound asleep, Vision TV will broadcast this stage pageant.

Presented by the Canadian branch of the International Christian Embassy, *The Covenant* is both a drama and a musical, recreating the biblical history of the Jewish people through words, song and dance in fulsome fashion.

Produced and directed by Chuck King and Robert and Elizabeth Muren, this lavish production features some 30 performers and musicians in full throat and full flight.

Spanning the ages from the dawn of Judaism to the birth of Israel, it conjures up images of Abraham directing the Israelites to the Promised Land, Moses leading his flock from slavery in Egypt to freedom in Canaan, Solomon building the temple in Jerusalem and Mordechai and Esther conspiring to undo the machinations of Haman.

The Assyrian conquest of Israel, the fall of Judea and the Babylonian exile are also recounted in bursts of emotion and colour by an energetic cast.

The Jewish revolt against the Roman occupation is followed, somewhat disjointedly and jarringly, by the Holocaust in Poland. This fragmentary segment surfaces within the framework of the persecution of Jews.

In Warsaw, an Orthodox Jewish family stands around a sabbath table and rejoices in the Lord as Nazi terror lurks menacingly outside.

Newsreel pictures of Nazi rallies, fluttering swastikas, the dreaded yellow star and Hitler reinforce the perception of a looming catastrophe.

Despair turns to joy as David Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister of Israel, declares statehood, as the ingathering of the Jewish people takes place and as the national anthem, *Hativkah*, is sung.

The presence of actors in Israeli army uniforms suggests that Israel fights for its survival.

The Covenant, which is infused with religious symbols and impregnated with religiosity, comes full circle as Abraham reappears in the final frames.

It's candy for the eyes and morsels for the mind.

***The Covenant* is worth staying up for.**

'Smart comedy' about life and politics'

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Like many young people, the members of Warm Summer Hotness bonded with each other over a mutual love of drinking and a mutual hatred of everything else.

The sketch/improv comedy troupe will be taking to the Comedy Bar stage Nov. 2 as part of the Toronto Sketch Comedy Festival, now in its sixth year.

Zanna Seipp Katz, one of five members of the troupe, which includes Seema Lakhani, Troy McFadyen, Niall O'Halloran and Laura Salvas, has wanted to perform since she was little and moved to Toronto in 2008 after finishing acting school in her hometown of Winnipeg.

"I ended up going to Second City when I first moved here. I had no friends, and I ended up making great friends with this group of people and ended up forming our group at the end of the year's classes," Seipp Katz, 26, says.

"We just loved each other and wanted to continue to meet on each week. So we wanted to make our own improv team, but our first gig that we got was a sketch show, so we ended up writing a sketch. Then everything we got booked for became sketch shows, so we became a sketch troupe, which I think I have more of a passion for because I prefer the scripted material."

Seipp calls her comedy "smart comedy" – not going for the obvious joke so that the audience has to really listen to what is being said to get the joke. The group's humour runs the gamut, touching on politics or sometimes just the hilarity of life itself.

"We all do the writing. Niall and Laura are our head writers, then we all tweak it, and then we work it to find out what works and what doesn't work as a group. For SketchFest, we put together our best sketches. We have a good lineup, including four parodies based on the Cash Man [jeweller Russell Oliver]... and a haunted house sketch where there is flailing and killing, but it's very comical," she says.

Warm Summer Hotness has played various shows at the Rivoli and Comedy Bar. Last March, the group self-produced its first full-length show titled *PROROGUED!* They will be doing some sketches from it at SketchFest.

"We get our ideas sometimes from doing improv and seeing where that leads. If it leads to something funny then we write it as sketch. We also get ideas from life. Sometimes in a day something really weird happens, and that ends up on paper."

Seipp Katz hopes one day to write a sketch based on Jewish characters and situations from her past. "We all have that one old Jewish aunt or that ridiculous Passover story."

There are 40 North American acts performing at SketchFest, which takes place at the Lower Ossington Theatre, 100A Ossington Ave., and the Comedy Bar, 945 Bloor St. W. at Ossington.

Warm Summer Hotness performs at the Comedy Bar Stage, Nov. 2 at 10 p.m. Advance tickets are available online at www.totix.ca or in person at the T.O. Tix Booth at Yonge-Dundas Square. Day-of tickets are also available at all venue box offices.

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A Jewish couple, Hanna and Franklyn, can't have a child of their own, and pose as Lutherans in order to adopt a child offered to them by a young God-fearing pregnant woman from Iowa. That is the premise of *Kosher Lutherans*, a comedy by playwright **William Missouri Downs** that Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre is staging in November.

Despite its high comedy, the play "doesn't stay away from tackling serious issues," said Teatron founder and artistic director **Ari Weisberg**, who directs the cast of five. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, 5040 Yonge St. Nov. 10 to 21. $31 to $48. Previews $19. 416-616-5350, www.teatrontheatre.com

* * *

Harold Green Jewish Theatre presents *Lenin's Embalmers*, an "absurdist, savagely funny dark comedy" that comes straight from Broadway. Based on a true story, the play spins a tale of two Jewish scientists who were chosen by the Committee for Immortalization to embalm **Vladimir Lenin** after his death in 1924. Al Green Theatre, Oct. 30 to Nov. 21. $49 to $76. 416-366-7723, www.stlc.com

* * *

Israeli Cinema: Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** presents a thoughtful discussion of "The Cinema of Israel" with film clips. The focus is on religious, political and social films that examine the plight and realities of religious Jews, immigrant Jews, Israeli Arabs and women. Religious films *(Kadosh, Va, vis et deveins Ushpizin* and more) are featured on Monday, Nov. 1, 7 to 9 p.m. Classes are weekly on Monday evenings. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. Drop-in fee, $12 per class. www.mnjcc.org

* * *

***Four Seasons Lodge*:** Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Four Seasons Lodge*, a documentary that follows a group of Holocaust survivors during what might be their final summer together at a bungalow colony in the Catskill Mountains. The film reveals the survivors' lives after the war and their contagious passion for living in the aftermath of enormous loss.

Presented as part of Holocaust Education Week. Guest speaker **Shirley Kumove**. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. Sunday, Nov. 7, 4 & 7:30 p.m. $15, $10. Rush seats on sale 15 minutes before each screening. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Show One Productions presents the **Moscow Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra** with conductor-violinist **Vladimir Spivakov** in performance at Roy Thomson Hall, Thursday, Nov. 18, 8 p.m. $45 to $105. www.roythomson.com, 416-872-4255.

• The Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts recently announced its highly impressive upcoming season of more than 30 shows. They include a production of *Golda's Balcony*, coming in April 2011, in which **Tovah Feldshuh** recreates her powerful performance as **Golda Meir**. Other talented performers include **Patti LuPone**, **Jerry Stiller**, **Jane Krakowski**, **Andrea Martin** and **Kim Mitchell**. www.richmondhill.ca

• Two independent local theatre companies, Acting Up Stage and Studio 180 Theatre, are collaborating to present the Tony Award-winning musical *Parade*, by **Jason Robert Brown** and **Alfred Uhry**, to be directed by **Joel Greenberg**. The piece, which premièred at the Lincoln Center Theatre in 1998, tells the story of the infamous case of **Leo Frank**, the young Jewish factory manager in 1913 Atlanta who was railroaded for a horrendous crime that he didn't commit. The production is to open at the Berkeley Street Theatre Upstairs on Dec. 30.

• Planet Music – lectures on world music, for the armchair traveller, is a series of four Thursday lectures at the Miles Nadal JCC, Oct. 28 to Nov. 18, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Register for the series or drop in for $18 per lecture. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

* * *

Healing Power of Stories & Music: The Parent Child Mother Goose Program presents *Talking You In*, a story created and told by **Dan Yashinsky** with music by **Brian Katz**. This is the story of a family's journey through the harrowing realm of a neo-natal intensive care unit, hoping that the sound of their voices telling stories, rhymes and songs will connect them with their fragile "starchild" and possibly help with his healing and theirs. (Yashinsky wrote the piece when his child was in the neonatal intensive care unit.)

The duo perform the work at the Hollywood Theatre at the Hospital for Sick Children (enter at 170 Elizabeth St. and go to the Black wing.) $25; all proceeds to support the Parent Child Mother Goose Program. Saturday, Oct. 30, 8 p.m.Reception to follow. www. nald.ca/mothergooseprogram

* * *

At the Galleries

• *Dogs*, a series of paintings by **Julie Glick**, are on view at the Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space in the Miles Nadal JCC, Oct. 20 to Nov. 21.

• **Yael Brotman**'s *Mnemonic Stoop* and **Candida Girling**'s *Marcovaldo: Where the Sidewalk Ends* are the exhibitions on view at the loop Gallery, 1273 Dundas St. W. Until Nov. 14. 416-516-2581.

Lenin's Embalmers continues Thiessen's interest in Jewish themes

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Lenin's Embalmers, by Governor General's Award-winning playwright Vern Thiessen, kicks off the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company's 2010/11 season later this month.

Thiessen's work is inspired by the non-fiction book *Lenin's Embalmers*, by Ilya Zbarsky and Samuel Hutchinson. Although the piece deals with many issues, Thiessen focuses on Lenin's embalming and takes huge liberties by fictionalizing it.

"The play takes place in 1924," says the Winnipeg-born playwright, who moved to New York City three years ago with his partner, Susie Moloney, a horror novelist.

"It's the story of two Jewish scientists who are pegged by Joseph Stalin to embalm Vladimir Lenin or face death," Thiessen says.

The dark, absurdist comedy is based on the true story of Vladimir Vorobiov and Boris Zbarsky, Lenin's real embalmers.

"I found it incredibly ironic that the two scientists that were doing this were Jewish and that Lenin was also part Jewish, and, although not terribly religious people, normally they would be putting these people in the ground within 24 hours, let alone trying to make them live forever."

Thiessen said the protagonists in the play are torn between their loyalties to each other, their science and their cultural background, somewhat.

Although Thiessen, one of Canada's most produced playwrights, is not Jewish, he's written on Jewish themes a lot. He says his Jewish friends are convinced that if he did DNA testing, he'd find roots back to a shtetl somewhere.

"Personally, the story had a great interest to me, because my parents grew up in the southern Ukraine," says Thiessen. "I'm of Mennonite origins, and both my grandfathers were taken away to concentration camps in their early '30s during one of the Stalinist purges. The cultural aspect of the play, the time period and why I wrote the play is really a testament to my grandparents and to my parents and their survival underneath that system."

Another reason he devoted a couple of years to the project was his interest in the scientific aspects of it. Lenin's embalming was quite the feat of science at the time.

Thiessen received a commission from the Sloan Foundation in the United States, which funds artistic ventures dealing with science themes, and he made a connection with New York's Ensemble Studio Theatre, where the play premiered in March 2010 to critical acclaim.

This production marks the Canadian premiere and is a co-production with the Winnipeg Jewish Theatre (WJT). It's directed by Geoffrey Brumlick and stars James Durham, David Fox, Martin Julien, Hardee T. Lineham, Arne Macpherson, Harry Nelken, Steven Ratzlaff and Janine Theriault.

The playwright had numerous offers from other companies wanting to produce *Lenin's Embalmers*, including the Stratford Festival. He choose Harold Green and the WJT because they were the most passionate, and he said he's thrilled about his decision after seeing the cast in rehearsal in Winnipeg.

Next spring, *Lenin's Embalmers* will be produced by Theatre Artists Studio in Phoenix, Ariz. It's also been optioned for translation into Polish for a production in Warsaw and into Hebrew for a production in Tel Aviv.

Thiessen has written for radio, television and the stage. His plays – which include *Shakespeare's Will*, *Apple*, *Einstein's Gift*, *Blowfish*, *The Resurrection Of John Frum* and *Vimy* – have been produced across North America and Europe.

When not working, Thiessen, who has won numerous awards, including the Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition, and the Governor General's Literary Award, enjoys being a sports fan. He roots for the New York Mets baseball team and is an Edmonton Oiler hockey fan, because of a loyalty to the city where he spent much of his adult life.

Lenin's Embalmers runs at the Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave., Toronto from Oct. 30 to Nov. 21. Buy tickets at 416-366-7723 or online at www.hgjewishtheatre.com.

Painted Visions from the Written Word

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Words in literature and song often conjure up images in our minds.

"There is often one sentence, one phrase or an idea which captures the essential theme of the entire story," artist Ruth Frankel says.

"It could be a message of unconditional love, hope, belief, desperation, glory or one of the many human predicaments that entangle or threaten us – stories of naïveté or sophistication, ignorance or profundity, cruelty or perseverance."

Frankel's current exhibition, titled, *Painted Visions from the Written Word*, is on display at Bookclub-in-a-Box Literary and Activity Centre, 875 Eglinton Ave. West, Suite 210.

Frankel, an award-winning artist who has had many group and solo exhibitions, uses a multimedia, three-dimensional approach in her works. "I never strive to illustrate but to respond with a personal vision that I hope can be shared with the viewer and thus heighten an awareness of some aspect of the human condition."

She says this show includes 20 of her works inspired by writers as diverse as Anne Frank and Anne Michaels, and Isaac Bashevis Singer and S.Y. Agnon.

In her multi-dimensional art, Frankel works with canvas, paper, acrylic, fabric, pastels, wood, string and other materials.

She began painting as a very small child. She recalls that on freezing cold days, she and her sister would take a shortcut to school through the Art Gallery of Ontario "and thus I frequently saw many masterpieces."

As a teenager, she was introduced to Irving Stone's novel *Lust for Life*. "I discovered the great art of Vincent Van Gogh. And, I discovered that the purpose of great art was to say something about the human condition, to raise awareness of some aspect of life which might lead to change, in line with the Jewish credo to make the world a better place."

On a trip to New York, she says she discovered the collages of American artist Romare Bearden, "whose fragmentations and distortions captured the history, vitality, tragedy and triumph of the Black people in American. I resolved to do the same for the Jewish people."

An art teacher and lecturer, she says that she found "tremendous inspiration in the work of Isaac Bashevis Singer, whose words fly off the page and form pictures real enough to touch."

The exhibit runs until Nov. 24 and is open from 1 to 4 p.m., Monday to Thursday. Arrangements can also be made to view it on evenings and weekends. For more information on Painted Visions from the Written Word, go to www.bookclubinabox.com, call 416-578-5571 or call Ruth Frankel, 905-709-1420.

***Yochna and Shmelka*, a multimedia work by Ruth Frankel from a short story by Isaac Bashevis Singer.**

Happy Days' Mr. C lost family in Shoah

JTA

Actor Tom Bosley, best known as *Happy Days* dad Howard Cunningham, died last week of lung cancer. He was 83.

Bosley, who was Jewish, was a Tony Award winner, but he gained his greatest fame as the patriarch of the Cunningham clan on *Happy Days*, the 1970s sitcom about life in 1950s Milwaukee.

Bosley was nominated for an Emmy Award in 1978. The show ran from 1974 to 1984.

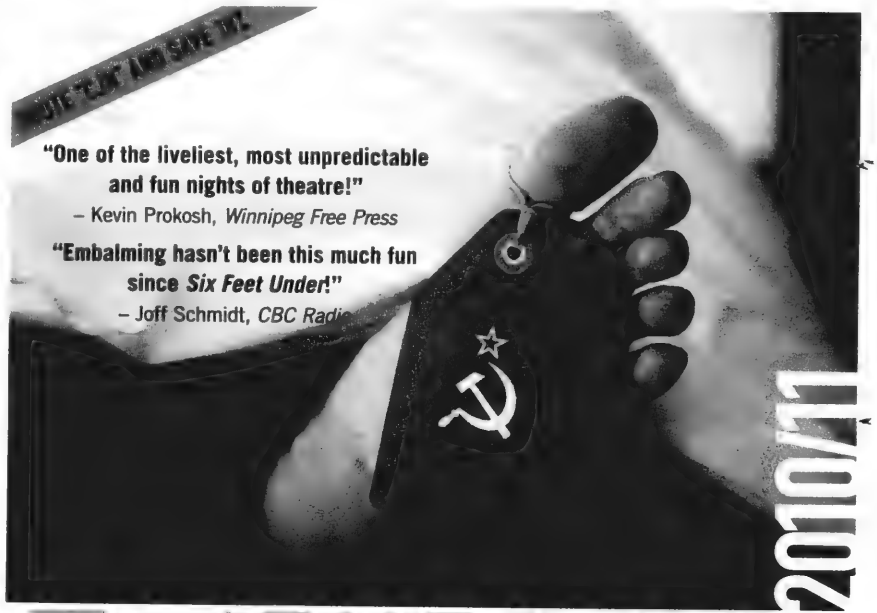
Bosley was also known for his portrayal of the crime-solving priest on *Father Dowling Mysteries* and Sheriff Amos Tupper in Angela Lansbury's *Murder She Wrote*.

He played himself in the 2004 movie *Paper Clips*, about the efforts of middle-school students in Whitwell, Tenn., to collect six million paper clips in memory of Holocaust victims.

The effort and the paper clip he contributed was meaningful to him, Bosley told the *Philadelphia Jewish Exponent*.

"It was important for me as a Jew to do it," he told the newspaper. "I had lost a great-uncle, whom I never met, in the Holocaust."

Bosley reportedly found it amusing that he played numerous priests during his acting career, even though he was Jewish.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Lenin's 'Jewishness' as seen by pro-and anti-Communists

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

There was a popular joke doing the rounds in the Soviet Union that went something like this: in the early days of the Communist era, whenever the Bolsheviks needed a break during their meetings, Trotsky would turn to the other ministers in the room, point at Lenin and say in a mixture of Russian and Yiddish: "If this goy leaves the room, we can have a minyan and can daven Minchah."

The joke being, of course, that the Russian Revolution was Jewish in origin. But more telling was that in the mind of Soviet citizens who told this joke, Lenin was not part of this cabal, because Lenin *was not* Jewish.

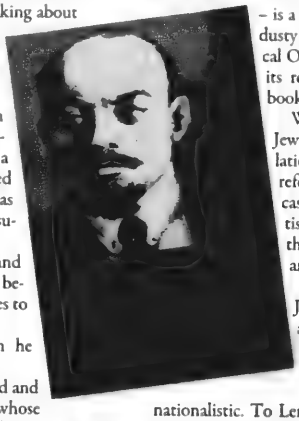
Why then did Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, associate professor of history at Northwestern University and the director of the school's Crown Family Center for Jewish Studies, write a book called *Lenin's Jewish Question* (Yale University Press)?

In his defence, he wrote the book almost apologetically and admits in the preface that his inclination was not to do it. But after reflecting on the subject matter, he realized that although Lenin was not Jewish, the perception that he was, or might have been, was a convoluted, highly charged and significant subject. Why did the Soviet-era governments hide any traces of Lenin's Jewish past, such as they were? And why, later, did the right-wing anti-Communists exaggerate Lenin's Jewish genealogy?

First things first: if Lenin was alive today, he would not be able to make aliyah under the Law of Return. Neither of Lenin's parents were Jewish, his mother was a Christian of German heritage, and he was baptized and never circumcised.

Lenin's Jewish origins go back to his great-grandfather, Moshko Blank, who was born sometime between 1758 and 1763. He was an Ashkenazi, Yiddish-speaking Jew, married to the devout Miriam Froimovitch.

The author spends much time talking about Blank, a town pest who spent his life at odds with his local Jewish community, frequently engaging in long drawn-out squabbles and lawsuits.



He was a prototype for the modern self-hating Jew who considered assimilation into the Russian culture as a "redeeming escape from the uncivilized and rustic Jewish environment filled as he thought with obsolete rites and superstitions."

He converted both his sons, Abel and Yisrael, who were sent to state schools, became doctors and changed their names to Dmitrii and Alexander.

Moshko himself converted when he turned 80, shortly after his wife died.

It was his son, Alexander, converted and assimilated, a doctor in St. Petersburg, whose daughter, Maria Alexandrovna, gave birth to Vladimir Ulianov, or Lenin.

"In the strictest terms of Jewish tradition, Lenin's mother, Maria Blank, was born to a family of a Christian convert, married someone Russian Orthodox and was not Jewish on either side. Lenin would be flatly denied that opportunity [to make aliyah], even by the most liberal Jewish agency. There was nothing Jewish about Lenin."

As the author writes, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, "The main character of this study – a Jewish Lenin – is a fictitious artifact that belongs on a dusty shelf of the East European Historical Old Curiosity Shop – together with its researchers and the author of this book."

Whether Lenin even knew about his Jewish ancestry is a subject of speculation. He certainly never made any reference to it in his lifetime. His occasional condemnation of anti-Semitism was only as a tool to bring down the Czarist regime, which was highly anti-Semitic.

As a Marxist, Lenin believed that Jews should seek assimilation into a decentralized and proletarian international culture. He was no fan of the Bund, the union of Jewish workers, which he saw as too nationalistic. To Lenin, nationalism was a blasphemy against proletarian internationalism and he thought the Bund's claim that anti-Semitism penetrated the workplace contradicted class theory.

But Jews, as such, the author writes, "did not interest him in the least. [He] treated and mistreated the Jews according to his immediate pragmatic needs."

After his death, Lenin's sister discovered her family's Jewish origins while she was writing a biography of him. When she brought this to light, the Soviet authorities chose to suppress the information.

The book argues that it wasn't anti-Semitism per se that caused the Communists to be weary of publicizing Lenin's heretofore unknown Jewish roots so much as they didn't want to dispel the cult image of Lenin as an individual of pure Russian blood. "Stalin's vision of the Communist party... had no room for a Jewish Lenin."

This suppression lasted until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Lenin's Jewish ancestry, such as it was, was considered top-secret information in the Soviet Union, even during Gorbachev's perestroika years.

Lenin's Jewish origins surfaced just before and immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union and for most commentators this suppression was proof of the anti-Semitism of the regime.

But it was the anti-Semitic right-wing anti-Communists who seized upon this discovery. The revelation that Lenin had Jewish origins was enough to make sense of each and every action Lenin had undertaken against Russia. They went so far as to reinvent Lenin's ancestry, even portraying his mother as a Jew.

To these Russian nationalists, made up of anti-Semitic xenophobes, Lenin's Jewishness was the most important issue for understanding the Russian Revolution.

Concise and to the point, this book is for anyone interested in Lenin, the formative years of the Soviet Union, and the impact anti-Semitism had, and continues to have, on Russian history.

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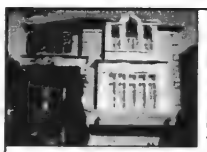

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Israel & the Jewish World

Iran rejects AMIA trial

JTA

BUENOS AIRES — Iran has rejected Argentina's proposal to put on trial in a neutral country those accused in the bombing of a Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires.

In a letter sent last week to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Iran called the proposal "unsustainable."

"The Iranian government has ensured that no Iranian citizen was involved, directly or indirectly, in the bombing of the AMIA," the letter said.

Argentine prosecutors have accused Iran of masterminding the July 1994 attack on the AMIA central Jewish umbrella building, which killed 85 and wounded hundreds. Prosecutors in Buenos Aires have issued warrants for the arrest of five Iranians, including Iranian Defence Minister Ahmed Vahidi, in the case.

Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner had made the proposal to hold a trial in a third country while at the United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York on Sept. 24.

Argentina will issue a response to Iran's letter, Kirchner said.

Lift Gaza blockade, Jimmy Carter says

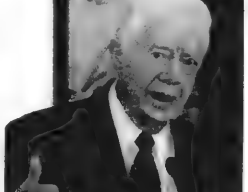
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

DAMASCUS — Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter, during a visit to Damascus last week, called for Israel to completely lift its blockade on the Gaza Strip.

Carter made the remarks in the forum of a delegation known as the Elders, comprising former world leaders, who met with Syrian President Bashar Assad and Hamas leaders in Syria.

Despite the U.S. and the European Union's labelling of Hamas as a terrorist organization, the Elders met with exiled Hamas politburo leader Khaled Meshal, as Carter has done during previous regional visits.

Following their talks with Assad and Meshal, the Elders said people in the region have "very low expectations" that the current U.S.-led talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, which excluded Hamas, would succeed.



Jimmy Carter

Carter, who has visited the Gaza Strip several times in recent years, did not accompany the rest of the delegation on their trip there Oct. 16.

Despite his absence from Gaza, Carter renewed calls for Israel to lift its blockade of the Hamas-governed Gaza Strip. Israel imposed the blockade in 2007 after Hamas wrestled control over the territory in a violent coup.

"The blockade is one of the most serious human rights violations on Earth and it must be lifted fully," Carter said from Syria.

Besides Carter, the Elders delegation included former Irish president Mary Robinson and former UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi. While in Gaza, the group described Israel's blockade as an "illegal collective punishment" and "an impediment to peace."

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Israeli boxer ready to rumble at Rama

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It's hard to imagine that in a sport as brutal and primal as boxing, there's a cerebral element to it as well. But Hagar Finer Smoelfield might well be the thinking man's – or woman's – fighter, who considers a bout to be a chess match as much as a slugfest.

"I like technique. I like to be smart. I like to break an opponent in the head, not the body, psychologically," she said on the phone from Israel.

Smoelfield, 26, is part of the under card at the upcoming "Rumble at Rama XIII," a boxing event at Casino Rama on Oct. 30. Headlining the five-card fight will be Canada's former world cruiserweight champion, Troy Ross, who will take on Carl Handy.

Smoelfield will defend her Women's International Boxing Federation (WIBF) bantamweight title against Julia Sahin, a German boxer who defeated her in 2006. Smoelfield vividly recalls that match, which was fought in Germany and which she believes she won, except for the judges' decision.

"All the audience booed" when the verdict was delivered, she said. "It was obvious she didn't win."

The revenge factor is being touted prior to the contest at Rama, and although she agrees Sahin "is very tough," Smoelfield is confident she will prevail.

"I know it will go all the way, because she won't go down and I won't go down," she said.

Smoelfield has won 21 fights, six by knockout, lost seven and drawn three. She attributes her record and her never-say-die spirit to her first love, karate and the martial arts, as well as her own obsession to be perfect.

"I started training in martial arts when I was 13, and at age 18 I won the Israeli championship in karate. Then my trainer told me I should continue in fighting as I had good potential to successful, but in boxing.

"So I moved to boxing."

What is it about either sport that attracted her?

"I took it up for self-defence. When you live in Israel, the national security is not so good. You have to protect yourself. I fell in love with martial arts. I like the discipline, the way you learn, that you have to repeat every exercise many times."

"You have the responsibility on yourself," she continued. "If you practice not so much, you are not so good. The more you work, the better you get."

Her parents were not particularly happy at her choice of sports. "They didn't like it," Smoelfield acknowledged. "They're still afraid about it... I told them, 'Either you're with me or I'll be alone.'"

They now come to watch her fight occasionally. "My mom always cries," and her sister "worries about me."

It's not like you can avoid injuries when you're an internationally ranked fighter. Smoelfield admits to some rib injuries – she brushes them off as minor inconveniences – but a few years ago she was hurt pretty seriously. During one match, a fighter bumped her head against Smoelfield's face, breaking a bone near her eye socket. She suffered nerve damage and was out of action for a year. "I couldn't feel part of my face," she recalled.

Yet that hasn't dissuaded her. "In the ring, I never give up," she said. "I get that from martial arts training. You never give up, never give up. You always have a chance, right to the end."

And that's where the cerebral side of the sweet science comes in. "You look at who you're standing against and go opposite your opponent's strengths. It's like chess," she said.

Looking back, she recalls a match against Regina Halmich, a German fighter who was ranked number 1 at the time, as "the fight of my career.

"I was much better than her, but she was such a good opponent, she brought out the best in me."

Her performance launched her career and opened lots of doors in the boxing world.

Interestingly, Smoelfield considers boxing more of a hobby than anything else. Although a professional, her main source of income is from a martial arts studio she runs in the heart of Tel Aviv, where she teaches karate and krav maga, the Israeli army's hand-to-hand combat techniques. During her one-week visit to Toronto and Rama, she expects to meet local martial arts fighters and train with them.

"I know I'm going to hit, but I don't know who," she quipped.

Smoelfield wears her Israeli heritage proudly – one set of blue trunks are adorned with a white Star of David. She's a real fan favourite and even in Germany, when she fought the local hero, "I had Germans who picked up Israeli flags" and waved them.

"That's the best. I give all the champions the best fight they had."

Hagar Finer Smoelfield

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NEW TO CANADA
By NINA SHENHAV

"They want me to start working next Monday," I shout excitedly. Meir, who's frying me some potatoes, puts the pan away, looks at me long and then hugs me even longer.

"At last," he whispers, "at last you'll make some money." I back away a bit. "It's, uh, for free… I'm volunteering." He keeps hugging me.

But the fries don't taste so good, and he forgets to season my salad (a form of aggression). I don't complain. Instead I say, "So, you'll give me a ride back and forth, right? It's only 40 kilometres from here."

Meir stops preparing his cutlets. His eyes say no. I'm angry. "Some day, when I'm rich and famous, you'll come crawling to me!" I promise. "When? When will you be rich and famous already?" he answers.

"Well… well, you'll see. And then I'd leave you! You'll regret the day you were born," I shout. "I already regret that day," he says pensively and puts a cutlet on my plate.

On Monday, I'm excited and nervous. I take one bus, then another, then I enter the subway. I've only used the subway once before in my life. I'm puzzled like crazy. The signs seem to be in Chinese. Where the hell are all the trains? And more importantly, where the hell am I? I ask a lady for directions, and she points to the escalators, saying I should go down.

Standing on the moving stairs, I notice I'm going toward heaven, and with all due respect, my place is not there yet, if at all. I try to move down, but the escalators are stronger than me, and so are the two tough-looking guys in my way.

Canadians don't like to chat. I'm in a silent world. Everybody has iPods. At last, I enter this train of horror. None of the stations' names sound familiar. (Meir wrote the names down for me.) So I get out of the train and step onto the platform.

A guy with blue hair shows me the way out. Problem is, now that I'm out in the open, I'm not allowed back. So I pay again, and return to the dim, underground world. Millions of people, and I feel so alone. I miss Meir.

I see a bunch of people in a hurry. I join them and ask a smiling Asian guy where we're headed. He doesn't know, either, and little by little his smile fades. I let him go from my strong arms and turn to a blond woman. My English is a mess. When I talk to Chinese people, Pakistanis, Indians, I'm good. But God forbid, when I turn to "real" Canadians, all of my self-esteem vanishes. I'm voiceless.

Somehow, after 80 hours, I get to the place I was trying to reach. At least from now on, I'll know the way there.

The employer hands me a note with addresses. "These are all the places you'll have to be at. Each day you volunteer in a different place. You'll never be bored, eh?"

I thank him with tears, lots of tears.

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Exercise and cancer

FITNESS CORNER
By FELYCE ZOMPARELLI

Regular physical activity has been proven to help reduce your risk of developing a number of cancers, but did you know that exercise can also help during and after cancer treatment?

The Canadian Cancer Association and the American College of Sports and Medicine strongly suggest that cancer patients be as physically active as possible during and after treatment. A growing number of studies have shown that physical activity is safe during cancer therapy and can help patients cope with and recover from treatment.

Recent studies have shown exercise, supervised and modified for the individual, can improve quality of life, physical function, cardiovascular fitness, muscle strength, physical endurance, immune function and reduce cancer-related fatigue. Physical activity may even reduce the risk of the recurrence of cancer while prolonging survival.

Studies have shown exercise can help minimize cancer-therapy side effects such as nausea, diarrhea, pain, anxiety, depression and constipation.

Exercise such as flexibility training during and after treatment can increase mobility, and once treatment is finished, it may even help you regain normal range of motion. Exercise reduces stress, improves mood, boosts energy, stimulates appetite, improves body image, promotes good sleep and can help you regain strength during recovery.

Two studies done in 2006 found that staying active after cancer can help keep you healthy and cancer free. Before starting any exercise program, consult your doctor, and then, if you are a cancer survivor, contact a physiotherapist or a fitness professional with experience in this area who can design a program specifically for you.

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The sea split in Chile

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

The story of the Chilean miners was magnified, as all great events are, allowing us to see every nuance, shade and gradation of this historic happening.

Between August and October, 33 men survived in a small room in the San José copper and gold mine for 69 days. There they created a structure and a regimen. Anarchy was possible in that mine – writer and activist Elie Wiesel talks about sons beating their fathers for food in the concentration camps – but it was nowhere to be found.

The Chilean miners gave us a concentrated view into the intense love of family, nation and the Saviour. Each miner, beginning with Florenco Avalos, after stepping on the face of earth, hugged his wife and family. A few hugged their mistresses. But the embraces did not last long. It seemed the miners understood their "15 minutes" of Warholian fame also belonged to the Chilean people, the world and God.

Some fell to their knees first and prayed to the Lord. Some then laughed and sang parts of the Chilean national anthem, and all of them hugged Chile's president, Sebastian Pinera, thanking him for his refusal to abandon them in the bowels of that mine.

Faith was aplenty in Chile that day. "God," a miner said, "joined us in the hole," Superstition followed closely behind, and apparently the devil paid a visit or two. There was no word of a trapped atheist, but had there been, would he have prayed?

Rebirth and birthing happens around us every moment. Our skin dies and is then regenerated. When the rescue capsule – the Phoenix – entered the earth, it cast the impression of conception, of creation. The mine was the womb. When the engineered contraption erupted through the hole, it seemed as if a child would soon be reborn.

Six rescuers went down the shaft, likely thinking they might never return. How often do we see bravery like this or witness a man being lowered into a half-mile tunnel to rescue other men, not knowing if the shaft will collapse, the twine-rope will snap, or the cage will jam and be hampered by its own inefficiencies? We saw the rescuers' faces before they descended. They were smiling. So that's the way life-and-death courage looks.

The rescue of the Chilean miners felt like Apollo 11 landing on the moon, the first Beatle dying, the Israeli defeat of half a dozen armies. In our minds, and no doubt in the chronicles of history, it's an event that will be remembered forever. Why?

The Chilean mining disaster and the subsequent rescue had everything, including guts, determination, strength, humility, love, skepticism, humour, creativity, corporate irresponsibility, ingenuity, faith, community and hope. The rescue had it all with no disappointments, only celebration.

It was an event that was akin to well-written fiction, detailed and magical in its message and twists of phrases. The mining disaster and rescue, however, was real. It was not composed and then delivered. It was gracefully raw, and in it we saw ourselves – our fears, our dreams and our salvation.

An undertaker will tell you the earth is where we go upon our death. A gardener reminds us it's where we plant seeds that sprout and blossom. The rescue of the Chilean miners reminded us that a potential grave can turn into a garden.

On Oct. 13, the sea split once again, this time at the San José copper and gold mine.

(Help the world's miners.)

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This Week

National

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Spice of Life

Coconut milk makes for great curry chicken. *Page 30*

Heebonics

No mountain is too high to climb for cancer. *Page 48*

Arts & Travel

Susan Cogan launches her latest CD. *Page 52*

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Canadian grandmothers petition for Schalit

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

If Sally Zerker, 81, and a group of grandmothers she assembled have their way, Canada will soon play more of an active role in the attempt to free captured Israel Defence Forces (IDF) soldier Gilad Schalit from Hamas.

A York University economics professor emeritus, Zerker formed the group Grandmothers for Gilad in September. The group consists of some 50 grandmothers who are determined to push Canada into a leadership position on the Schalit file.

To that end, Zerker drafted a petition that calls on the Canadian government, the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as well as other humanitarian relief agencies, to "uphold the applicable standards of international humanitarian law, including proof of life, visitation rights and communication between him and his family as a bare minimum."

The petition also states that Canadian aid be transferred to Gaza on the condition that the Palestinian Authority "commit itself to Schalit's repatriation, and that Canada use its good offices to put an end to these violations of international humanitarian law to secure his release and return him to his family as a matter of fundamental decency and justice."

Zerker's petition was tabled in the House of Commons on Oct. 27 by Liberal MP and human rights advocate Irwin Cotler.

Schalit was taken captive by Hamas on June 25, 2006, after operatives of the terrorist group attacked his IDF unit in a cross-border raid at Kerem Shalom.

All Israeli and international efforts to determine his location and negotiate his release have failed to date, although he's presumed to be held in Hamas-controlled Gaza.

A videotaped message from Schalit dated Sept. 14, 2009, was obtained by Israel in exchange for the release of 20 female Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails. In it, he states he's being treated well by his captors and longs to be free. It's so far the only proof of Schalit's condition.

Speaking to *The CJN* last week, Zerker said there are 56 signatories on her petition, all of whom are grandmothers who sympathize with the Schalit family.

Twenty-five signatures are required on a petition for it to be tabled in Parliament.

"In August, I sent out a group e-mail to my grandmother-friends and wrote the petition and started a blog," Zerker said.

Continued on page 37

During a moment of consternation last weekend in Jerusalem, Gilad Schalit's mother, Aviva, expresses concern for her son, who was kidnapped more than four years ago and is still being held in Gaza. *[Flash90 photo]*

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Jewish communities take precautions after failed Chicago bombs – see page 45

The News in Brief

Canada

Buyout In Works?

EDMONTON — Canada's Gehermezian family is in talks to buy Clal Insurance from its Tel Aviv-based owner, the Israeli business paper *Globes* has reported. *Globes* said the Jewish family, with estimated wealth of $4 billion, is in talks with Clal's majority owner, IDB Holdings, to buy its 55 per cent stake in Clal for $1.1 billion. The family has holdings in real estate, hotels, and oil and gas, but is perhaps best known for building the West Edmonton Mall.

World

Shchitah Warning

AUCKLAND — New Zealand Jewish life is in jeopardy if the community loses its legal battle over a new ban on kosher slaughter, Jewish leaders warned. An Oct. 22 e-mail titled "Save The Future of Judaism in New Zealand," sent to the country's 1,000 Jewish families, warned that if the community loses the case, it will be badly harm the community, which dates back two centuries. "It will mean our religious families will be forced to leave New Zealand....We will be seen as a country where Jews are not welcome, and where our traditions and beliefs are not respected or valued," Auckland Hebrew Congregation president Garth Cohen and Wellington Jewish Community Centre chair Claire Massey said in the e-mail.

Opera Rejects Boycott

CAPE TOWN — The Cape Town Opera has rejected South African Nobel laureate Desmond Tutu's call for the group to cancel shows in Tel Aviv. The company is performing *Porgy and Bess* Nov. 12 to 27 on its first trip to Israel. "Just as we said during apartheid that it was inappropriate for international artists to perform in South Africa in a society founded on discriminatory laws and racial exclusivity, so it would be wrong for Cape Town Opera to perform in Israel," the former archbishop of South Africa, said last week. But managing director, Michael Williams, told the *Sowetan* that while the company respects Tutu, it's "first and foremost an arts company that believes in promoting universally held human values through the medium of opera."

Green Leader Praised For Stand on Event

TORONTO — The Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) said last week it was pleased that Green Party leader Elizabeth May advised her party's candidates to cancel a planned "peace" conference featuring a virulently anti-Semitic speaker, as well as Iranian academics who support the Islamic Republic.

Elizabeth May

But the self-titled "Group of Four" – comprising two current and two former Green candidates – ignored May and went ahead with its "Just and Sustainable Peace" conference Oct. 28, featuring Davood Ameri, director general of the Iran-based Islamic World Peace Forum, which claims Zionists are not only responsible for 9/11 but also for all "criminal events" in the Muslim world today, including places such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon and Pakistan.

The RCMP reversed course last week and decided not to send an outreach officer to the event, one day after Public Safety Minister Vic Toews criticized the move.

Dichter Avoids Spain

JERUSALEM — Kadima MK Avi Dichter, former head of Israel's Shin Bet intelligence agency, decided not to attend an international peace summit this month in Spain after Spain wouldn't grant him immunity from arrest or prosecution while there. The meeting, organized by the Madrid Coalition, invited Israelis and Palestinians to a summit on the peace process. Dichter is under threat of legal action in Spain and other countries for ordering the killing of a Hamas leader when he headed Shin Bet, and for his involvement in the Gaza invasion as minister of public security. In a letter to Spain's foreign minister, Dichter said "it's absurd" Palestinian Authority representatives faced no difficulties upon arrival in Spain.

Spying Alleged

TEHRAN — Two Iranian citizens will go on trial for their lives for spying for Israel. Iranian state radio quoted Tehran's prosecutor general as alleging last week that the two unnamed men "were linked to the Zionist regime's intelligence services" and had received money from Israel. Last month, Iran said five Iranians would go on trial for passing secrets to its enemies, a likely reference to Israel and the United States.

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Jewish councillors eager to work with mayor-elect

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

"We're one step closer to a minyan," Josh Matlow, councillor-elect for Ward 22 – St. Paul's, quipped to *The CJN* in a post-election interview last week.

Matlow is one of three Jews on the incoming Toronto City Council, the others being James Pasternak, who won a tight race in Ward 10 – York Centre to replace the retired Mike Feldman, and David Shiner who was re-elected in Ward 24 – Willowdale. Two Jews sat on the previous council.

Mayor-elect Rob Ford will start work next month with a revamped and relatively fresh-faced group – 14 of the 44 councillors are new to the job, including Matlow and Pasternak.

Matlow, the incumbent public school trustee in his ward, won after Michael Walker, the area's longtime incumbent, also retired. Matlow said he's looking forward to bringing change to City Hall.

"My record [as a trustee] will reflect the kind of representation I will provide to the Jewish community of Toronto. I've never accepted hateful attacks on the community, and my votes will reflect that," he said, adding that he'll carefully scrutinize city-supported events such as the annual Pride festival, which has allowed the group Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA) to participate in its last two parades.

He said he also wants the city to do "all it can to assure the security needs of the Jewish community and of all communities are met."

Matlow said he's glad to see that a group of new "moderate" councillors have been elected, which should enable City Hall to function more "congenially, thoughtfully and respectfully," and tone down the bickering that occurred during the last term.

Continued on page 14

Ford thanks community

Rob Ford

"I want to thank the Jewish community for its support."

That was the message from Toronto mayor-elect Rob Ford in a brief interview last week following his Oct. 25 landslide victory.

Speaking to *The CJN*, Ford reiterated his position of "zero-tolerance" toward racism and bullying directed at the city's Jewish community.

Regarding the issue of the Pride Parade and the participation of the controversial group Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA), Ford said he has been clear with Pride organizers: they won't get city funding if they allow the group to participate again next year.

"I guarantee I will not tolerate any racism or hate crimes against the Jewish community, or any community for that matter. I'm simply not going to tolerate it. And I will support the Jewish community any time they feel they're being threatened or intimidated," he said.

Asked if he'd ever visited Israel, Ford said he hadn't, but would like to travel there at his earliest convenience, because it would be a "great learning experience."

He added: "If I can travel to Israel, I will. But I won't be using taxpayers' money. I'll be using my own."

— *A.L.A.*

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Truth or Nobel?

From the editor's desk...

Saul Bellow, the late, award-winning, Nobel laureate in literature, once wrote that Israel was often used as a moral resort for many of the world's high-minded and high-sounding didacts who delight in wagging their long, ethical fingers in full-blown, righteous opprobrium at the Jewish state.

He made that observation in the mid-1970s. Israel had, by then, already refused to yield its existence to the genocidal aspirations of its neighbours five times – in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1969-1971 (the War of Attrition) and 1973 (the Yom Kippur War).

Thus, having determinedly emerged victorious – i.e., survived – in five wars in the first three decades of its existence, the tiny Jewish state found itself recast by many commentators and pundits in the imagery of the Middle East conflict.

It was now inconvenient and certainly no longer quite the compelling news story for those same experts to still see Israel as slingshot David battling the arrogant giant Goliath comprising the 20-plus member Arab League and their cheerleaders, supporters and allies in the 50-plus-member Islamic Conference, the rigidly controlled countries of the Soviet bloc and the scores of countries in the falsely named Non-Aligned Bloc.

Israel was now seen as the militaristic Goliath menacing and oppressing the stone-throwing Palestinian David.

To the surprise of the Jewish world, David was now embodied by the grizzled, sunglasses-shading, keffiyeh-wearing, gun-toting, "anti-colonial," "revolutionary" leader of the Palestinians, Yasser Arafat.

Ironically, or perhaps not, the United Nations officially enshrined the David status upon him – and thus, too, upon the people whom he represented – on Nov. 10, 1975, 37 years after Kristallnacht, when the General Assembly voted to equate Zionism with Racism. The label of racism placed on the national project of the Jewish people (Zionism) was the blueprint for the structure of hatred that has disbursed its poison against the Jewish state ever since.

It is true that in the wake of the first heady days of the Oslo accords, the United Nations revoked the infamous equation. But by then the poison had malignantly infected the UN body politic and a majority of the governments of its member states. A mere glance, for example, at the agenda items and the voting record of the UN's Human Rights Council confirms this. Anti-Israel venom is the elixir that most of the council's members imbibe, constantly, almost ritualistically. They are saturated with contempt for the Jewish state, oozing anti-Israel, even anti-Jewish toxin from virtually every pore. The atmosphere of the chamber is rank with the fumes of hatred and execration.

Were he alive today, Bellow indeed might point out the flaws and the imperfections of the Jewish state, but in a manner proportionate to the entirety of the country's society and humanity.

However, he would also point to the hypocrisy, if not also the malevolence, of the many individuals who reside so self-righteously in Israel's "moral resort" of which he wrote in 1975. In particular, he might point with great disappointment to fellow Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu as one of the chief residents of the resort.

Last week, the celebrated South African prelate pleaded with a Cape Town opera troupe to cancel a performance they had scheduled next month in Israel.

Tutu said the proposed visit to Israel was comparable to international artists performing in apartheid South Africa, when it was "a society founded on discriminatory laws and racial exclusivity." He said that bringing international artists to perform in the Tel Aviv Opera House "advances Israel's fallacious claim to being a civilized democracy."

Thankfully, the opera's managing director, Michael Williams, refused to accede to Tutu's urging. Hanna Munitz, the Israeli Opera's general director, responded in a statement, saying that her house and Cape Town Opera were apolitical.

Tutu has long excoriated Israel in the world media. Given his stature as a champion against the brutal system of apartheid under which he lived for most of his life, he is regarded as a man of great credibility. His word carries weight with those who see Israel as Goliath.

That he clearly does not care that he spreads calumny against Israel and thereby aids Israel's enemies is perplexing. But that he is silent when those enemies call for Israel's elimination is infuriating.

For example, Ramadan Shallah, the leader of Islamic Jihad last week in Damascus said: "The slogan of all should be that Israel must be wiped out of existence."

Tutu said nothing.

The core constitutional document of the government in Gaza – Hamas – calls for the annihilation of the Jewish state. The Hamas government kidnapped and holds captive Gilad Schalit.

Tutu says nothing.

The moderate Palestinian Authority refuses to allow that Israel should be and can be a Jewish state.

Tutu says nothing.

But not us.

We will not be cowed by Tutu's Nobel stature. We will rather embrace Bellow and point to the truth about Tutu as Bellow might have also done today.

–*MBD*

SeeJN

EXHIBIT CHRONICLES BABI YAR MASSACRE

A graphic photo exhibit on the Nazi massacre of Jews at Babi Yar, Ukraine, 70 years ago will be displayed in Parliament, Nov. 8-9, as parliamentarians gather from around the world for the second annual conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Anti-Semitism. The Ukrainian delegation, headed by MP Oleksander Feldman, created the exhibit. Some 150,000 Jews were slaughtered at Babi Yar, just outside Kiev, over a three-day period. Next week's conference is being hosted with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada and is being sponsored by the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy.

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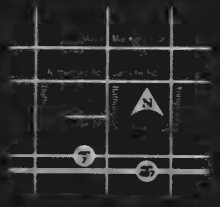

Singing protesters call for cafe boycott

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Employing a bit of street theatre, about a dozen green-clad protesters called for a boycott of the Israel-linked Aroma Espresso Bar recently.

The protesters, members of Independent Jewish Voices, presented a choreographed message to passersby at the cafe's Bloor Street outlet, singing "boycott, boycott."

The protest was posted to YouTube and the website of the Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid. It was made in solidarity with the call for a boycott requested by Palestinian civil society. The video slams Aroma as part of an Israeli-owned chain that has one restaurant in the "illegal Jewish only settlement" in Ma'aleh Adumim.

Responding to the boycott attempt, Buycott Israel, an arm of the Canada-Israel Committee, called on its supporters, to "visit your closest Aroma Espresso Bar for fabulous Middle Eastern-inspired coffees, sandwiches, salads and snacks – and help support Israel!"

UJA Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto also called on its supporters to patronize one of the cafe's five Toronto-area locations

According to sources, Aroma's business has not been affected by the protest.

Operating partner Anat Davidzon said that "the company has decided not to make any comment on the situation so as not to escalate or get involved in a political dispute right now."

Davidzon said Aroma Espresso Bar Canada Inc. is a four-year-old Canadian-controlled private corporation. The cafes are franchise operations operating under license from the Israeli parent company. The Bloor Street cafe was opened in 2007 and was the second, after New York City, outside Israel.

According to its website, the Aroma chain "boasts 100 branches nationwide, with new branches opening at a rate of about two or three per month, and serves about 25 million customers per year."

It operates branches in the United States, Ukraine, Cyprus and Romania.

Protesters gathered at the Bloor Street location of Aroma Espresso Bar last week calling for a boycott of the Israel-owned chain. *[Ruth Schweitzer photo]*

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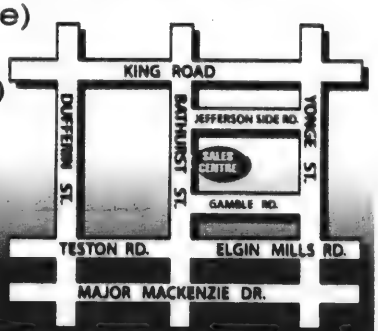

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A very bad odour at Aroma protest

And so it has come to this. Some 65 years after the end of World War II, on the streets of Toronto, in the ethnically diverse, tolerant, trendy Annex neighbourhood, once the centre of the city's Jewish immigrant life, about a dozen green-shirted political activists sang, danced and urged upon many unlucky passersby the modern-day equivalent of the demon slogan that horrifically cut the frenzied air of Nazi Germany: *Kauft Nicht bei Juden!* Boycott Jews. Don't buy from Jewish establishments.

It wasn't Jews, per se, the activists targeted. Rather it was the Aroma Espresso Bar. The coffee shop in the Annex, like four others in the Greater Toronto Area, is an individually owned franchised café of a Canadian-controlled private corporation. But the franchises operate under licence from an Israeli parent company, and this is what so exorcised the consciences of the protesters. Aroma is Israeli! Moreover, one of its shops is in Maaleh Adumim, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, which the protesters consider an illegal settlement.

Thus they were moved to bring the expression of their outraged consciences to the streets of Toronto with foul, plastic theatre.

"Boycott, boycott. Human rights are hot," was the main chorus refrain they sang. But human rights weren't their real concern. If it were, the green-shirts would have also sang perhaps for the people of Darfur, the Congo, China, North Korea, Syria, Iran and Gaza, to name simply a few places where people have no human rights.

"Don't be part of apartheid" they exhorted. It is a brazen lie to associate Israel with apartheid. Yet, it is effective. And the singers know it. The lie of apartheid is the sword by which Israel's enemies aim to pierce the heart of the sovereign Jewish state.

"Israel out of Palestine" they cheerfully chirped. But what are we to understand by this? Do they mean Israel out of the West Bank? If so, why did they not sing "Israel out of the West Bank"? Without any apparent affront to their highly honed consciences, the singers have simply adopted the language, slogan and dare we say intent of Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"Free Palestine" was the message on the front of their T-shirts to ensure that there was absolutely no confusion about the message they were singing. Gaza is already *Judenrein* (free of Jews). In lock step with the publicly expressed preferences of the Palestinian Authority, it seems the singers want the West Bank as well to be *Judenrein*.

"Boycott Israeli products" was the message they wore on the backs of their green T-shirts. Ah. So it is not simply the Aroma Espresso Bar that the singers want us to boycott. It is all Israeli products. In other words: *Kauft Nicht bei (Israelisches) Juden!*

This particularly pernicious message should forevermore and always be thrown into the garbage heap of history, where it belongs. At this time of the year especially, a week before the anniversary of Kristallnacht, it shocks sensibility that we continue to hear it.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Benjamin Netanyahu, addressing a UN General Assembly debate on South African apartheid, denounced the policy as being contrary to Jewish values and tradition, and urged Pretoria to end it. He also said that Arab states that condemned Israel for its ties to South Africa had more ties to it than Israel did.

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Disband the UN

The United Nation's rejection of Canada's bid for a non-permanent seat on its Security Council is merely a reflection of the perfidy and dysfunction of the council. Prime Minister Stephen Harper should be hailed and should wear the rejection as a badge of honour ("Vote says more about UN than it does about Canada," Oct. 28).

Let's face it: the the UN has long since destroyed its own credibility by defying the purpose of its creation. Rather than carrying out its mission, it has become a corrupt, biased, Third World self-serving organization.

Where is the sanity of the civilized world's leaders who aim to become leaders of an organization in which Libya and Iran sit on its human rights council, while it shuns its responsibility toward countries whose citizens are most in need of human rights protection, among them Iran, Sudan, China and Saudi Arabia, and calls Israel a racist and apartheid state?

Time is long past due for civilized western countries to free themselves of this criminal institution, disband it and form a *real* United Nations in service of all.

Goldi Steiner
Toronto

* * *

Campus advocacy training

I think columnist Seymour Epstein has got it wrong when he says that "there is no reason to teach militant advocacy" on campus ("Is militant campus advocacy the solution," Oct. 21.) Epstein's preferred approach is to teach "Semitic literacy" through "deep Jewish learning to produce proud and courageous Jews." Who would argue with that long-term goal? But the campus battlefield is a matter for today, and our young people are being overwhelmed and cowed by organized, militant anti-Semitic advocacy. Our youth must have an equally articulate, and equally powerful voice simply to bolster the self-esteem and confidence of our kids, if nothing else.

While we are at it, we must give words and a voice to otherwise well-educated and supportive non-Jews, whether in the student body, teachers or administration, who are inclined to speak but need advocacy training as well. Organizations such as Fighting Anti-Semitism Together (FAST) will help, and they ought to be encouraged and supported. If we say nothing, we cede the field to our enemies. Together we can make our campuses a place where critical discourse and critical thinking can prevail. First, however, we must be prepared to fight fire with fire.

Ron Hoffman
Toronto

* * *

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1594

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

Israel as a spider web

In the article on Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's visit to southern Lebanon, "Did Ahmadinejad's visit help or hurt Hezbollah?" (Oct 21), reference was made to the famous "spider web" speech by Hassan Nasrallah in May 2000, after Israeli troops withdrew from southern Lebanon. In that speech, the secretary general of Hezbollah claimed that Israel is "weaker than a spider's web" and "stressed that his supporters do not fear it." Well, it may be useful for Nasrallah and his cohorts to know, that in spite of its extreme thinness, a spider web is not at all weak. Quite the contrary: it is made of the strongest material known to man, based on the cross-sectional area of its very fine, quasi-invisible silk threads. In that vein, I must agree with Nasrallah's analogy. Israel's strength and reach may indeed be likened to a spider's web. It is no wonder then that the Hezbollah chief is holed up in a secret bunker and never dares to show himself in public.

Albert Herscovitch
Montreal

* * *

Heschel School doesn't 'suck'

My answer to the headline of Avrum Rosensweig's column "School sucked. Does it still?" (Oct. 14) is an emphatic no. I feel saddened that his own education disappointed him, and that his expectations for his son's education are so low. Like Rosensweig, I have a son who just started junior kindergarten, and I have another son in Grade 1. After a lot of research into public and Jewish schools, my husband and I decided to send our kids to the Toronto Heschel School. I can honestly say that the school has exceeded my highest expectations.

A few things stood out for us about Heschel. It is a pluralistic school that embraces the diversity of our city's Jewish population and encourages students to explore the different ways in which families observe and interpret Judaism.

At Heschel, Jewish themes are explored from kindergarten onwards in age-appropriate and creative ways. The kindergarten teachers take Chumash stories as a jumping off point for covering the Ontario curriculum.

The Toronto Heschel School aims to instil in its students a sense of awe and wonder, and as a parent, I feel that it is successful. There is no rote learning at this school. Lessons are carefully designed so that students discover new knowledge on their own.

Lisa Richler
Toronto

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Perspectives

Israeli electoral system is an obstacle to peace

Israel's electoral system is the real danger to Israel's future. The flawed electoral system, to a large extent, is the reason why more substantial progress toward peace has not been achieved thus far.

Israelis, therefore, have to engage in a passive, refusal-to-vote revolution in order to force the Knesset to adopt electoral change. Alternatively, Israelis must boycott the upcoming elections, which no doubt are looming by the end of December 2010 with the spectre of the collapse of the coalition due to peace-process complications.

Recent debates in the Knesset illustrate the current peace-process/electoral-system dilemma.

"You have turned Israel into a weak, fearful state which is losing its friends in the world, which defies the leader of the free world, the source of its strength," Tzipi Livni said last week, in reference to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"Perhaps you have led Israel to this position out of weakness due to your inability to make a decision and take a stand. You refuse to pay a political price for the peace process. As your main interest is the coalition, you will not be able to make the right decisions."

Speaker of the Knesset, Reuven Rivlin, predicted last week that "by the end of the current session, six months from now, the date of the next elections will be set."

Ehud Barak, leader of the Labor party, gives the coalition until the end of next March, but then hedged his prediction on the collapse of the coalition: "I would say it will happen by the end of December," he said.

Labor party Welfare Minister Isaac Herzog threatened to leave the coalition if direct negotiations with the Palestinians are not renewed by the end of the month.

Given the deeply flawed electoral system, why hold elections at all? As absurd as it sounds, a new election will change nothing. New constellations of coalitions will also be unable to move the peace process forward since new coalition partners will once again threaten the collapse of the government and with that new elections will be called, in a disheartening cycle of stalemate and frustration.

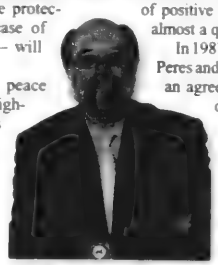
There is still time for the current Knesset to deal with this most fundamental issue. But the reality, unfortunately, is that politicians are reluctant to endanger their parliamentary status.

It is, however, imperative that the system be reformed because the survival of Israel is at stake. Israel is the only country in the world that is at war every seven years and replaces its government every two. Since its creation in 1948, Israel has had 31 governments, of which only two have completed a full four-year term in office.

Knesset members are not elected directly. No Knesset member is accountable to the Israeli public. A member's loyalty is solely to the party. The real decision-makers are *mercazei hamiflagot* (party centres) and the *Va'adot Mesadrot* (organizing committees).

After the votes are counted and party strength allocated in the Knesset, based upon strict proportional division of 120 seats of the Knesset, the politicians depend on potential coalition partners to form a government.

Forming a coalition usually requires massive concessions and backroom dealings. Given the distribution of votes, this means concessions are made mostly with religious party partners, Zionist and non-Zionist, who have likely promised their supporters that their pet issues – such as the protection of settlements, in the case of the religious Zionist parties – will be protected.



By Arie Raif

In terms of reaching a peace agreement with Israel's neighbours, such accommodations to the religious parties were, are, and will be, a constant obstacle.

Of course, the failure to reach a peaceful solution with our neighbours cannot be said to be Israel's fault. But a dysfunctional Israeli electoral system has crucial implications for the peace process and for regional stability.

Because of the operation of the strictly proportional electoral system, a minority of some 12 per cent of the Israeli population – who are actively involved in the settlement enterprise – are effectively blocking a settlement with the Palestinians. Without the electoral power wielded by the supporters of the settlement enterprise, it is reasonable to surmise that Israel could have already reached an agreement with those Palestinians who also sincerely seek coexistence and peaceful solutions with Israel.

Many Israelis view the religious parties as speaking on behalf of a nationalism that shows little, if any, respect for political outlooks that differ with their own. As a secular Zionist, however, I cannot abide that. I seek a state that encompasses a framework far greater than that of the religious groups alone. Their views, in the main, are not the road to peace with our neighbours.

Most leaders avoid taking bold, new initiatives toward peace for fear of losing the support of their coalition partners. In the result, our politicians diminish the one quality that is so essential for a people to retain – hope.

One of the most egregious examples of how the electoral system prevented the possibility of positive change in our region occurred almost a quarter century ago.

In 1987, then-foreign minister Shimon Peres and Jordan's King Hussein reached an agreement in London on a number of significant bilateral issues. The document became known as the "London Accord."

It was an excellent agreement for Israel. Had it been implemented, it would have changed the face of the Middle East. It mentioned three entities: the State of Israel, Jordan – which were to remain as they were – and a new entity that was supposed to include the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the context of a Jordanian-Palestinian federation.

By the terms of this agreement, Israelis living in the territories could have retained their Israeli passports. Jerusalem would have remained united, with each religion taking responsibility for its own holy sites. The accord was supposed to be presented to the public in the name of the United States, whose representatives agreed to this.

Israel's prime minister Yitzhak Shamir torpedoed the plan.

He justified his opposition to the agreement by saying that the accord would not stand the test of time and that he was opposed in principle to any international involvement of the resolution of the conflict (although he took part not long afterward in the multilateral Madrid conference, and he also claimed that he had been surprised by Peres' trip to London, even though deputy chief of the Mossad, Ephraim Halevi, who reported directly to the prime minister, accompanied Peres to London).

Torpedoing the London Accord was the biggest political mistake of Shamir's government. It was also the biggest political mistake since the establishment of the State of Israel.

The need for a *rotatzia* arrangement (a rotation) between Peres and Shamir – due to the demands of the electoral system compromises – destroyed the possibility of attaining a long-lasting agreement for Israel.

Today, 23 years later, the U.S. and the European Union are pressuring Israel regarding renewed peace talks. Many people in the U.S. and the EU believe, rightly or wrongly, that it is the Israelis, not the Palestinians, who are "obstacles to peace."

Israelis are an emotional, hot-tempered people loaded with many deeply based traumas and fears that are justified given our history. Our leadership therefore is obliged to behave calmly and intelligently in the face of crisis and not to encourage feelings of fear or exaggerate the sense of danger that play upon already deeply rooted legitimate worries, concerns and fears.

Zionism is not a colonial movement. It did not set out to seize control of another people or of their natural resources. It set out to ensure the right of the Jews to live on our own plot of land in our ancestral homeland in the Middle East in freedom and security.

I am haunted by the possibility that what we built yesterday might fall apart tomorrow. Right-wing political coalitions – of secular and messianic religious stripe – opposed to compromise or reconciliation with our neighbours are damaging the cause of peace.

The majority must stand up now and say aloud: "We were wrong. It is time to realize that one must make peace with one's enemies and not with one's friends.

As a member of a political party, together with my colleagues, I tried in the past, to change the system from "inside." We failed.

Peace will happen only when real change in the electoral system takes place. The current system, which resembles more of a "market of hagglers," rather than a respectable ideological arena, also prevents a better "quality" of Israelis to venture into politics. The wheeling-dealing is so shameful that the best and the brightest do not want to take part in the charade.

That is why I suggest that we lead a passive, no-vote revolution to force the Knesset to vote for a change in the system. Alternatively, we should boycott the upcoming elections.

Alas, it is only our dead and fallen who have seen the last of war. We, the living, still yearn to see the end of it.

Arie Raif is an Israeli political activist and former diplomat. He fought in three Israeli wars in which he lost relatives and friends. In 1974, he stood for election in Israel for the Liberal party. He is president of the Peres Center For Peace-Canada.

Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak looks over his right shoulder at a recent meeting of the Israeli cabinet. ***[Israel Sun photo]***

Opinions

Advocacy revamp coming soon

It's by now an open secret that the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) is in the process of a makeover. Founded in 2004 and serving as "the advocacy agent of UIA Federations Canada," CIJA is mandated to promote the Jewish community's position in the media, on university campuses and to various levels of government.

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

That CIJA has reached a point in its evolution where it's seen by some to need reorganization seems to imply that either new demands in the public space require it to adapt or that internal dynamics are driving the current shake-up. Either way, perceptions surrounding the motives for the restructuring have fuelled much skepticism, with many in the community expressing concern that there has been insufficient consultation with a broader spectrum of stakeholders during the early stages of the process.

On the pretext of improving efficiencies and streamlining its operational and leadership structures, CIJA has, since its inception, been seen to be tilting toward an increasingly exclusionary model where more and more influence has been wielded by a core group of insiders who have empowered a cadre of professional staff to direct our community's advocacy agenda. This has resulted in a heavily "top-down" approach that has tended to shut out a large segment of what used to be a vibrant volunteer leadership, thereby reducing the Jewish voice to a monotone that no longer represents the diversity of opinion and essential introspection that has defined the Canadian Jewish mosaic for decades.

And as the "new CIJA" begins to take shape, there's talk of "a single board of directors" and a "single operating structure," suggesting that still further consolidation may be in the works. If this is so, it's feared that there will be even less accommodation for differing or dissenting viewpoints and that there will be little opportunity for a broad grassroots representation within whatever national configuration emerges.

Furthermore, it's troubling that many members of the "CIJA re-org committee" – who are apparently also engaged, though perhaps not principally so, with the recruitment of the organization's next CEO – are the same insiders who founded the council initially, while others represent agencies under its umbrella. Why is this so? Wouldn't an independent "arms length" committee have been more fitting?

Once the CIJA revamp has been completed, it's likely that there will be a sea change in the way that Israel and Jewish advocacy will be conducted in Canada. What precisely will this look like? Will there be an elected and representative lay leadership? And to whom will the CIJA board be accountable? These questions, and many others, need urgently to be addressed.

Netanyahu must dump Lieberman and his party

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says he's serious about making headway in negotiations with the Palestinians. If that's true, sometime soon he'll have to rid himself and his government of Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman and his Yisrael Beitenu party.

Yair Lewstein in Jerusalem

Many Israelis support Lieberman because he exhibits a lot of brawn and bravado. He says exactly what he thinks and won't let Israel be pushed around. He doesn't believe in peace with the Palestinians and refuses to take part in talks with them. Others believe he is damaging Israel's reputation in the world, a world that will jump at any opportunity to vilify it, and that his actions are aimed at undermining efforts to advance peace.

Recently, he's been acting like a bull in a china shop even more than he usually does. In the midst of renewed attempts to jump-start direct talks with the Palestinians, and just days after the end of the contentious 10-month moratorium on building in West Bank settlements, Lieberman addressed the UN General Assembly, declaring that reaching comprehensive peace in the Middle East "could take decades" and that "the guiding principle for a final-status agreement must not be land-for-peace but rather, exchange of populated territory."

Less than two weeks later, after meeting with the French and Spanish foreign ministers it was leaked to the press that Lieberman had told his guests they should solve their own problems in Europe before coming to Israel with complaints and that "Israel will not be the Czechoslovakia of 2010."

These intentional remarks from Israel's very undiplomatic foreign minister aren't isolated events. By not formally rebuking him for these actions, Netanyahu gives credence to assertions that Lieberman expresses positions Netanyahu can't support publicly, fuelling doubts about his sincerity regarding the peace process.

Lieberman's agenda goes beyond foreign policy. During the last election campaign, his party based its platform on a slogan aimed at Israel's Arab minority, demanding citizenship only be given to people willing to pledge allegiance to the state. Yisrael Beitenu hasn't succeeded in passing sweeping "allegiance" legislation, but recently, through Netanyahu's political manoeuvring, the government approved a watered-down bill drafted by the justice minister, who was appointed to the position at Lieberman's behest. According to the amendment, those seeking naturalized citizenship will have to take an oath that their allegiance is to "a Jewish and democratic" State of Israel.

Sounds OK, right? The United States requires all new citizens to pledge allegiance. Why shouldn't Israel? But like so many other things in this country, the issue is more complex than it appears. The new law would calculatedly apply only to non-Jewish – i.e., mostly Arab – naturalized citizens. Jews can automatically become citizens under the Law of Return. Hence the outrage from civil rights organizations, politicians and commentators, followed by the international community, asserting that the proposed amendment is racist.

The bill is also aimed at breeching the delicate equilibrium that exists between Israel's Jewish majority and its Arab minority. It won't transform Israeli Arabs into Zionists, and it unnecessarily heightens tensions between the communities. There are better ways to make Arabs feel they're wanted citizens in this country.

Realizing Lieberman's initiative had once again placed him in an uncomfortable corner, Netanyahu began back-peddling. He ordered the justice minister to amend the amendment so that Jews too would be required to take the oath of allegiance upon receiving citizenship. That in turn led to another crisis, as some in the haredi community voiced opposition to the part of the pledge that recognizes Israel as a democracy.

There's a saying in Hebrew that, roughly translated, states "it's not enough to be right, you also have to be smart." It's becoming increasingly applicable to Lieberman, and through him to Netanyahu.

If he's earnest about his desire to make real inroads both domestically and with our neighbours, Netanyahu has to get smart. The time has come to replace Lieberman and Yisrael Beitenu with Tzipi Livni and her Kadima party. That won't be easy either. Personal and collective egos will have to be set aside. But the responsibility of leadership demands it.

Margaret Atwood duped by NGO propaganda

Margaret Atwood is highly respected for her writing and her devotion to human rights. She's not a hard-core Israel basher and is usually careful, both in her writing and her political stands, including opposition to the immoral boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign. But this wasn't the case for a recent article attacking Israel for the "suffering of Palestinian children." Atwood's authorship reflects the degree to which anti-Israel NGO propaganda has infected even the most well-meaning people.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

On Sept. 17, Atwood published an article in *Ha'aretz* headlined "Suffering of Palestinian children is something both sides can agree on." In it, she blamed Israel for malnutrition of Palestinian children in Area C, the portion of the West Bank under Israeli control, which she said is "higher even than that in Gaza, and many kids are not only developmentally stunted, but are dying from related illnesses." It's libels like this that feed the effort to demonize Israel.

Atwood's mistake was to believe the claims in a Save the Children-UK (STC-UK) publication (*Life on the Edge*), published in October 2009. In June 2010, STC-UK issued a press release linked to the report, headlined, "Children in West Bank facing worse conditions than in Gaza." The text included the claim that "Areas of the West Bank under complete Israeli control have plummeted into a humanitarian crisis worse than Gaza." Such accusations – like others from political NGOs such as HRW and Amnesty international – are highly misleading, but Atwood fell victim to the "halo effect."

STC-UK has a record of using humanitarian frameworks for anti-Israel propaganda, and this is another example. The press release is completely misleading, as the statistics didn't concern the general condition of West Bank children, but focused on a very small group.

And the evidence was not even based on STC-UK's own research, but rather from the "UNRWA/UNICEF/WFP household survey: Food Security and Nutrition Survey For Herding Communities In Area C." UNRWA has been shown to be particularly unreliable and biased – many of its officials are deeply involved in the assault against Israel's legitimacy – so its statistics need to be taken with more than a grain of salt.

Even if the report's factual claims were reliable and its analysis had credibility, the condemnation of Israel would still be another example of double standards used to single out and target Israel. Such double standards are central to BDS and other campaigns that exploit human rights and other moral principles for political propaganda.

Major disparities in child nutrition can be found in pockets of many countries, including advanced western economies. There are usually cultural, economic and social factors that lead to these anomalous nutritional situations. This is clearly the case regarding the herder communities on the edges of Area C that are the basis for the UNRWA/STC-UK assault.

When these discrepancies were noted in a letter from my own organization, NGO Monitor, to STC-UK, the group said that it "did not contact Atwood directly and is not responsible for her statement."

Atwood didn't respond to NGO Monitor directly, but *Ha'aretz* published a response on its website. Instead of an apology and correction, she went on the offensive: "As for the notion that the bad condition of the children of Area C is a lie made up by me, or that Israel bears no responsibility for Area C conditions, please see the following, from the STC-UK press release of June 2010… If the STC-UK report is wrong, or if there are other, more accurate statistics, these should also be published."

Sadly, Atwood again relied on STC-UK's false headlines, misleading packaging and double standards. Instead of uncovering and condemning the role of these powerful NGOs in the cynical exploitation of human rights and humanitarian norms, she repeated their biased agendas and propaganda. Atwood isn't alone in being duped by the NGO halo effect. But given her deep commitment to these principles, instead of joining this mob, she should join those who are exposing this abuse and working to restore the moral foundations of human rights.

The Kirshner File

The Balfour Declaration reshaped the Mideast

In a momentous moment that irretrievably reshaped the Middle East, the British government issued the Balfour Declaration 93 years ago this week. A source of joy to Zionists but an act of deceit and betrayal to Arabs, it was addressed to Walter Rothschild – the unofficial leader of Britain's Jewish community and the scion of an illustrious Jewish family – on Nov. 2, 1917, when Britain was bogged down in a protracted war in Europe and Asia.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

The declaration read: "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

The historic declaration, the outcome of tortuous negotiations, was delivered to Rothschild's home in London several days after the British army, commanded by Gen. Edmund Allenby, launched an offensive to capture Palestine, a neglected Turkish Ottoman province since 1516.

Herbert Samuel

The modern Zionist movement, created almost single-handedly by an assimilated Austrian Jewish journalist named Theodor Herzl, was satisfied with Britain's endorsement of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, though its long-range objective was still a Jewish state. When Britain threw its prestige and power behind the concept of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, 85,000 Jews, representing one-ninth of its population, lived in Palestine.

Britain's pro-Zionist policy, the result of both canny and misconceived notions, was fundamentally a function of the Ottoman Empire's decision to join Germany in an alliance and declare war on Britain and its allies, Jonathan Schneer suggests in his book, *The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Doubleday Canada). As he writes, "When the Ottoman Empire entered the war on the side of the Central Powers, they called into question the future of their own empire, which meant the future of Palestine as well."

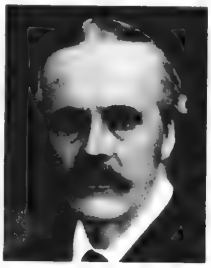
Prior to the war, the geopolitical situation did not favour the Zionists.

In 1913, a year before the outbreak of World War I, Nahum Sokolow, a top official of the World Zionist Organization, requested a meeting with the permanent under secretary of Britain's Foreign Office, Sir Arthur Nicolson, to discuss Zionist aspirations in Palestine. Eager not to offend the Ottomans, who opposed Zionism, Nicolson rebuffed Sokolow. He did, however, permit his private secretary, the Earl of Onslow, to meet Sokolow. Afterward, Nicolson told Onslow, "We had better not intervene to support the Zionist movement."

With the eruption of the war, Britain's attitude to Zionism changed completely, making it possible for Zionists such as Chaim Weizmann to engage Britain in constructive talks to further the Zionist agenda in Palestine. Weizmann, a scientist who developed acetone, a flammable liquid used in the production of explosives, was held in high esteem by the British. Nonetheless, as Schneer observes in this first-rate account of tangled wartime diplomacy, British interests in the region were also closely attuned to the Arabs.

In 1915 and 1916, in a secret exchange of letters between British diplomat Sir Henry McMahon and the Ottoman-appointed ruler of Mecca, Ibn Ali Hussein, Britain promised to recognize the formation and independence of a large Arab state in return for Hussein's pledge to lead an Arab revolt against the Ottomans. Britain hoped that the rebellion would divert Ottoman resources from the war, blunt Ottoman calls for jihad and convert Arabs to the Allied cause. The revolt erupted in June 1916 as Hussein's armies conquered several cities in the Arabian peninsula – Mecca, Jeddah, Taif and Aqaba – and besieged Medina. T.E. Lawrence, popularly known as Lawrence of Arabia, participated in this campaign.

With the ink barely dry on the Hussein-McMahon correspondence, Britain and its ally, France, signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916, dividing Ottoman lands to be conquered among themselves. Since Britain and France both coveted Palestine, they decided it would be administered by an international condominium.



Alfred James Balfour

Neither Arabs nor Zionists were informed of the agreement, which, in any case, was never implemented.

As these developments unfolded, Zionist officials continued to press Britain for a statement of support that would, as Schneer notes, "constitute a binding form of official recognition. He adds, "Shrewdly, delicately, implacably, they pressed forward, unaware that Palestine already was spoken for in the Sykes-Picot Agreement and perhaps in the McMahon-Hussein correspondence."

The Zionists had friends in Britain's government, notably Herbert Samuel, a Jewish cabinet member who would be appointed the first British high commissioner in Mandate Palestine.

Shortly after the war erupted, he met with Britain's foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, saying an opportunity might arise for the Jewish people to fulfil their "ancient aspiration" for a Jewish state in Palestine. Later, in a memorandum, he advocated a British protectorate in Palestine that would enable Jews to build a homeland there.

Samuel, the first self-professing British Jew to sit in the cabinet, was supported by two key allies, David Lloyd George – who would replace Herbert Henry Asquith as prime minister in 1916 – and his foreign secretary, Arthur James Balfour. Mark Sykes, the British diplomat who co-signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement, was also on side, as was C.P. Scott, the editor and publisher of the influential *Manchester Guardian*.

Sharing the common prejudices of the day, virtually all of them harboured anti-Semitic sentiments of one sort or the other.

As they attempted to court prominent Jews and British officials, the Zionists met fierce resistance from Jewish assimilationists such as Edwin Montagu, a member of the cabinet who happened to be Samuel's cousin. Montagu and like-minded Jews argued that Palestine was of little strategic importance to Britain and that Zionism would undermine the status of Jews in British society.

Zionist hopes were threatened not only by Jewish assimilationists and Arabists, but by rumours that the Ottoman Empire might squirm out of its alliance with Germany and sue for peace. Had this occurred, Schneer writes, Britain would probably have accepted Ottoman claims to Palestine.

On the eve of throwing its support behind a Jewish homeland, the British cabinet, in a fit of indecision, consulted the United States. Weizmann, in response, mobilized American Zionists to extract a promise of support from President Woodrow Wilson.

In hindsight, Schneer believes, Britain's pro-Zionist policy was guided by misconceptions. British politicians, their vision clouded by anti-Semitic myths, believed that "world Jewry" might help fund the cost of the war and convince Russia to remain in it. They also feared that Germany, in a bid to rally Jewish opinion behind the Central Powers, would play the Zionist card and force the Ottoman Empire to grant autonomy to the Jews of Palestine. "In this sense, the Balfour Declaration sprang from fundamental miscalculations about the power of Germany and about the power and unity of Jews," he says.

Ultimately, the interests of Britain and the Zionist movement converged, since both parties wanted the Ottomans out of Palestine. The war did indeed push the Ottomans out of Palestine, thereby laying the foundation for the State of Israel.

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Greater Toronto Area

Pluralistic group plans silent prayer service

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The individuals who organized a public prayer service in Toronto in support of Women of the Wall (the group that organizes women's prayer services at the Kotel) this past February have organized as a formal group and are holding their next event this Sunday, Nov. 7.

To honour its pluralistic vision of the Jewish community, the group has adopted the name Eilu ve'Eilu, a phrase from the Talmud indicating the value of the schools of both Hillel and Shamai, even though their visions and practice of Judaism differed markedly.

"Our main focus is to get people from the various movements together," said Rabbi Michal Shekel, executive director of the Toronto Board of Rabbis.

The upcoming event – a silent Shachant (morning worship) service, with guest speaker Rabbi Ed Elkin of the First Narayever Congregation– will be part of the Global Day of Jewish Learning, honouring Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz' completion of nearly five decades translating the Talmud.

It will be held at the National Council of Jewish Women, 4700 Bathurst St. at 10 a.m. Participants are asked to bring their own prayer books and Jewish ritual items.

Educator (and *CJN* columnist) Rachael Turkienicz, who suggested the group's name, said she thinks the event is very important "because I think that the ability for all of us to leave our comfort zones and reinforce unity, to reinforce a strong and larger community, and start to focus on the things we have in common and less on the things that separate us, is crucial. I think it's crucial that our kids see it.

"Really, it's the question of what are we modeling for them. Do they ever see us leave our communities of comfort and support another Jewish person and their right to express their Judaism?"

The group, which has a mailing list of more than 150 people, recognizes that the upcoming service does not represent "everyone's comfort zone," she said. "It's probably everyone's discomfort zone."

Rabbi Michal Shekel

Having a silent prayer service – which will include some readings and a *Kaddish d'Rabbanan* – means avoiding "tension as to which service to use," Rabbi Shekel said. "The important thing is for everyone to be together.

"There's something very powerful and very spiritual about silence as well."

The service is the first of what organizers expect to be two- or three-times-yearly events on Sundays that are also a Rosh Chodesh, the celebration of a new month in the Jewish calendar.

With one exception, the organizers are all women, because the initial event last winter was related to women. "We definitely want to get more men involved on the organizational level," Rabbi Shekel said.

Religiously, the group is more diverse, with Reform, Reconstructionist and Orthodox members. There is no one from the Conservative movement at the moment, but the group has the support of the movement's local rabbinic umbrella, the Rabbinical Assembly, Ontario region, she added. "We have the support within the Conservative movement but don't have a Conservative individual on our committee."

For further information, e-mail publictefillah@gmail.com.

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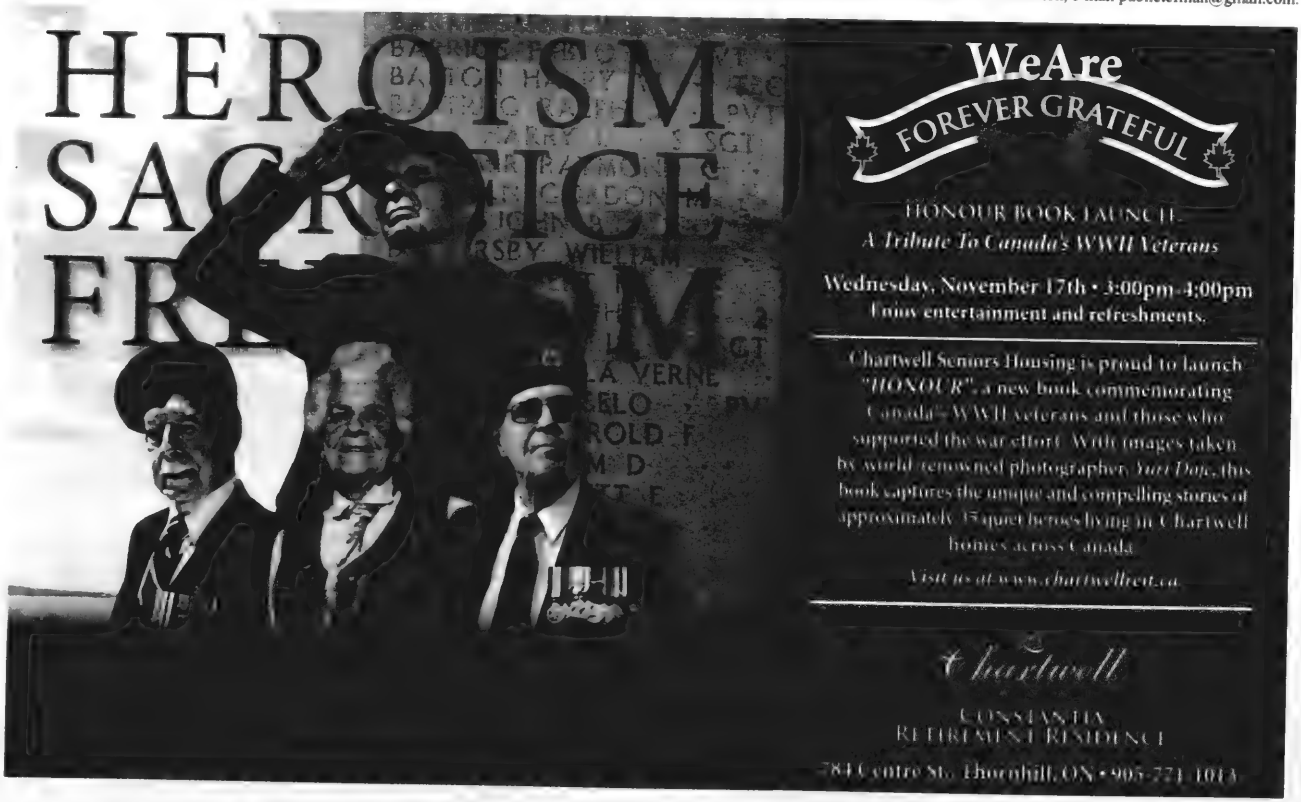
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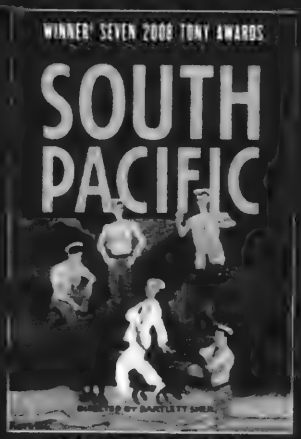

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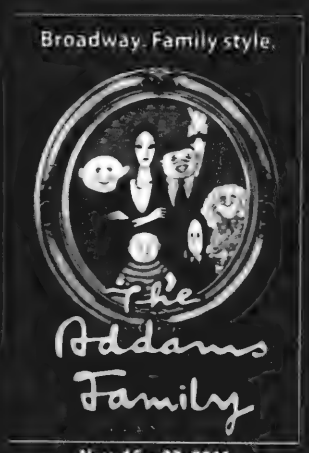

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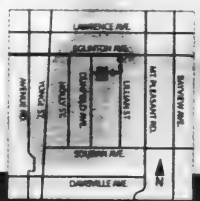

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Greater Toronto Area

Jewish councillors elected north of Toronto

Continued from page 3

He said he has "never been supportive" of the city's land transfer and vehicle registration taxes, but that before getting rid of them, it would "only be prudent" to have a responsible conversation about how to replace these revenue streams.

Pasternak, who was the incumbent school trustee in his own ward, said he's eager to work with the mayor-elect and the rest of council, and to represent the Jewish community.

"Councillors elected in Jewish wards have a tremendous responsibility to educate and inform other councillors on… issues of concern [to the Jewish community], the need to stamp out anti-Semitism in all its forms and to make sure that world conflict zones are not recreated in our city," he said.

He said the Pride Parade has lost the trust of council and won't get any more funding "as long as they let groups like QuAIA participate. This councillor will not be doing business with Pride, and I will urge my colleagues… to not give them public funding."

Another issue he said he'll highlight is the relationship between the city and its university campuses when it comes to hateful events such as Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW). He said he worked hard as a trustee to ban IAW events from city schools.

"This is an event that divides people, is discriminatory and produces no benefit to society. If the University of Toronto and York University want to do business with the City of Toronto, they will have to think long and hard about whether they want to continue to host [IAW]," Pasternak said, adding that anytime these institutions come to the city for partnerships from now on, he will urge council to ask them about what their "time-frames are" for ending IAW.

Pasternak said that he invited Ford to light the chanukiyah at Mel Lastman Square on Dec. 1, and Ford accepted the offer.

"I have confidence that [Ford] will represent what's important to the Jewish community and be passionate about our issues."

Like Ford, Shiner also campaigned on a platform to abolish the land transfer and vehicle registration taxes, and to scrap the city's proposed "Transit City" light rapid transit plan. He's held his seat for 19 years.

Shiner was unavailable to speak with *The CJN* before deadline, but in an Oct. 25 *InsideToronto.com* report, he said he was "glad there are changes on council. I think it's for the better. Some councillors need to remember the suburbs count."

He added that he had "no problem working with Mr. Ford. He will work to reduce expenditures across the city. The time has come, and the people have spoken."

Ford said last week that he'd spoken briefly with Matlow, Pasternak and Shiner to congratulate them and welcome them to council, but the four had not yet discussed any particular Jewish community concerns.

Council will be sworn in Dec. 1.

* * *

In Vaughan, despite an election that saw the ouster of Mayor Linda Jackson plus the defeat of three other councillors, Alan Shefman managed to retain his Ward 5 – Thornhill seat.

Alan Shefman

Shefman said he's only had preliminary "congratulatory" conversations with mayor-elect Maurizio Bevilacqua, the former Liberal MP who resigned to run in Vaughan, but anticipates that Bevilacqua will become sensitized to issues in Shefman's heavily Jewish ward.

"I think he has a basic awareness of the Jewish community of Thornhill, but that's something I will help provide to him and work with him on," Shefman said, noting that he helped plan previous mayor Michael DiBiase's trip to Israel and his participation on a March of the Living trip.

"I'm hoping that over time, Mr. Bevilacqua will also develop a greater interest in the Jewish community, as well as the broader diversity that exists in Thornhill," he said.

Howard Shore

* * *

In Markham, Howard Shore, who won in Ward 2, becomes the lone Jewish councillor, replacing Erin Shapero, who retired from politics and endorsed Shore.

Markham's Ward 2 is bounded in the east by Highway 404, in the west by Bayview Avenue, in the south by Steeles Avenue and in the north by Highway 7.

Shore, a former York Region District School Board trustee, said he plans to continue Shapero's environmental initiatives and to serve with an eye to Jewish values and concerns.

"I've never been prouder to be a Jew than in this election campaign. I'm not the most observant Jew, but the values of the community are ones I will carry forward with me" on council, he said, adding: "I've asked Rabbi [Avraham] Plotkin of Chabad Lubavich of Markham to swear me in on Dec. 7."

Shore said that while he represents a "wonderfully diverse community" in his ward, he hopes to raise awareness of the Jewish community and promote cultural initiatives between faiths. He said he anticipates being able to work well with returning Mayor Frank Scarpitti, as they've known each other for almost 20 years.

Celebrating the power of Jewish women

Enjoying the recent UJA Women's Philanthropy Lion of Judah Luncheon are (l-r) Carol Handelman, Anne Handelman, Bonnie Goodman-Bloom, Grace Goodman, Sherry Firestone, Sarena Koschitzky, Marina Nemat, Felicia Posluns, Leanne Matlow, Micki Mizrahi, Sara Gorman, Michele Rotman, Debbie Gorman-Sadja and Beverley Gorman Herzig

By Daniel Horowitz

Approximately 300 caring, committed and visionary Jewish women of all ages recently celebrated the work of United Jewish Appeal's Women's Philanthropy at the annual Lion of Judah Luncheon.

Women's Philanthropy, chaired by Sarena Koschitzky, continues to play a pivotal role in the success of UJA's annual campaign and has already raised close to $7 million.

The vice chair of Women's Philanthropy is Felicia Posluns.

"We are extremely grateful to the entire Women's Philanthropy team for their stellar achievements," said Sherry Firestone, chair, along with Jeff Rosenthal, of UJA's 2011 Campaign. "The proof is in the numbers. Consistently, year in and year out, women's philanthropy has outpaced every other division in our annual campaign and is the benchmark by which all the other divisions are measured."

This year, a special focus of the Annual UJA Campaign, which has raised approximately $38 million to date from over 14,000 donors, is to leap forward in programs and initiatives designed to instill a strong Jewish identity in our next generation, while connecting them to Israel. The campaign comes at a time of a global movement attempting to delegitimize Israel as a Jewish state.

"Our campaign focus is built on creating a future partnership and future relationship with our youth," Koschitzky told the audience. "Our youth will lead us in the not so distant future, but we must give them the proper tools to do so. The tools to advocate, the tools to create Jewish affiliations and social networks. The tools to create and choose strong Jewish identities and the tools for strong leadership development. We must provide Jewish learning in many different shapes and forms and teach our youth the secrets of a strong Jewish community."

"For all of us here today, *tzedakah*, the righteous act of giving to others, is a way of life," said Elizabeth Wolfe, senior vice chair of the UJA Board. "That's what Jewish tradition teaches. But *tzedakah* is much more than that. Our great sages viewed *tzedakah* as equal to all other worthy deeds combined. Today, we celebrate each of you, and I want to thank you for leading the way. You are our philanthropic leadership. You model, in action and deed, the Jewish value of *tzedakah*. I am honoured to be among you today as we celebrate the power of what happens when women work together towards a common goal to make the world a better place."

This year's event, held at Toronto's Four Seasons Hotel, was chaired by Leanne Matlow and Micki Mizrahi as well as Honourary Luncehon Chairs Grace Goodman, Bonnie Goodman-Bloom, Sara Gorman, Beverley Gorman Herzig, Debbie Goodman-Sadja, Michele Rotman, Anne Handelman and Carol Handelman.

The event featured a riveting, emotional address by Marina Nemat, a native of Tehran, Iran, who, after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, was arrested at the age of sixteen, and spent more than two years in a political prison where she was tortured and narrowly escaped death. She came to Canada in 1991 and has called it home ever since.

UJA Federation's twinned city wins tender for Renewable Energy Centre

Over 20 years ago, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto recognized that the socio-economic gaps emerging between central Israel and its geographic frontier were one of the country's most critical strategic challenges. In 1988, UJA took the bold step of creating a partnership with Israel's most geographically remote region, and made key, long-term investments in a place where these gaps were very serious – Eilat and Eilot.

There are five components to UJA's strategy in Eilat and Eilot:

- Promoting Higher Education
- Promoting the Educational System
- Promoting Renewable Energy
- Promoting Career Development Services
- Promoting Health Care

Last month, UJA's ongoing investment in the Region yielded yet more dividends, when it was announced that the Arava Group, initiated by Ben-Gurion University, and the Eilat-Eilot municipality, won a tender from the Israeli Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor to establish and operate a technology centre for renewable energy in the south of the country.

The Eilat-Eilot group's bid was chosen over that of the National Renewable Energy Centre Group by the country's Chief's Scientist's Committee.

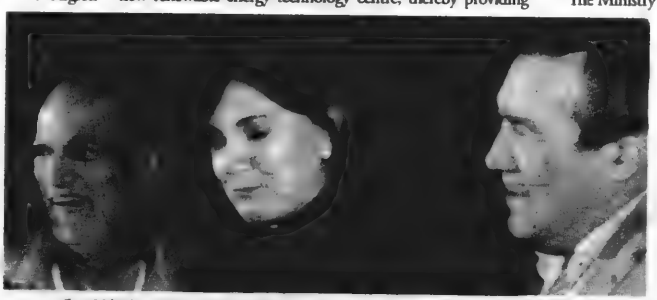
Eilat-Eilot's renewable energy technology centre will be built in the Arava region, just north of Eilat, part of the Eilot Regional Council administration. The winning consortium will invest NIS 57 million, more than $16 million CAD, in the new centre over the next five years while matching funds will be provided by Israel's Chief Scientist, according to the contract with the Israel government.

"Promoting the development of a renewable energy industry in Eilat and Eilot has been a primary component of Toronto's strategy for strengthening and transforming the region into a centre of opportunity," said Lorri Kushnir, chair, along with Morland Brown, of UJA Federation's Partnership 2000 initiative, which partners Toronto with the Eilat-Eilot Region. "Winning this tender is an incredible vote of confidence by the Government of Israel in what the Region has been able to develop in a mere four-year period. Not only does the tender allow the Region to establish and operate a new renewable energy technology centre, thereby providing Eilat and Eilot with the base from which to become a leader in renewable energy development and technology. It also enables the Region's leaders to harness its vast natural assets – land and sun - for the benefit of all of citizens. It was an honour and joy for our Committee to have played a role in realizing this dream."

"By winning the tender, many professionals in the field of renewable energy will be moving to Eilot/Eilat and will be bringing their families with them," said Brown. "This will help change the demographic nature of the region by introducing a more diverse population not dependent on agriculture or tourism. Also, these new families will require services in the region, not the least of which is housing. These requirements will help increase economic activity in the region."

The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor praised the new technology centre, expecting it to encourage technological entrepreneurship in the cleantech centre and create frameworks for assistance to entrepreneurs who are starting out, require direction and need funding for their business plans.

"Renewable energy will generate job opportunities for the residents and make us leaders in the global effort to sustain our planet. All of these factors will contribute to establishing the region as the silicon valley of renewable energy," says Udi Gat, Chair of the Eilat Regional Council. "Toronto's Jewish community was the first to believe in the Renewable Energy Project."



(l-r) Udi Gat, Chair of the Eilat Regional Council, Lorri Kushnir, Morland Brown, Chairs of UJA Federation's Partnership 2000 initiative.

Creator of *House* to host local galas

Shore to appear at programs for Ve'ahavta and Aish

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

For David Shore, charitable participation is something that runs in the family.

On Nov. 7 and 9, the creator and executive producer of the award-winning TV show *House* will make appearances in Toronto as the MC at Ve'ahavta's Starry Nights Gala and at Aish's Raising Leaders Dinner Gala.

Shore became involved with Ve'ahavta, a Canadian humanitarian and relief organization, through his friend Mark Diamond, chair of the Ve'ahavta board. Shore's wife is on the board as well.

In 2009, he attended the gala as a guest of honour.

"It was really quite a special time for all of us because he's a good guy," said Avrum Rosensweig, founder and president of Ve'ahavta (and a *CJN* columnist). "He's very caring and very philanthropic."

"I started writing some cheques and wanted to know what they were doing with [them]," Shore said of his involvement with Ve'ahavta. "My son made it his bar mitzvah project.

"You see somebody doing something good, you feel guilty and you get sucked in, is what it is."

Shore's involvement with Aish, whose mission is to provide opportunities for Jews to discover their heritage in an open and respectful atmosphere, came through his younger twin brothers, who are both rabbis. They got involved with the organization "because Aish brought them religion," he said.

"I try and lend my name to things. I've done some online promotion for [Aish]. I've spoken at various conferences for them.

"I've hosted events in L.A. for them, and I've written a few cheques. Which is not as cool as the rest of the stuff I could be doing, but I just want to help wherever I can."

The Raising Leaders Gala honours Canadian parents of Aish rabbis and leaders. This year, Shore's parents, along with six other couples, are being recognized.

"They're thrilled," Shore said of their reaction to being honoured.

"My parents are the stereotypical Jewish parents in a very good way. They love their kids to an annoying extent. They're very proud of their children, they think their children can do no wrong. It's very cool to see them get a little pat on the head for that."

David Shore

Shore believes everyone who is able should give something back to the community, saying status has nothing to do with it.

"I don't particularly do it because I'm in the public eye... let's not kid ourselves about the extent to which I'm in the public eye. I'm capable of walking down the street without being accosted.

"All of us have had some luck in our lives, and there's a lot of people who haven't been nearly so fortunate. All of us can improve the way we live and what we do for our community," he said.

"I want to serve as a role model first and foremost to my children. I am to some extent aware of the fact that people are looking at me a little bit. I want to use that not so much to get reservations at restaurants, but to help in a tiny way to set an example to people that live better lives [financially]."

While Shore does not consider himself a religious person, he still tries to incorporate Judaism's lessons into his life.

"I'm not a religious person, but I am a Jew and I'm very much aware of that... I try to be aware of our role in the world, tikkun olam, and make the world a better place."

While *House*, which airs on Global Mondays at 8 p.m. PST/EST, has featured its fair share of Jewish moments (including an Orthodox wedding), the show also takes a look at religion in general, he said.

"I think my connection to my brothers has made me more aware of the role religion plays in people's lives. I think we probably do more religious-themed episodes than almost any other show on TV. House is not a religious man, but people facing death ask the big questions.

"My background has inspired cases on the show and my Jewishness is part of my background."

Ve'ahavta's Starry Nights takes place on Nov. 7 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. For tickets, call 416-964-7698.

Aish's Raising Leaders is happening Nov. 9 at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto. For tickets, call 905-764-9340 or e-mail aishleaderdinner@gmail.com.

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Hebrew University gets gift from ex-senator

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Canadian and Israeli medical researchers and academics are about to get a double-dose of philanthropy from a former senator.

Toronto lawyer Jerry Grafstein – recently retired from his Senate seat – and his wife, Carole, have initiated two new projects that they hope will foster more ties between Canada and Israel.

The first, the Honourable Jerry and Carole Grafstein Network for Cancer Research, will support cancer research being conducted at Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada (IMRIC) and eventually facilitate collaboration on cancer research with Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital.

The second, the Honourable Jerry and Carole Grafstein Visiting Professor Program, will bring a "noted scholar" annually to the University of Toronto's Centre for Jewish Studies to teach two courses. The program will also bring a Hebrew U PhD to Toronto for a post-doctoral fellowship at the centre.

The overall aims of the Grafsteins' programs are to promote the transfer of knowledge between Canadian and Israeli scientists and academics, and expose Israel's medical and scholarly contributions to society and, in so doing, help combat anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment.

Both programs are being promoted by the Canadian Friends of Hebrew University (CFHU), which said the projects will cost $1.5 million to complete. Between the Grafsteins' donation and other fundraising activities, the organization has managed to raise two-thirds of the money.

The Grafsteins will be fêted at a CFHU gala event this month, when both programs will be officially launched, and it is hoped event attendees will donate enough to complete the fundraising goals of the projects.

The majority of the proceeds will go to IMRIC to help advance research on cancer.

Speaking to *The CJN* last month, Grafstein said he and his wife were motivated to create and give seed funding for the projects out of a desire to "neutralize academic anti-Semitism on university campuses" in Toronto.

"We have to fight political correctness," Grafstein said. "The people who are arraigned against [Israel on university campuses] are hiding under the guise of academic freedom. Our battle starts at the university."

Rami Kleinmann, CHFU's national director, who was present at Grafstein's office, said his organization was deeply indebted to the Grafsteins for their initiative. He added that he was determined to fight anti-Semitism on Canadian campuses and that as a result of these new projects, Hebrew U is now better positioned to do so.

"One of the ways we can combat anti-Semitism… is to partner with every Canadian university campus," Kleinmann said, adding that this was the founding vision for CFHU.

"We're trying to replace anti-Semitism with affinity," Grafstein said.

Both Grafstein and Kleinmann spoke of the emerging global "knowledge economy" – the idea that knowledge is becoming viewed as a product that can be commercialized and capitalized on – and noted that universities will play a critical role in generating economic benefits for countries in the future.

Jerry Grafstein

"We wanted to make a shidduch between Israel and Canada on technology and [knowledge] transfer," Grafstein said. He added that he's also trying to drum up private and public local venture capital to help Israeli startups take root in Toronto.

Kleinmann said Hebrew U is currently in the top 10 of the world's knowledge economies.

He said the university's strategy, and Israel's on the whole, is to expose itself to all comers, Jews and non-Jews alike, by offering what it now does best "and that's in our knowledge. Our [hasbarah] track record over the years has been to attract sympathy for our country.

"But we're in a new age. We now want to attract partners and investors who view Israel as a destination hub for large corporations. It's about time for Jewish communities worldwide to support this endeavour."

CFHU's Evening of Movers and Shapers honouring Grafstein takes place on Nov. 15 at 7 p.m. at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. Steve Paikin, anchor of TVOs *The Agenda*, will host the gala and comedian Jackie Mason is scheduled to perform.

For more information, call 416-485-8000, ext. 123.

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Benefit to raise funds for Israel Elwyn

Organization serves over 2,000 children, adults with special needs

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Moshe Greengarten, chairman of the board of Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn, calls the organization a hidden gem.

Since he learned about it on a trip to Israel about 12 years ago, he said, he's been intent on "uncovering it, polishing it, and discovering its treasure."

Founded in 1984, Israel Elwyn serves more than 2,000 children and adults with special needs. The ultimate goal of all of Israel Elwyn's programs is to provide individuals with the tools they need to lead more independent lives within the community.

Services include early intervention centres and preschool centres, education services, adult development centres that focus on independence and work skills, and work activities centres that provide basic work opportunities in the occupational training centre or supported work in the community.

Supported group homes are available for 48 adults and teenagers who can live more independently, and there are residential services for 235 children and adults who are in need of total support.

A transitional training program provides special education for students aged 18 to 21, with both classroom instruction and a wide range of job experiences in the community and at Israel Elwyn centres.

Funds raised by Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn support the preschool development centre.

Greengarten, 61, a health-care management consultant, said that he was immediately attracted to the organization because it is "entrepreneurial and visionary, and it pushes the boundaries. It combines the highest quality of services with the pursuit of knowledge."

Moshe Greengarten

He said that since its inception in Jerusalem in 1984, it has expanded from one program serving 60 people to country-wide programs serving more than 2,000 people.

"Its major thrust is that it normalizes the lives of those with special needs. It places people in the regular workforce with training and coaching, and integrates them into Israeli society," he said.

He said Israel Elwyn has partnered with such places as the Knesset, Supreme Court, hospitals, and Aroma Espresso Bar to place thousands of clients in permanent jobs.

"They also advocate for the rights of workers with special needs, and they share their knowledge with the Jewish world and the rest of the world."

He said that in order to expose the work of Israel Elwyn, Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn has partnered with Beth Sholom Synagogue for an evening of wine tasting with Michael Pinkus, "The Grape Guy," Nov. 11, at 7:30 p.m. For information, call Patricia Starr, 416-787-1151, ext. 300.

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Greater Toronto Area

Former campers to gather for reunion Nov. 12-14.

Camp Ramah returns to its roots

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Camp Ramah in Canada is celebrating its 50th year with a weekend-long reunion Nov. 12 to 14, at Toronto's Beth Tzedec Congregation.

The weekend will kick off with Friday night dinner "Ramah style," and will feature Los Angeles-based Craig Taubman, a former Ramah Canada staffer, singing in concert as part of a Saturday night gala banquet fundraiser honouring the Flatt and Wolfe families. As well, morning Shabbat services will be followed by an enhanced Kiddush, and havdalah services will also be conducted Ramah-style.

Money raised will be put toward scholarships for camp enrolment fees, said Ramah's development director, Ilana Hirt. "We're looking to raise about $100,000 for kids who are in need of a scholarship."

Michael Wolf, Ramah's director for the past eight years, "grew up at the camp," he said. The 45-year-old Pittsburgh native, who now lives in Detroit, noted that the camp serves between 400 and 450 youngsters per session, not just from Ontario, but from Montreal, western Pennsylvania, upstate New York and Michigan.

Ramah is "based on Jewish values, but we do all kinds of life skills," Wolf said. "We're known for our waterfront – waterskiing, sailing, canoeing, swimming. We have a brand new sports field, and we offer a whole lot of different hobbies.

"What makes us unique is the spirit and Jewish values. It's Conservative Jewish, but we have campers from Conservative and Orthodox congregations, and some Reform… [but] I think like most good camps, the thing we generate is friendships. Lifelong friendships are formed each summer at camp.

"It's exciting to be able to reconnect live, not just through Facebook."

Reunion chair Howard Slepkov, who lives in St. Catharines, is a former longtime Ramah parent and has been on the camp's board for 12 years. He hopes that alumni with growing families will rekindle friendships at the reunion and remember "how important Ramah was to them."

Jewish camping is "a formative experience," said Slepkov, who is an educator.

Rabbi Mitch Cohen – director of the New York-based National Ramah Commission and former director of Ramah Canada for 11 years until 2000, said that Ramah has a "probably the most beautiful natural setting of any of the camps." As well, he added, a combination of the environment and the young staff who serve as role models have a lifelong impact, inspiring Jewish identity and commitment.

"The key to successful Jewish identity-building is social relationships, friendships," he said. For that reason, it also impacts the other ten months of the year, he explained.

Rabbi Cohen said that, as much as he's gained from serving the camp, he especially appreciates the "powerful impact" it has had on his children.

It's very appropriate that the reunion is being held at Beth Tzedec, because the synagogue was where it all started for the camp, said Ab Flatt, a reunion honoree with his wife Phyllis and brother- and sister-in-law Harold and Carole Wolfe. Ramah – more formally known as Camp Ramah in Canada, the Max and Beatrice Wolfe Campus – is named for Phyllis' and Harold's parents.

Ab, a former camp chair who has been involved with Ramah for about 40 years, said Beth Tzedec's then rabbi – Stuart Rosenberg, who died in 1990 – was one of the camp's founders.

Rabbi Rosenberg and the late J. Barney Goldhar, a congregant who would become the camp's first chair and whose daughter had attended a Ramah camp in the United States, approached the Jewish Theological Seminary, which oversees Ramah camps, for permission to open Canada's first and so far only Ramah camp.

Founders purchased the site of the former Camp Winnebago with funding from 11 Conservative synagogues in Ontario and Quebec, said Flatt. The three major supporters were Beth Tzedec and Beth Sholom Synagogue in Toronto, and Congregation Shaar Hashomayim in Montreal, he added.

"It's a wonderful camp with great Jewish values," said Flatt, whose four children are Ramah alumni and whose 14 grandchildren of camp age have attended the camp.

Some people think that kids who attend Jewish day school don't need a Jewish overnight camp, or that it's "too religious," he noted. But, he said, a camp such as Ramah means "living Jewishly 24 hours a day.

"One is living," he clarified. "One is theory."

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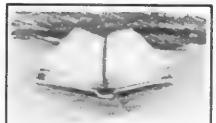
Jewish Life

Civilization: learning to be kind

By RABBI DAVID CADOCH



Some time ago, while observing my congregants, I wondered what makes this place of worship different. Having had the opportunity to meet wonderful people throughout the various phases of my life, this time I was looking through the lens of a rabbi. Indeed, every rabbi is proud of his congregation, so what distinguishes the congregation I serve and what particular characteristic am I so proud of?

Before answering this question, I'd like to share a conversation. I was once approached by a person who decided to learn the Tanach. In the midst of her reading journey, she shared with me her bewildered feelings as to why the Tanach is so filled with violence, treachery and suffering? In response, I remembered the words of my teacher and rebbe, Rabbi Aryeh Leib Baron, who summed up this enigma with a simple and gentle truth. He taught that the Tanach is the journey of mankind from a state of being a diamond in the rough to an on-going process of refinement. This is what we call civilization, which is defined by most dictionaries as a society that has a high level of culture and social organization.

Plato said that "poetry is nearer to vital truth than history." There's a kind of writing – containing personal cries wrung from men and women in the strong twist of life – to which we cannot remain indifferent. Those of us who have spent countless hours reciting and studying the psalms of the poet of Israel, King David, will testify to their power, with words that "pluck the strings with just the touch the human heart craves."

Those of us who imbued Hannah's prayer to the Almighty at a time when she was barren and longed for children – the same woman who, years later, the Talmud tells us, was destined to lose her seven sons in the sanctification of God's name – cannot remain indifferent.

What makes us human if not the distinct ability to feel empathy for creatures and fellow humans? But empathy isn't enough. One must act on these feelings with intelligent compassion. We begin by understanding what compassion and empathy mean, as defined by a standard dictionary. Empathy is the ability to identify with and understand somebody else's feelings or difficulties. Compassion is defined as sympathy for the suffering of others, often including a desire to help. Sympathy is the ability to enter into, understand or share somebody else's feelings.

Clearly, the mark of a civilized nation is its ability not only to feel for the unfortunate and those suffering from personal crisis, but also the ability to stimulate immediate and appropriate acts to help and relieve those in need.

This is the hallmark of the synagogue I serve at Maimonides Geriatric Hospital in Montreal. Congregants from outside take up the duty to assist residents who might not be very mobile. Their acts of kindness vary from a simple "Shabbat shalom" to helping residents with their religious devotions. Even more touching is the children's involvement. These young four- to 12-year-olds might push a resident's wheelchair to the bimah for an aliyah or prepare the kiddush table and help serve kiddush plates to residents.

This is first-hand education for the children in the meaning of kindness to the elderly and those incapacitated by illness. It's amazing how the children do this naturally and with such pride and pleasure, not to mention the immense enjoyment the residents receive from watching these angels at work.

This is what makes me so proud to serve this congregation – acts of chesed thrive vibrantly amidst our prayers, and that is a true brachah!

Rabbi David Cadoch is spiritual leader of the Beth HaRambam Synagogue at the Maimonides Geriatric Hospital in Montreal.

Observing Remembrance Day

After the carnage of World War I, Albert Einstein asked Sigmund Freud this question: "Is war natural to man?" Freud's response was pessimistic: aggression, truculence and strife, he asserted, are endemic features of the human condition.

Is this true? Over the years, dozens of scientific studies have emphasized that aggression is not essentially innate, but a learned form of anti-social behaviour. Violence is neither in our evolutionary legacy, nor in our genes.

Alfie Kohn, in his book about popular beliefs, *You Know What They Say*, wrote, "The idea that [aggression is] biologically determined – a proposition with which about 60 per cent of Americans agree, according to several surveys – is far-fetched. 'When one country attacks another country, this doesn't happen because people in the country feel aggressive toward those in the other,' explains Richards Lewontin. 'If it were true, we wouldn't need propaganda or a draft: all those aggressive people would sign up right away.' State 'aggression is a matter of political policy, not a matter of feeling'"

Pessimism is not necessarily realism. When we observe Remembrance Day, what shall we remember? In the first place, over and above the clichés and the platitudes, we should remember what war is really like.

In World War I, the British and their allies fought the enemy for four years and three months. It began with strategic army manoeuvres in Belgium and northern France, which ended when both sides were locked in the terrible and infamous trench system.

When the madness finally came to an end, eight million men in uniform – including 61,000 Canadians – would be dead. Twelve million civilians would perish in the accompanying revolutions, famine and epidemics. The incalculable tragedy about all this that no one knew what this war was all about. Certainly not those who fought in the trenches or the historians who are still arguing about it over 90 years later. It was as senseless as it was barbaric.

World War II, unparallelled in its ruthlessness and fuelled by the flames of Nazi ethnic, political and religious genocide, led to the death of all causes, of 55 million men, women and children – among them 42,000 Canadians.

It is often reported that the recent war in Iraq led to the death of more than 5,000 American soldiers. It is seldom mentioned that over 100,000 Iraqi civilians were killed and more than a million uprooted from their homes.

It is commonplace to assert that atomic weapons can destroy our vaunted civilization. Weapons, small in size but great in power – easily hidden and transported – can now find a place in the hands of the emotionally disturbed and the morally irresponsible.

The late astronomer Carl Sagan, warned, "If we are content in a world with nearly 30,000 nuclear weapons, we are betting our lives on the proposition that no present or future leaders, military or civilian – the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea and whatever other nuclear powers there will be will ever stray from the strictest standards of prudence. We are gambling on their sanity and sobriety even in times of great personal and national crisis."

The achievement of a warless and a just world order will require undreamed of spiritual strength and unimagined restructuring of the current political, social and economic order. And like love and friendship, it must forever be nurtured, renewed, and consciously sustained.

On Remembrance Day, we might consider for a brief moment poet Eve Merriam's dream of giving birth to a child who will ask: "Mother, what was war?"

Jewish Life

The sustaining power of peoplehood

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

In shuls, of course, but also in airports. Hotel lobbies. Office board rooms. Living rooms of shiva houses. A restaurant. At the Kotel. By a river. At the bottom of a mountain. By the side of the road. Where I was the only English speaker. Where I was the only Ashkenazi. Where I was the only one with a knitted kippah. The only one in a suit. The only one without a suit. All of these places and situations became sacred for me, complete with the various ad hoc minyanim that were formed there, during my 11 months of saying *Kaddish* a few years ago for my father, Colin Malamet.

Perhaps the most memorable space, geographically and emotionally, was a thoroughly secular kibbutz in Israel, where I had gone with a small group of students for one night only. It appeared that there would be little or no chance of mustering up the requisite quorum for *Kaddish* the next morning.

But late at night, I ran into some guests, in their requisite sandals and shorts and open shirts, with not a kippah to be found. We spoke, and in my halting Hebrew, I asked if they would be so kind as to rouse themselves early the next morning to fill out the necessary 10 so that I could say *Kaddish*. An odd but not unkind look appeared on the faces of the men as they said, simply, "*Nireh*" (we will see).

At 6:45 a.m. I showed up at the designated place. My two male students who had joined me were highly skeptical that anything would come of this, especially as 7:00 and 7:15 a.m. passed. Close to 7:30, when it seemed like my request had found its inevitable answer, a still half-asleep, but good-natured group of Israeli men shuffled toward me. I had almost finished Shacharit, but there was now, as through the millennia, the ability to once again say the words "*Yitgadal veyitkadash shmei rabbah*." In unison, my "secular" brethren intoned "Amen."

In a world that often demonizes Jews and Israelis, that small moment on a quiet Negev kibbutz was a reminder to me of the sustaining power of Jewish peoplehood, no matter what seems to divide us.

When I watch the BBC, or read transcripts from the various assemblies of the United Nations, or books such as Jimmy Carter's *Palestine: Peace not Apartheid*, I have the feeling they're not quite seeing the same Israel, or even the same world, that I do. But Jewish history shows, if nothing else, the unlikely endurance of this small yet remarkably creative and meaning-centred people, and I believe that we will continue into the future, long after certain of our enemies have left this earth.

On Nov. 10 at 7:30 p.m. at the Village Shul in Toronto, I will be interviewing the British journalist Melanie Phillips on some of the key issues facing the West at this crucial time. My family is sponsoring the event, and we invite the community to join us to commemorate the third yahrzeit of my father. May his memory be for a blessing.

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The Canadian Jewish Shmooze

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Children with special needs, Pt. 2

One of the heroes in developing bar and bat mitzvah programs for children with special needs is Judith Edelman-Green. American-born and now living in Israel, Edelman-Green founded and directed the country's Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program for Children with Special Needs. Established in 1995, the program has helped thousands of youngsters celebrate their special day. The program is run by Israel's Masorti (Conservative) movement, but children from all backgrounds are welcome. As Edelman-Green says, "Although a child may be limited physically or mentally, he or she need not be limited spiritually." You can read more at the program's website. **[http://bit.ly/mitz11]**

Becca Hornstein is another pioneer who gained first-hand experience when she planned a bar mitzvah for her son, Joel, who is autistic. Hornstein, co-founder of the Council for Jews with Special Needs in Phoenix, Ariz., says that for every challenge, there is a creative response. **[http://bit.ly/mitz12]**

• If a child cannot learn to read Hebrew: write the "script" in transliteration (phonetic English) or prepare an audiotape with all the prayers in Hebrew and English.

• If a child cannot verbalize: a boy who was profoundly multiply disabled and had absolutely no communications skills "sat on his father's lap, his fingers lovingly curled around the wooden handles of the scroll, as his father chanted the Hebrew in his son's honour."

• If a child cannot stay in one place for long: Hornstein tells the story of one hyperactive boy's bar mitzvah. Knowing that he might wander during the Shabbat service, the rabbi explained to the congregation, "Today is Ben's day. The entire chapel is his bimah, and he can move in it as he wishes [to] communicate with God in his way." **[http://bit.ly/mitz13]**

Bnaimitzvahguide.com has tips about photographing a child with special needs as well as advice about what to look for in a professional photographer for your simchah. There's also an article that poses these questions: "Where does the parent of a reading or physically disabled child go when looking for study materials for the bar or bat mitzvah? Where can one find a parshah in Braille? How does the dyslexic child learn their Haftorah when standard print is incomprehensible?" The answer: JBI International. Once known as the Jewish Braille Institute, this organization provides Torah and Haftorah readings in audio and Braille or large print for bnai mitzvah, as well as customized Jewish readings. At the JBI International site, you can watch a brief video as bar mitzvah candidate, Alan, recites readings from his parshah, thanks to his hard work and a Braille text. **[http://bit.ly/mitz10]**

Sometimes the right timing – and location – for the ceremony can make all the difference in the world. As Mitchell Parker explains, when Brian David was called to the Torah to celebrate his bar mitzvah, "on hand were Brian's parents, two sisters, brother, and family friends, as well as almost 600 of his closest friends – the campers and staff of Camp Ramah in Canada." At 21 years of age with Down syndrome, Brian was also a veteran of the camp's tikvah program for children with special needs. When Brian was 13, his parents had decided to forgo a formal ceremony, "but now that he had a community of his own, with a congregation that welcomes him just as he is, we decided to have a bar mitzvah where Brian is both loved and respected." **[http://bit.ly/mitz14]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based website producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be contacted at highway@rogers.com.

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Towards a better future ... integrating people with developmental disabilities into the community

In the same room with greatness

By BERNIE M. FARBER

From left, Elizabeth Wolfe, chair elect, UJAFED, Bernie Farber, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Mark Freiman
[*Adrienne Leong photo*]

In 1969, my Tibetan friend Shamar told me about the mystique that is Tenzin Gyato, Tibet's 14th Dalai Lama.

I was a young university student: impressionable, fearless and open-minded, probably to a fault. The world at the time was a "happening place." Jewish students were at the centre of both Jewish and world politics, marching in the streets.

Guest Voice

Opposing the war in Vietnam or fighting for the right of Soviet Jews to immigrate to Israel made us feel empowered. Given the world today, it's fair to say that both these struggles were examples of youth taking conflict by the scruff of the neck and winning. Into all this stepped Shamar. He was quiet and dignified; he brought an interesting calm into my life at a time when the world seemed to be raging.

In university, I majored in world religions, so understandably, I found interesting commonalities in Judaism and Buddhism. More importantly, I came to see that the clear and humbling messages of the Dalai Lama mirrored many of Judaism's messages. In Judaism, we are told that one of the greatest of mitzvot is to perform acts of loving-kindness. One of the Dalai Lama's main faith themes states: "Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible."

Over the years, I gained a new understanding of patience from the manner in which the Dalai Lama has dealt with his forced exile from Tibet. The Chinese have occupied Tibet since 1950, arguably the longest occupation in modern history. While the Israeli-Palestinian issue preoccupies many, the Dalai Lama has been unwavering in his consistent attempts at finding a peaceful resolution with China. He has never given up hope that a resolution will come.

A couple weeks ago, I received a call from Tenzin Khanzar, formerly chief of staff for Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenny. But on this call, he was acting as an emissary for the Dalai Lama's upcoming trip to Canada. "We would like a delegation of Jewish leadership to attend a small luncheon in honour of the Dalai Lama," he told me. "Interested?" he rhetorically asked. As a representative of the Canadian Jewish Congress for more than 25 years, I've had the honour of meeting prime ministers and presidents, actors and philosophers. But the opportunity of being with the Dalai Lama would be a singular honour.

And so on Oct. 24, I joined Elizabeth Wolfe, incoming chair of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, and Canadian Jewish Congress national president Mark Freiman at a luncheon hosted by the Tibetan Canadian Cultural Centre in Toronto.

As I approached the building, I noted the tight security. Roads were cordoned off, and parking was limited to only those invited to the luncheon. However, thousands of people were on the grounds, hoping only for a glimpse of the man they hold in such reverence – a true testament to the man's popularity.

The small luncheon included businessmen such as former New Brunswick premier Frank McKenna and politicians, including senators Con Dinino, Vivienne Poy and Vim Kochar and MPs and MPPs, including Borys Wrzesnewskyj, Cheri Di Novo and Olivia Chow. At the table next to me sat former mayoralty hopeful and always elegant Rocco Rossi. At our table sat Cindy Chung and Tenzin Jigme, both representatives of the Tibetan/Chinese Youth Dialogue. We chatted about how Tibetan and Chinese students in Toronto have found a bridge of reconciliation. It gave me great hope for the future on many fronts.

As we were chatting, I noticed an excited gathering of the crowd by the door. As would be his wont, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyato, entered the room unannounced. He needed no introduction. His charisma and sheer presence were introduction enough. Dressed in his customary red and gold robes, he looked the same as the first picture I saw of him in 1969. He spoke briefly, his message almost secondary to his presence. I was struck by the joy and heartiness of his laugh. It was absolutely infectious – the kind of laugh we could all recognize as coming from a trusted friend, a beloved uncle. We met him briefly, got a photo (that one goes on my wall), and it was over all too soon.

I left the centre knowing that I had been in the same room with a great man. I learned in the end that words are one thing, but the sense of calm and tolerance that can come from a person of greatness is so much more. I thought of Shamar and how incredibly excited he would have been had he known I met the Dalai Lama.

Bernie Farber is the CEO of the Canadian Jewish Congress.

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Jewish Book Fair

Mideast conflict casts shadow on Israeli novelist

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israel's struggle for existence is a theme Israeli novelists cannot usually slough off, says David Grossman, the internationally renowned novelist.

"You can't turn your back on this reality," he told the Toronto Jewish Book Fair at Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue on Oct. 23.

Grossman, here to promote his latest novel, *To the End of the Land*, said "the situation," or *ha matzav* – Israel's ever-present conflict with the Palestinians and its Arab neighbours – invariably casts a giant shadow on a writer's creative direction.

Fresh from winning this year's Peace Prize at the Frankfurt Book Fair, Grossman explained he wanted to write about *ha matzav* from the point of view of a normal Israeli family.

David Grossman

In his novel, a woman and her old friend, her former lover, take a hike through the Israeli countryside after their son returns to his army unit. According to a review in the *Globe and Mail*, the book is about "multiple journeys through time and space."

Grossman had nearly completed the novel when his son, Uri, 20, was killed in the final hours of the Second Lebanon War in August 2006.

Uri lost his life when his tank was hit by a Hezbollah missile. Three days earlier, at a press conference in Tel Aviv, Grossman and major Israeli writers had called for a ceasefire.

Four months after his son's untimely death, Grossman denounced the then-Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, for a failure of leadership.

In an allusion to these traumatic events, Grossman said *ha matzav*, "this almost impossible situation of ever-lasting war," has an effect on him.

Grossman made his comments as he answered questions from interviewer and fellow writer Noah Richler, the son of the late Canadian novelist Mordecai Richler.

Describing Israel as "a war zone," Grossman lamented that Israelis cannot imagine "a situation of peace" and feel that their destiny is to live and die by the sword.

He acknowledged that a "political layer" coats *To the End of the Land*, but said that the "human condition" interests him more.

When he begins a novel, he observed, he never knows what the ending will be. "My books surprise me."

Grossman admitted that writing this novel was "an excuse" to hike the Israel Trail, which runs the length of Israel from the Lebanese border to Eilat. He spent 32 days on the winding trail, sometimes in the company of his wife, Michal.

Born in Jerusalem, and now living in a town near the capital, Mevasseret Zion, Grossman described Israel as the only country in which he feels truly at home.

He likened Israel to "an idea," saying it encompasses the story of a people who returned to their ancestral home against all odds and created a democracy and revived the ancient Hebrew language.

Grossman dwelled briefly on one of his previous books, *The Yellow Wind*, a non-fictional account of Israel's occupation of the West Bank that made him famous.

He recalled that Yitzhak Shamir, the then Israeli prime minister, berated him for writing a "literary fantasy." But three months later, the first Palestinian uprising erupted, jolting Israelis into the realization that Israel is an occupying power.

During the short question-and-answer period, Grossman asked for "literary" rather than "political" questions. But most of the questions he fielded turned on politics.

He talked about his contacts with Palestinians during the Oslo peace process era, expressing regret they had ended but hope they might resume one day.

Praising U.S. President Barack Obama, Grossman said he understands the contradictions and nuances of Israel's dispute with the Palestinians, and is the only politician who can "make things move" in terms of constructive peace negotiations.

He said Israel needs "a friend in the White House" who is both "attentive to our situation" and "sensitive" to the needs of both sides.

Arts festival added to annual book fair in Winnipeg

please see page 36

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Palestinians still waffling on recognizing Israel

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The Oct. 21 column touched on a controversial issue worthy of further examination. It claimed that the Palestinians, in Algiers in 1988, by accepting the UN's 1947 Partition Resolution that called for the creation of "Jewish" and "Arab" states – something they had rejected, often violently, during the previous 47 years – had, in effect recognized the Jewish state.

Space restrictions did not allow an elaboration of that claim, which will be addressed here.

To begin, the Palestinians did not willingly or deliberately recognize Israel as Jewish, that is, as the nation-state of the Jewish people. What they did say in their Algiers declaration is that the Partition Resolution "still provides the legal basis for the right of the Palestinian Arab people to national sovereignty and independence." But if it provides the legal basis for statehood for the Palestinian people, it must also by extension provide the same for the Jewish people.

The Palestinians cannot adopt one part of the Partition Resolution – the one that relates to the rights of the Palestinian Arabs – without also accepting the other part relating to the rights of the Jewish people.

To put it another way, since the resolution calls for two states for two peoples, the Palestinians cannot choose to see it as legitimizing just one of those states. That's why the Oct. 21 column said that in accepting the Partition Resolution in 1988, the Palestinians recognized the Jewish state. But this was meant only as a logical implication of endorsing the resolution, not something the Palestinians openly espoused or even tacitly accepted.

In the Oct. 25 *New York Times*, Isabel Kershner wrote about the Algiers declaration and reminded readers that the Palestinians began their acceptance of the Partition Resolution by denouncing it as a historic injustice. In fact, throughout the 13-page declaration, Israel is denounced in the most vile terms – as "settler," "colonialist," and "racist." This demonization of Israel is of course the very opposite of acceptance. So it can be argued that the Palestinians' reluctant acceptance of the Partition Resolution did not amount to the "ground-breaking" development that some Israeli historians and analysts took it to be.

Indeed, it can even be reasoned that if the Palestinians accepted the resolution only in part but not in whole, they did not actually endorse a genuine two-state agreement.

To be sure, unlike Israeli leaders who have repeatedly stated that they recognize the legitimate sovereign aspirations of the Palestinian people, Palestinian leaders have refused to reciprocate. And this rejectionism signals to Israelis that peaceful co-existence remains elusive at best, impossible at worst.

Kershner left open the question of what exactly the Palestinians had agreed to in accepting the Partition Resolution. But she did mention an interview that then-Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat gave to *Ha'aretz* in June of 2004 that was published under the headline "A Jewish State? 'Definitely.'" That headline, however, was the only definitive element in what was otherwise a rambling eight-page exchange marked by Arafat's vagueness, evasiveness and contradictions.

While Arafat began by insisting that the Palestinians "accepted [a Jewish state] openly and officially in 1988 at [Algiers]," in the words of his *Ha'aretz* interviewers, he was "far from definite on key details of crucial issues."

PA President Mahmoud Abbas

Clearly, there was no "open," or other, endoresment of Israel's Jewish character. Reminiscent of his stand at Camp David in 2000, Arafat refused to acknowledge that Jews had any historic attachments to their holy sites in Jerusalem, insisting that the Western Wall is actually in Nablus. This is just one of many such absurdities.

Current PA President Mahmoud Abbas has been no more forthcoming about indicating to Israelis that the Palestinians are prepared to accept Israel as originally conceived by the United Nations.

The importance of this issue rests not in semantics or in games of logic or in political manoeuvrings. It rests instead in the necessity for a fundamental attitudinal shift by the Palestinian leadership if peace is to have any chance at all.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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FAN 590 morning man a real 'Judeophile'

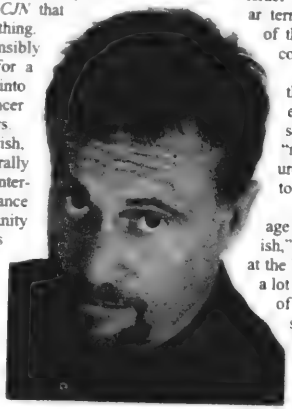
By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

"I think I suffer from Jewish envy."

With that, Andrew Krystal, the new, irreverent morning man at the FAN 590 Toronto's sports talk-radio station, told *The CJN* that he's big on the whole Jewish thing.

And so what was ostensibly going to be an interview for a sports story instead turned into a confessional by the announcer on his love for Israel and Jews.

Krystal, who is not Jewish, admitted that while he generally shies away from granting interviews, he "jumped" at the chance to talk to the Jewish community via *The CJN* because he wants the community to know that he's a friend and fervent supporter.



Andrew Krystal

"I'm a Judeophile. I've never done an interview like this," he said, adding that his impudent, on-air approach matches what he says he admires in the Jewish narrative.

"I'm excited by intelligence and balls – *chutzpah*. That's what Israel and the Diaspora represent," he said, arguing that those who malign Israel are "just jealous" of its successes in the face of incredible survival odds.

He said it's easy for "the *goyim*" to make pronouncements about what Israel should or shouldn't do with respect to its policies toward the Palestinians or its own security.

"Israel is on the frontlines of nuclear terrorism. The hard-won success of the Jewish community did not come by accident," Krystal said.

Though not a member of the tribe, Krystal said he flirted with the idea of converting some years ago while dating a "nice Jewish girl," but the failure of the relationship put an end to that idea.

Krystal, who won't reveal his age other than to say he's "40-ish," studied international relations at the University of Toronto and has a lot to say about the world outside of sports. He said he aims to use sports subject matter for talk-radio purposes and not use talk-radio for sports.

While it's his day job, talking sports is, Krystal said, "an escape valve" that lets his thoughts move away from "the more dire consequences" found in the daily news.

That said, he's an unabashed Toronto Maple Leafs fan and takes every opportunity to deride and poke fun at their hated rivals, the Montreal Canadiens.

He predicts the Leafs will make the post season this year by finishing eighth in their conference and claiming the final playoff spot in the east.

Krystal said he won't go out of his way to interview sports figures on the basis of their religion.

"People are people first. I just happen to be drawn to Jews," he said.

His new job at The FAN marks Krystal's return to Toronto after previous stints at AM 640 and CFRB, and after spending time in Halifax as a talk radio host, where, despite loving the city, he said he couldn't find matzah ball soup anywhere.

"The first thing I did when I went to Halifax is look up the Jewish community," Krystal said, noting that he was very involved with the Atlantic Jewish Council while out east, where he would speak at Jewish events.

He said he hopes to find similar opportunities to work with the Toronto Jewish community now that he's returned to his hometown, although he said he doesn't always toe the line on community issues.

"The other reason I feel affinity for the Jewish community is that 50 per cent of my audience hates me," Krystal said, laughing.

While his sardonic radio style rubs some listeners the wrong way, he said it's something he refuses to change.

"Canadian radio is often milquetoast, and I will use vulgarity in context" to keep it lively, he said.

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UJA FEDERATION

Federations look to Toronto to fight delegitimization of Israel

By JACOB BERKMAN
JTA

Organizers of a new, multimillion-dollar initiative to fight anti-Israel campaigns are looking at the response to an attempted boycott of last year's Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) for inspiration.

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) are launching the initiative, called the Israel Action Network.

When TIFF organizers decided to focus on filmmakers from Tel Aviv, more than 1,000 prominent actors and filmmakers signed a statement saying that the organizers had become part of Israel's propaganda machine, and they threatened to boycott the event. In response, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles worked together to come up with a counter-statement supporting the festival. That statement was signed by even more prominent Hollywood figures, including Jerry Seinfeld, Natalie Portman, Sacha Baron Cohen, Lisa Kudrow, Jason Alexander and Lenny Kravitz.

"The partnership started last year around the Toronto International Film Festival," said Ted Sokolsky, president of the Toronto federation. "We jointly produced an ad saying that we don't need another blacklist."

Sokolsky went on to say, "I spoke to Jay [Sanderson, the CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles] and said, 'Here, there are a lot of prominent Hollywood types on the delegitimization protest. Can you reach out to the Hollywood community and find some pro-Israel leadership?' He reached out to some key leadership in Hollywood. And it was like waking up a sleeping giant. Then we realized we can't all fight this alone."

Ted Sokolsky

He added that it was "a great lesson, and set a template on how to respond because, clearly, the other side is running a linked campaign with international funding and global strategy but local implementation."

Howard English, UJA Federation's vice-president of strategic communications and a member of an advisory committee for the new initiative, told *The CJN* that one of the most important functions of the network will be the ability to connect communities with each other for support and advice to help them deal with delegitimization.

"The federation is uniquely equipped to deal with that, because it's based on a donor model… and on community governance," said English. "To my knowledge, there is no other network that is fulfilling that particular role."

In Canada, the federations will work closely with the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy, Canadian Jewish Congress and the Canada-Israel Committee, English said. The work of those national advocacy organizations is "quite complementary to the work being done at the community and federation level," he added.

JFNA and the rest of the Jewish federation system have agreed to invest $6 million in the new network over the next three years. The federations will work in conjunction with JCPA, an umbrella organization that brings together local Jewish community relations councils across North America.

The network is expected to serve as a rapid-response team charged with countering the growing campaign to isolate Israel as a rogue state akin to apartheid-era South Africa – a campaign that the Israeli government and Jewish groups see as an existential threat to the Jewish state. In fighting back against anti-Israel forces, the network will seek to capitalize on the reach of North America's 157 federations, 125 local Jewish community relations councils and nearly 400 communities under the federation system.

"There is a very, very high sense of urgency in [fighting] the delegitimizing of the State of Israel," JFNA president and CEO Jerry Silverman said.

In fact, Silverman added, Israeli leaders identify this as the second most dangerous threat to Israel, after Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Under a plan approved in late September, JCPA's senior vice-president, Martin Raffel, will oversee the new network, working in concert with the head of JFNA's Washington office, William Daroff. Over the next several months, Raffel will be putting together his team, including six people in New York, one in Israel and one in Washington.

The network will monitor the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement worldwide and create a strategic plan to counter delegitimization wherever it crops up. It will work with local federations and community relations councils to enlist the help of key leaders at churches, labour unions and cultural institutions to fight anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions campaigns.

The Jewish federations have agreed to give JFNA $1.6 million to fund the project fully in its first year. In the two subsequent years, the federations will split the cost 50-50 with JFNA.

"Israel's government has been advocating for this, especially over the past six or eight months," Silverman said. "It has been in dialogue within our federation movement for a while, especially following the Toronto incident and… divestment movements in the Protestant and Presbyterian churches. This idea was born out of the large city executives meeting that said, 'It is time. And time is running out.'"

Silverman said he expects the Israel Action Network to be fully staffed and up and running by Jan. 1.

"We're very excited about the establishment of this network," English said.

With files from Frances Kraft

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On Campus

Hillel called 'agent of a foreign government'

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Hillel at York University has come under attack from a history professor who accused it of being an "agent of a foreign government" because of its Israel advocacy efforts.

In an Oct. 8 letter to York University president Mamdouh Shoukri, David Noble wrote that "[Hillel at York] serves as, in effect, an agent of a foreign government."

Noble, who is Jewish but has a history of criticizing Israel and Jewish groups on campus, added: "In the case of Hillel at York [corruption of the educational mission of the university] is already well underway, with York University's tacit approval... York University must formulate and adopt policies that would prohibit all such activities on behalf of foreign governments on campus."

Last month, Noble dropped a defamation suit against Canadian Jewish Congress regarding a flyer he published in 2004 titled, "The York University Foundation: The tail that wags the dog." CJC alleged the flyer contained anti-Semitic material.

The document suggested the university was influenced when disciplining pro-Palestinian activists by the board of its fundraising foundation, which the flyer stated "is biased by the presence and influence of staunch pro-Israel lobbyists, activists and fundraising agencies."

The pamphlet set out an incomplete list of foundation board members and officers, noting their connection to Jewish groups such as UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

In addition to Congress, others sued by Noble in that case included Hillel at York University, Hillel of Greater Toronto, the board of the York University Foundation, the foundation itself, senior York officer Paul Marcus and former York president Lorna Marsden, as well as UJA Federation. The suits against those other groups and individuals are ongoing.

Calls to Noble about the Oct. 8 letter targeting Hillel were not returned by *The CJN*'s press time.

Alex Bilyk, York's director of media relations, said Robert Tiffin, York's vice-president of students, responded to Noble's charges in an Oct. 21 letter of his own, which stated that Hillel is recognized by York because it complies with the university's principles and policies that student groups must abide by, as well as with the "three pillars of tolerance" specified by York's Inter-Faith Council.

"On many occasions, Dr. Shoukri has noted that it's the right of any community member to express his or her view within the law without fear of intimidation or harassment," Bilyk said. "This extends to the members of a student organization such as Hillel."

Brandon Crandall, Hillel at York's president, told *The CJN* that it's "quite comical and absurd that somebody would say that anyone who supports the Jewish state or a democratic Jewish state is an agent for a foreign country."

He noted as well that "Canada supports the State of Israel – we're democratic allies. Hillel has had a strong presence on campus both politically and socially since the university began."

Joshua Wais, a third-year York student and vice-president of AEPi's Eta Pi chapter at York, wondered why Noble only focused on a Jewish campus group.

"If he were to have a valid argument that Hillel is 'an agent of a foreign government' then why hasn't he targeted other student groups around campus? There are several groups around the campus that blatantly support their respective countries and their governments."

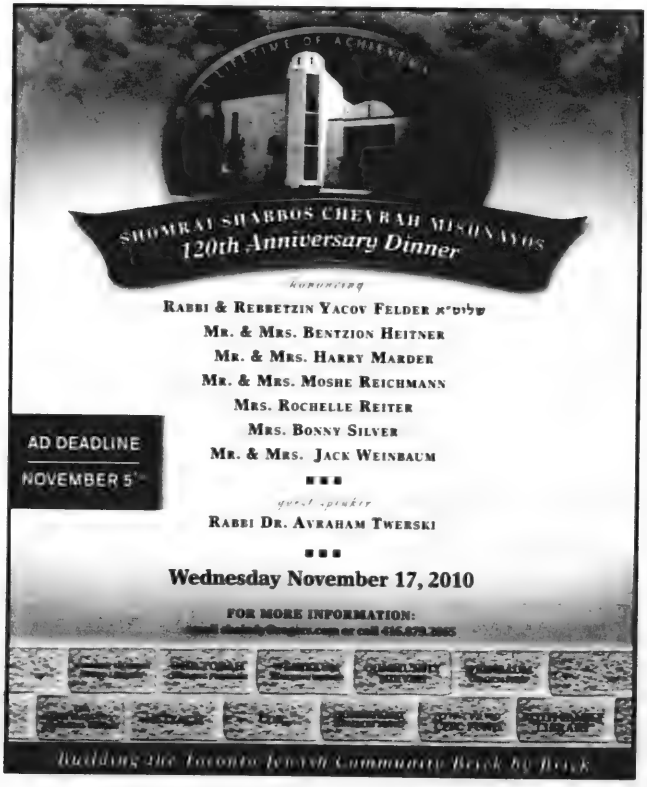
Sammy Katz, a York graduate and managing director of the Canadian Network for Israel Affairs, called Noble's statements "ridiculous."

"Advocating or promoting a country on campus that isn't Canada doesn't mean you're acting on behalf of a foreign state. When it comes to Israel, it means that you support democracy, you support equality, you support human rights, you support women's rights, gay rights, all minority rights. It could be many different reasons.

"It's laughable, because he didn't mention any other group. He talks about support on behalf of [a] foreign government – he didn't speak of any other group on campus.

"His claims don't really have that much standing within the greater community, at least in our perspective."

Visit www.cjnews.com for photos of Hillel@York's Unity March, held Nov. 1 in response to Noble's allegations.



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Special Report

Synod position on Middle East angers Jews

Archbishop rejects idea of a Jewish state

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A Vatican synod (assembly) that was supposed to examine the state of declining Christian communities in the Middle East has drawn fire from around the Jewish world for "political attacks on Israel" and for contradicting longstanding Catholic positions on the Middle East.

The synod's final document and explanatory remarks by one of the document's authors – that God's promise to the Jewish People had been nullified – does not represent the views of local Catholics and will likely be left to gather dust on Vatican shelves, say observers of Catholic-Jewish relations in Canada.

The document at the centre of the dispute was published last week after a month-long series of meetings at the Vatican. Titled, *Synod for the Middle East: a Message to the People of God*, it urged creation of societies where all peoples share equal rights and standing. It also called for an end to anti-Semitism, anti-Christianity and Islamophobia, and for Mideast peace ensured by the international community, as well as resolution of disputes in Iraq and Lebanon.

However, some of the synod's strongest language was reserved for Israel while concern over the fate of Christians in Muslim-dominated countries was expressed in a passive voice. And in a news conference that followed its release, one of the document's authors, the Lebanon-born Archbishop Cyril Salim Bustros, asserted that "Holy Scriptures cannot be used to justify the return of Jews to Israel and the displacement of the Palestinians, to justify the occupation by Israel of Palestinian lands."

Archbishop Bustros also rejected the idea of a Jewish state and said God's promises to the children of Israel "were nullified by Christ. There is no longer a chosen people."

The synod's document itself was critical of Israel, referring to the "Israeli occupation, the lack of freedom of movement, the wall of separation and military checkpoints, the political prisoners, the demolition of homes, the disturbances of socio-economic life and the thousands of refugees."

However, when it "recalled the Christians assassinated in Iraq," it did not name the assassins, and where it acknowledged that "emigration has become a generalized phenomenon by Christians, Muslims and Jews alike," it failed to note who is pressuring people to leave.

In a section titled "Co-operation and Dialogue with our Fellow Citizens, the Jews," the document states, "Both Christians and Jews" are called to commit to a permanent and just peace.

"Recourse to theological and biblical positions which use the Word of God to wrongly justify injustices is not acceptable," it stated.

Later, the synod calls for a sovereign homeland for the Palestinian people and for peace and security for Israel. "The Holy City of Jerusalem will be able to acquire its proper status, which respects its particular character, its holiness and the religious patrimony of the three religions: Jewish, Christian and Muslim. We hope that the two-state solution might become a reality and not a dream only."

Abe Foxman

Around the same time as Archbishop Bustros was saying that the Jewish People do not have a biblical right to Israel, Franciscan Father Pierbattista Pizzaballa, who participated in the synod, said in an interview with Rome's Zenit News that Christians in Israel do not suffer discrimination, but "there are… inequalities of treatment of approach… Along with this, there is the influence of the ever-difficult relationship between Judaism and Christianity. There is a deep-rooted prejudice that was born and developed in the course of the centuries in Judaism in confrontations with Christianity, for reasons that are known and that in Israel became tangible."

Responding to Archbishop Bustros' remarks, ADL national director Abe Foxman said, "By stating that God's covenantal promise of land to the Jewish people was 'nullified by Christ' and that 'there is no longer a chosen people,' [he] is effectively stating that Judaism should no longer exist. This represents the worst kind of anti-Judaism, bordering on anti-Semitism."

Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon said the synod had "become a forum for political attacks on Israel in the best history of Arab propaganda."

The synod had been "hijacked by an anti-Israel majority," said Ayalon. He called on the Vatican to reject Archbishop Bustros' remarks.

Vatican spokesman Father Federico Lombardi responded by saying personal comments by individual synod participants "should not be considered as the voice of the synod in its entirety."

However, Ottawa Rabbi Reuven Bulka discounted that statement. "You can't make a guy your spokesman and then say he doesn't speak for us," said Rabbi Bulka, who represents Canadian Jewish Congress on interfaith dialogue.

"The Roman Catholic Church can't play these games. If they reject it, it has to be in an unequivocal condemnation of what he said. They can't do it in a wimpy manner," he said. "They can't say, 'We want to work with you and have a new atmosphere,' but when we're attacked, be equivocal about it."

Continued on page 29

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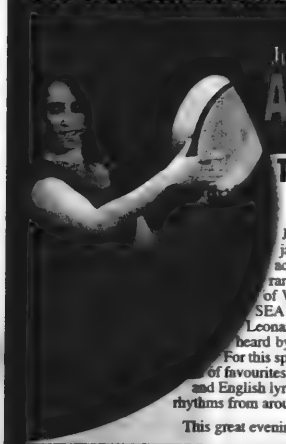

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Thursday, November 18th, 2010
8:00 p.m.

Join award-winning singer Aviva Chernick with Canadian jazz and improvisational greats Tania Gill (piano/accordion) and Andrew Downing (bass and cello) for this rare concert event. In 2008, the trio released a collection of World and Cabaret music in an album entitled IN THE SEA that continues to delight audiences. Aviva's rendition of Leonard Cohen's Dance Me to the End of Love continues to be heard by listeners across the country regularly on CBC Radio. For this special evening, the trio will be arranging a new collection of favourites. They will delight with Judeo-Spanish, Hebrew, Yiddish and English lyrics, traditional, contemporary and original melodies and rhythms from around the Jewish World and beyond.

This great evening of music is sponsored by Margaret and Arthur Shiff.

Cost: $18.00, including dessert reception
Beth Sholom Synagogue
1445 Eglinton Ave W (across from Eglinton West Subway) 416-783-6103 ext 228

Special Report

Rabbi Bulka weighs in on Vatican document

'It has a bad odour, to put it mildly'

Continued from page 28

As for the document's impact, Rabbi Bulka said, "It's too early to tell how significant it is. From the point of view of the Jewish community, it has a bad odour, to put it mildly.

Rabbi Reuven Bulka

"It's going to have impact. How can it not? Where are you when we need you?

"They're wagging their finger and saying, 'Naughty boy, you're not behaving,' which I find offensive.

"This is a church with a history of over 2,000 years of fomenting anti-Semitism of the worst sort and they invoked the world of God for that. All of a sudden, they're saying we are doing the same thing as that. It's disgraceful."

Victor Goldbloom, former CEO of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, said it appeared documents the synod had consulted, which were "rather constructive and even-handed," had been ignored when putting together the final statement.

"I had hoped the synod, which was focusing on the life of the church in the Middle East and the ability of the church to sustain that life, would avoid the political unpleasantness we encounter there. It seems there were members of the synod with a different, more aggressive view of the situation involving Israel, and they prevailed."

Goldbloom said the document does not change Vatican policy. "Church doctrine comes from the Vatican itself, and there's been no [indication] at this point they will take any action or endorse what these bishops brought forward."

He said the Jewish community's relations with the Canadian Catholic church are "positive" and he doesn't believe the synod's document reflects the views of local bishops.

No one from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops was available for comment.

On previous occasions, when tensions arose over the Middle East, "the Roman Catholic Church has been solidly supportive and refused to go along with the negative position regarding Israel that other churches have brought to their general assemblies," Goldbloom said.

Nevertheless, Goldbloom believes the synod's statement will come up at the next meeting of the Canadian Christian-Jewish Consultation, likely in December.

Eric Vernon, director of government relations and international affairs for Congress, said, "We certainly want to remove any impediments to harmonious relations."

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Kosher coconut milk great for curry chicken dishes

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

On a late Friday afternoon, Nina Kagan stands at the stove stir-frying chicken in a large skillet. The York University student spends most Friday nights with various families in the Aish HaTorah community, but on this day, she's home for Shabbat preparing a Thai dish for her family.

To make the curried chicken sauce creamy, Kagan uses milk. Yes, milk, but it's pareve. Her recipe calls for coconut milk, a dairy-free food that's been a staple of South-Asian cuisine for centuries.

Coconut milk – it comes in a can – has long been available in North American. However, kosher coconut milk has been on store shelves in the Greater Toronto Area for only about a year.

East West Foods (www.eastwest-food.co.il), an Israeli food importing company, introduced a kosher Asian line called Taste of Asia in Israel three years ago, and this brand can now be found in the GTA. The main products offered are light and regular canned coconut milk, which the company calls Coconut Liquid and Coconut Liquid Gold, respectively, and red or green curry paste.

These products are not widely available in the GTA. They can be found in some independent kosher supermarkets and the kosher sections of a few grocery chain stores. In midtown Toronto, Loblaws in Forest Hill and Fortino's on Lawrence Avenue West carry the milks and pastes.

In the Bathurst and Wilson area, they are sold at No Frills, Kolbo Kosher Foods and Kosher City Plus, and further north in Toronto, at Price Chopper at Bathurst and Cedarcroft and No Frills at Centerpoint Mall.

In Thornhill, you'll find Taste of Asia products at Sobeys, Taste of Israel and the No Frills on Centre Street.

The light coconut milk is 66 calories and has 5.7 grams of fat per100 ml, while the same quantity of the higher-fat version is 115 calories with 12 grams of fat. The curry pastes, which are roughly 220 calories with about 20 grams of fat per 100 ml, are sold in 195-ml jars.

Negba Eckerling, the Israeli import coordinator for Taste of Asia products, told *The CJN* in a recent phone call that the company imports the coconut milk from Thailand because it is the "highest quality." She stressed that the kosher certification is authorized by the chief rabbinate of Israel.

Eckerling said that initially, only foreigners in Israel used coconut milk and other East Asian foods. But over the years, Israelis began to develop a taste for Asian food, and that has led to a growing demand for kosher Asian products like coconut milk and curry paste.

Unlike kosher coconut milk, kosher coconut oil has been on the market for years and is available at many health and bulk food stores. The oil comes in a jar, because it is solid at room temperature. Orphelia, Spectrum and Omega Nutrition are brands with hechshers and they're all organic. Coconut oil is a saturated, stable fat that can be used for cooking and frying.

NINA KAGAN'S RED CURRY CHICKEN

1 onion, chopped
1 to 2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 red pepper, sliced
1 package frozen broccoli or 1 1/2 cups fresh broccoli, cut into florets
1 cup snow peas, trimmed
1/2 cup water chestnuts
1 cup mushrooms, sliced
2 large skinless, boneless chicken breasts, sliced in strips
2 to 4 tbsp. olive oil
2 14-oz. cans coconut milk
1 heaping tbsp. red or green curry paste
1/2 tsp. hot sauce
1 tsp. paprika
2-3 tbsp. brown sugar
salt for seasoning
1 tsp. cornstarch for thickening (optional)

In a large skillet, brown chicken (cook about 8 minutes) in 2 tbsp. olive oil on medium heat. Remove chicken from pan and set aside. Add 1 to 2 tbsp. oil to the skillet and sauté onion. Add garlic and sauté another 2 minutes. Add coconut milk, curry paste, hot sauce, paprika and brown sugar. Mix well. Let mixture boil to reduce liquid to thicken sauce. Lower heat to simmer and add red pepper, mushrooms, broccoli, snow peas and chestnuts. Cook 1-2 minutes Add chicken and simmer another 2 to 3 minutes. Season with salt to taste.

Sauce may not thicken as well with low fat coconut milk, so cornstarch can be used for thickening. To serve, spoon chicken and vegetables over rice. Makes 4 servings.

MALAYSIAN CHICKEN CURRY

This recipe comes from *A Year in Lucy's Kitchen* by Lucy Waverman (Random House Canada, 2009).

Curry Mix
1 tbsp. chopped ginger root
1 tbsp. chopped garlic
1 tbsp. finely chopped lemon grass, tender bulb only
1 tbsp. hot Asian chili sauce
1 tbsp. ground coriander
1 tbsp. ground cumin
1 tbsp. ground turmeric
2 tbsp. vegetable oil

Combine ginger, garlic and lemon grass in food processor or pound with a mortar and pestle. When mixture is pasty add chili sauce, coriander, cumin, turmeric and oil. Mix well.

Chicken
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 cup onion, chopped,
2 lb. skinless boneless chicken breast
salt and freshly ground pepper to season
1 cup coconut milk
2 tbsp. lime juice
2 tsp. granulated sugar
1 small red onion, thinly sliced
2 green chilies, seed and thinly sliced

Heat oil in a large deep skillet over medium heat. Add onions and sauté for 2 minutes. Stir in curry mix and sauté for 1 minute until or until mixture is fragrant.

Season chicken with salt and pepper and add to skillet. Cook for 3 minutes or until chicken has browned slightly. Add coconut milk, lime juice and sugar. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes until chicken is cooked. If sauce is too thin, remove chicken and boil sauce to reduce to desired thickness. If sauce is too thick, thin with coconut milk. Serve with rice and garnish with green chilies and red onion. Makes 4 servings.

We Salute Our Veterans
EVENT DETAILS
We Salute Our Veterans
With Jack Cahan,
Retired Squadron Leader
Friday, November 12th
1:00 – 2:00pm
Seating is limited. RSVP to Ann Marie, Marsha or Rhona at 905-731-4300
Please join us as retired Squadron Leader Jack Cahan talks about the role of the Jewish community in Canadian military history. Mr. Cahan is a founding executive member and former National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans of Canada. Very active in the community, Mr. Cahan has held numerous executive positions with military and community organizations and has been awarded several medals in recognition of his contribution to Canada, his community and fellow Canadians.
A question and answer session and a dessert reception will follow the presentation.
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Class Acts

A TASTE OF CAMP: From left, Aaron Malka, Jonah Dembe, Alex Tessier, Ethan Feldman, Zane Rodak, Sarah Winemaker, Carl DeLeon Jr., Hannah Byrne-Wolfson, Talia Waxman, Regan Berlin Bromstein, and Maya Earn enjoyed a recent overnight at Camp George, which is affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism. The children, from Temple Anshe Sholom in Hamilton, Ont., took part in "Taste of George" camp activities along with students from other congregations.

REMEMBERING RABIN

Robbins Hebrew Academy middle school students Jordan Zuckerman, left, and Sydney Bernknopf perform the song *Shir Lashalom* during the school's recent memorial service for slain Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, 15 years after his death.

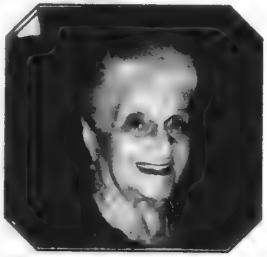
SICKKIDS FUNDRAISER

Zachary and Maya Winkler got their faces painted at the Do Something Sweet 2009 fundraiser for SickKids Hospital. Zachary, 9, has been raising money for the hospital for four years. This year's fundraiser is Nov. 7 from 3 to 5 p.m. at 81 Ramblewood Lane in Thornhill, with cotton candy, games, balloon animals and a silent auction.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news



Mazel tov to Rita Ginsberg on your 89th birthday. With love from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Best wishes from your family and friends.

Happy fourth birthday Geoffrey, from your loving parents Paul & Sharron Lungen, brother Matthew and grandparents Al & Diane Miller.

Lindsay Newman & Dr. Neil Gottheil, son of Doris and the late Saul Gottheil of Montreal, were married in Ottawa on May 23.

Gavin & Jennifer are engaged! Mazel tov from parents Abe & Frances Wang, Ronnie & Lorraine Neumann, grandparents Sam & Rose Potok and Doreen Berger.

Aggie Zichermann and Alex Zichermann, and Shirley Anne & Harvey Haber announce the engagement of Kevin to Sandra. Sharing in the excitement are both families.

Myles Itzkovitch shows off his sister, Jayce Nora, born Aug. 12. Parents, Sandra & Jonathan. Grandparents, Brenda & Ernie Waltman and Debby & Sonny Itzkovitch.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **WWW.CJNEWS.COM** and click the **Family Moments button!**

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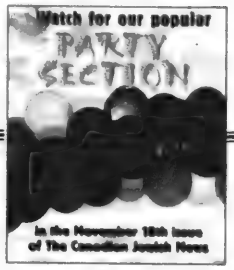
What's New



Deadline for Nov. 18 is Nov. 8. Deadline for Nov. 25 is Nov. 15. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjawhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Nov. 4

DAN BAHAT SPEAKS

Dan Bahat, former chief archeologist of Jerusalem on "Jerusalem in the Crusader Period." 7:15 p.m. 100 St. Joseph St. Carr Hall, room 403. Free, all welcome.

Friday, Nov. 5

'GLOBAL OCEAN CRISIS'

Temple Emanu-El presents an evening with journalist and author **Alanna Mitchell**. Following Shabbat services at 8 p.m., she speaks on "Finding Hope in the Global Ocean Crisis." 416-449-3880.

Saturday, Nov. 6

SHABBAT SERVICES

Join Beth Emeth for Shabbat services. **Gil Hoffman** speaks on "Efforts to Prevent a Nuclear Iran and Advance Mideast Peace." Services at 8:45 a.m.

TORAH STUDY

Beth Tikvah Torah class, Saturdays to December. **Henry Alkin** on parshah Toldot. 9:45 a.m.

VETERANS DAY SHABBAT

Join Beth Tzedec to honour all Canadian, Israeli and Russian war veterans. 9 a.m. Kiddush following. George Stern, 416-223-7481.

REDUCE STRESS

BDBIBA Synagogue Sisterhood presents **Judith Shier-Weisberg** on "Jewish ways to reduce stress and gain energy." 8 p.m. Beth David, Sisterhood Hall. Sisterhood members free, guests $5.

Sunday, Nov. 7

TALMUD DISCUSSION

Temple Har Zion presents **Marty Lockshin** on "The Gored Ox or the Bored Ox: Is the Talmud Relevant Today?" 10 a.m. Leo Baeck Day School. 905-889-2252.

TEFILLAT SHAHARIT

Silent morning worship with **Rabbi Ed Elkin**. 10 a.m. National Council of Jewish Women, 4700 Bathurst St. Bring own prayer book and Jewish ritual items. publictefillah@gmail.com.

Monday, Nov. 8

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Beth Emeth Continuing Education presents Food for Thought with **Kitty Wintrob**, author of *I'm Not Going Back - Wartime Memoirs of a Child Evacuee*. 12 p.m. $12. Call to reserve. 416- 633-3838.

'TEA PARTY NATION'

Temple Emanu-El's lecture series. "Tea Party Nation: Populism in America," with **Hugh Innes**, professor of media studies at Ryerson. 2-4 p.m. $10. 416-449-3880.

BIOMEDICAL ETHICS

Adath Israel Congregation Adult Study presents "Conflict Resolution: Choosing the Higher Ethical Value," with Cantor Eli Kirshblum. 8 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 9

MINYANAIRES CLUB

Join Beth Sholom's Minyanaires Club for minyan, dinner and a movie. 4:30 p.m. 416-783-6103.

ISRAEL PHILATELISTS

Monthly meeting of Society of Israel Philatelists. Antibes Community Centre, 140 Antibes Dr. 7 p.m. All welcome. Slide presentation of an account of the S.S. Pentcho and the Italian internment camps at Rhodes and Ferramonti. **Philip**, 416-226-2050.

Continued on page 33

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Mamilla Hotel, Jerusalem, enters The Sunday Times Travel Magazine's 'World's 100 Best Hotels' and Condé Nast Traveller UK & US editions' 'Hot List 2010'

MAMILLA HOTEL

What's New

Continued from page 32

'ONE MAN'S JOURNEY'

Temple Har Zion Brotherhood presents **Paul Stancer** on "How One Man's Journey Ended in Monte Casino," the story of a man's life before and during WWII. 7:30 p.m. Temple Har Zion. RSVP: harzionbrotherhood@gmail.com.

Wednesday, Nov. 10

YORKMINSTRELS PERFORM

The Yorkminstrels Show Choir performs Broadway show selections, contemporary music, folk songs and seasonal favourites. Temple Sinai Social Club members $8, guests $10. 7:30 p.m. 416-487-3281, education@templesinai.net.

THEATRE NIGHT – *WICKED*

Yad Sarah is Israel's volunteer network of home-care support services. Give your support by purchasing tickets to see *Wicked*. Orchestra level seats. Partial tax receipt will be issued. 416-781-6416.

THE BINDING OF ISAAC

Three-part course on The Binding of Isaac: A Family Drama, with **Sarit Kattan Gribetz**. Wednesdays to Nov. 24. 8-9:30 p.m. $40. Men and women welcome. Shaarei Shomayim. 416-877-2050.

VINTAGE JEWELRY

Carole Tanenbaum Vintage Collection and Bikur Cholim's sale and road show of vintage costume jewelry. Portion of sales to Bikur Cholim Toronto. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and 5-8 p.m. RSVP: 416-783-7983.

Other News

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION WEEK PROGRAMS

Beth Tikvah: Doris Bergen on "Holocaust Survivors and Holocaust Historians: Changing (and Challenging) Relations." Nov. 9, 12:15 p.m. By reservation. 416-221-3433.

Beth Tzedec: Holocaust educator and scholar **Christopher Browning** discusses his book *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave Labor Camp*. All welcome. Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m.

Pride of Israel: "The Legacy of Jan Karsi: The Man Who Tried to Stop the Holocaust. Presented by **Ewa Wierzynska**, leader of the Jan Karski Unfinished Mission program. Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. On display Nov. 8 and 9, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Kehillat Shaarei Torah: "Can Faith Be Restored? Suffering and Belief After the Holocaust." **Rabbi David Weiss Halivni** with **Elliott Malamet**. Nov. 6, 8:15 p.m. 416-633-5770.

Shaarei Shomayim: "May Your Memory Be Love," closing program. **Ephraim Kaye** presents a project that preserves the legacies of Holocaust survivors. Commemorating the 72nd anniversary of Kristallnacht. Nov. 9, 8 p.m.

Stashover-Slipia: Join the congregation for Shabbat services at 9 a.m. **Ralph Wintrob** speaks on "The Survival of the Warsaw Ghetto Archive." His talk is based on the book *Who Will Write Our History?* by **Samuel Kassow** at 11:30 a.m. 416-789-1333.

Temple Sinai: Arnold Reisman, author of *An Ambassador and a Mentsch: The Story of a Turkish Diplomat in Vichy, France*, to speak on Nov. 7, 10 a.m. 416-487-3281.

PARSHAH CLASS

Parshah-of-the-week class each Wednesday with **Judy Hazan**. Free. 7:30-8:30 p.m. Lodzer Centre. 416-636-6665. All welcome.

DR. OREN BENLULU SPEAKS

Dr. Oren Benlulu speaks about his experiences in an intelligence unit in the IDF and as an orthopedic surgeon treating Jewish and Arab patients. Nov. 11, 7:30 p.m. Lodzer Congregation. Free. **Sarah**, 416-636-6665.

WINE-TASTING

An evening of Israeli wines and food with wine expert **Michael Pinkus**. Beth Sholom. $50. Nov. 11, 7 p.m. 416-783-6103 to reserve.

BIG BAND CONCERT

Nov. 10, 7:30 p.m. Beth Tzedec presents From Sinatra to Buble: A Salute to the Big Bands. **Simon Spiro** with the John MacLeod Big Band Orchestra and **Jackie Richardson** and **Jeff Madden**. $50 general, $75 priority. 416-781-3511.

NEW YORK TRIP

Rabbi Danny Bahar with Project Inspire is running a New York trip with shopping, kosher restaurants and adventure for high school girls. Dec. 2-6. $99 US if booked before Nov. 8, $150 after. 905-882-6755.

NCSY CONCERT

30th annual NCSY concert and gala dinner. **Eli Gerstner** and Yeshiva Boys Choir perform. Dec, 12, 7:30 p.m. Toronto Centre for the Arts. ncsyconcert.com, 905-761-6279, ext. 230, for tickets.

YAHRZEIT BRUNCH

Brunch to commemorate the 200th yahrzeit of **Rebbe Nachman** of Breslov. 10:30 a.m. Nov. 14. Thornhill Community Shul. **Rabbi Jonathan Rietti** speaks on "Simplicity: Connecting with Your Real Self." **Rabbi Chaim Kramer** will speak on Rebbe Nachman's legacy.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 36

AMERICAN SONGBOOK

The Great American Songbook with **Jordan Klapman** on piano. Holy Blossom. Nov. 11, 8 p.m.

YIDDISH TRIBUTE

"Laughter, Nostalgia and Song: The Second Annual Tribute to Yiddish." Beth Tikvah. Nov. 14, 2-4 p.m. General admission $10, $15 at door. Patron: $36. 416-221-3433.

'EVOLUTION OF PRAYER'

Rabbi Barry Freundel speaks on "The Evolution of Prayer." Nov. 13. Mizrachi Bayit, 296 Wilson Ave. 416-633-1604.

JF&CS GROUPS

Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit jfandcs.com. Registration required.

Stepping stones for women: creating your journey toward employment: For women looking to enter or re-enter the workforce. Nov. 8, 9:30-11:30 a.m. or Nov. 16, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Lipa Green.

Loss of a Sibling: 6 sessions for people who have recently lost a brother or sister. Thursdays starting Nov.11, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Lipa Green.

Couple Communication: 4 sessions. Nov. 11, 7-9 p.m. Lipa Green.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Sholom Synagogue: Chai Society invites seniors for lunch and a talk by **Diane Mingail** on "Jews of Morocco." Nov. 10. 12 p.m. $15. 416-783-6103 ext. 228 to reserve.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Nov. 17, departs 10 a.m. Lunch and Laughter: latkes, etc., Nov. 30, 12 p.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Do you needlepoint, crochet or knit? Share your crafts, call Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m.

For seniors woodworking, call 416-630-6487.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Croll Memorial Health Lecture: "Mind Matters: Make Your Memory Work for You!" with **Dr. Gordon Wincour**. Nov. 4, 1:30-3 p.m.

Lecture: "Uniquely you." Nov. 11. 1:30 p.m. Free.

Lecture: "Famous Jewish trials: Alfred Dreyfus," with **Gerald Ziedenberg**. Nov. 9, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

Wagman Centre, 55 Ameer Ave., 416-785-2500, ext. 2267.

The entertainers of the Wagman Centre are looking for energetic seniors to join in their program of providing entertainment to other seniors. **Judy**, 416-733-0580.

Lunch and Learn: Nov. 25, 11:30 a.m. Fireside Lounge. **Jackie Barron** on "Safety Hazards and Wellness." Kosher dairy lunch. Reserve at service desk. $7 members, $8 guests.

Book club meets once a month. Members will receive a copy of a book to read one month prior. Next meeting is Nov. 18, 1:30 p.m. Register at the service desk.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Lunch & Learn with **Rabbi Moshe Stern**. Nov. 5, 12-1 p.m. Free. Bring lunch. Call morning of to confirm program is running.

Movie Mondays with **Larry Anklewicz**. Nov. 15: *Heartbreak Kid*. Movie 1:30 p.m. $5. Nov. 16, *Defiance* screening. 7:30 p.m. $8.

Nov. 21, 2-4:30 p.m. Launch of mind, body and soul seminar series. "Raising and Sustaining Healthy Families." Free. **Natalie**, ext. 4036.

Twenty years ago, *Half the Kingdom* challenged us to rethink the role of women in Judaism. Now we ask "what's next?" Nov. 30, 7:15 p.m. Bloor Cinema. Optional screening of movie at 6 p.m.

Class for those people who have never made Shabbat dinner from scratch. **Margie** will teach you how. Nov. 4, 7-9:30 p.m. Ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Lectures on world music for the armchair traveller. 7 p.m. Nov. 4, 11 and 18. $18 per lecture. Ext. 0.

Jewish Issues for Interfaith Couples. Thursdays, Nov. 4-25. 7:30 p.m. Register at 416-638-1881.

Global Day of Jewish Learning. Nov. 7, 2:30-5 p.m. **Rabbi Ed Elkin, Rabbi Michael Stroh, Annie Gilbert, Rhonda Rosenheck**. $10 suggested. Ext. 154.

Sundays on Bloor. Nov. 7, 11 a.m. "Tales of Courage from the Shoah." Free. Ext. 154.

Media Mondays, Israeli cinema: film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** leads discussions. With film clips. 7-9 p.m. $12 per class. Ext. 606.

Camp Gesher Shabbat. Nov. 12, 7 p.m. Dinner with dancing, trivia and games. Talk by **Shaul Zobary**. RSVP: info@campgesher.com, 416-633-2511.

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Coast to Coast

Sam Katz handily defeated ex-NDP MP Judy Wasylycia-Leis. *[Myron Love photo]*

Katz wins third term as Winnipeg mayor

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — In most civic elections, two factors are key to winning: name recognition and incumbency.

As a longtime NDP MP for north Winnipeg, Judy Wasylycia-Leis enjoyed high name recognition. But it wasn't enough to trump sitting Mayor Sam Katz in the Winnipeg mayoralty race on Oct. 27, because he had the benefit of both incumbency as well as name recognition.

It was the latter that helped win Katz his first mayoralty race in 2004. Winnipeg's first Jewish mayor was already well known in the city as the man who brought professional minor league baseball back to Winnipeg when he decided to throw his hat into the ring. He had also been involved in a number of other business ventures and active in the entertainment industry, bringing high-profile acts to the city.

Katz's first race was a by-election brought about by then-mayor Glen Murray's decision to run (unsuccessfully) for a seat in the federal election that year. (Murray has since moved to Toronto and was recently elected – in a byelection – to the Ontario Legislature representing Toronto-Centre.) In a race without an incumbent, Katz finished first with 43 per cent of the vote.

Last time out, four years ago, defending his position against a group of lesser known candidates, he won 63 per cent of the vote.

This time, the Israeli-born son of Holocaust survivors faced a more formidable challenger in Wasylycia-Leis. She had been an NDP MLA for seven years (1986-1993) and an MP since 1997. She's also been a strong supporter of Israel, both in Parliament and within her own party. She first sought a federal seat, unsuccessfully, in 1993.

Katz ran on his record. His main promises were to hire more police and firefighters, add more 911 operators and maintain his freeze on a property tax increase, a position he has held to since his first election. Wasylycia-Leis' major plank was calling for yearly property tax increases of two per cent over the next four years to go toward infrastructure repair.

Katz's winning margin was almost 25,000 votes, and he received 55 per cent of the votes cast.

While there's speculation that this will be his last term in office, he's not tipping his hat yet.

At the city council level, there were two races with Jewish content. In the inner-city ward of Fort Rouge-East Fort Garry, 12-year veteran councillor Jenny Gerbasi, who is Jewish but not involved in the Jewish community, beat back a challenge from Jewish candidate Ian Rabb..

And in the affluent ward of River Heights-Fort Garry, with its sizeable Jewish population, businessman Michael Kowalson took on incumbent John Orlikow, who although not Jewish himself, is a nephew of the late, longtime Jewish MP David Orlikow. The race pitted a scion of a well-known NDP family, the Orlikows, against the son of a leading Jewish Conservative family. Kowalson's father, Aaron, was a past president of the Manitoba Conservative Party.

It was also the city's most contentious campaign, with each side accusing the other of improper behaviour.

The final result gave Orlikow, who was first elected in a byelection a year ago, a little more than 50 per cent of the vote.

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Winnipeg adds art festival to annual book fair

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — This year, Winnipeg's annual Jewish book fair will be preceded by a new arts festival.

The week-long book fair, scheduled for Nov. 25 to Dec. 2, will feature the usual readings from selected authors, such as local writers Carol Matas, a popular children's author; Eva Wiseman, whose novels for young people speak to her Hungarian Jewish heritage, and Nurit Drory, as well as appearances by former Winnipegger Sidura Ludwig and perennial favourite Norene Gilletz.

Also appearing will be authors Lesley Simpson (*The Shabbat Box*), who teachers writing at McMaster University; University of Toronto cultural historian Ivan Kalmar (*Imagined Together: Western Views of Muslims and Jews*); Toronto-based author Anna Porter (*Kasztner's Train: The True Story of Rezso Kasztner, Unknown Hero of the Holocaust*), and Vancouver-based former Winnipegger Rhea Tregebov reading from *Arguing the Storm: Stories by Yiddish Women Writers*, an anthology that grew out of a Yiddish women's reading circle in Winnipeg. Tregebov edited the collection of short stories that were translated into English by members of the reading circle.

But while in years past, the authors' readings as well as the many books on display would constitute the sum total of the Jewish book fair, this year, the Rady JCC – which organizes the week-long event – has chosen to enhance the event with something extra.

"We decided to create a larger Jewish arts festival around the book fair," said JCC program director Tamar Barr. "We wanted to appeal to a broader audience and hopefully bring more people to the book fair."

The Tarbut: Festival of Jewish Culture will include the book fair, elements of the annual Israeli Concert Series, as well as comedy shows and films.

The arts festival kicks off Saturday, Nov. 13 – two weeks before the formal book fair – with a performance by the Israeli Chamber Project. The trio consists of harpist Sivam Magen, the first Israeli to win the International Harp Contest (2006); pianist Assaff Weisman, who won the Iowa International Piano Competition in 2006, and violinist Itamar Zorman, who made his solo debut at Carnegie Hall with the American Symphony Orchestra.

On Nov. 14, Belle Millo will reprise the launch of "*Voices of Winnipeg Holocaust Survivors*," an account of the experiences of Winnipeg Holocaust survivors that Millo compiled and edited on behalf of the Freeman Family Holocaust Centre.

In the evening on the 14th, comedian and author Joel Chasnoff will be introducing a Winnipeg audience to *The 188th Crybaby Brigade: A Skinny Jewish Kid From Chicago Fights Hezbollah*, his memoir of serving in the Israel Defence Force.

Nov. 16 will feature an evening of songs written by Leonard Cohen, as interpreted by local singer Anna-Lisa Kirby.

The Tarbut week concludes with two concerts, on Nov. 20 and 21, by the 3 Cohens – Israeli jazz musicians and siblings Avishai, Anat and Yuval Cohen – accompanied by local musicians.

"We have planned high-calibre programs," Barr says. "People are very excited about this new concept."

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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Toronto Jewish Free Loan Cassa
Gemilath Chasodim Association

Notice Of Annual General Meeting

Take Notice that the Annual General Meeting of the Members of Toronto Jewish Free Loan Cassa will be held at Prosserman JCC Sherman Campus 4588 Bathurst Street Room 123 on

November 16, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

for the following purposes:
(a) Hearing and receiving the reports & statements required by the Corporations Act to be read and laid before the Society at an Annual Meeting
(b) Appointing the auditor and fixing or authorizing the Executive to fix his or her remuneration and
(c) Transacting any other business properly brought before the meeting

Upon the completion of the above, the Board of Directors will convene to review suggested amendments to the Constitution and Loan Committee policies.

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ש'שאר ק'נ'ט

גידי קורן וחברים

מה יהיה

אני שומע מיותר ויותר חברים קנדיים שאין להם סבלנות לישראל, ושהם אינם מאמינים שישראל מעוניינת בשלום. אלה הם אנשים שמכירים את הפרטים ובורחים הנדול אין להם סימפאטיה למוסלמים, אבל לדבריהם- ברור שהשלטון הימיני בישראל אינו מעוניין ליותר למען השלום.

למני כאחד פרסם השבוען "טיים" מאמר כותרת שקובע שהישראלים אינן מעוניינים בשלום. לדברי העיתון- המצב הכלכלי בישראל משופר, והיא עלה על שכנותיה בסדרי נחל רציניים, ועל כן מה שמעניין את הישראלים זה ביטחון אישי, ולא שלום.

במקביל, יש סימנים ברורים לכך שחלקים של הקהילה היהודית בצפון אמריקה פעלים להרחיק את עצמם מישראל בנלל המדיניות הישראלית כלפי הבעייה המדינית, ונם בנלל היחס של ישראל לקהילה הרפורמית.

בסופו של דבר-כל זה עלול להביא למפולת שתגרום לישראל איבוד של התמיכה המסורתית של ארצות הברית.

חשוב להקשיב וללמוד היטב את הנטיות האלה, כי לצד המדיניות הישראלית פעלת בצפון אמריקה כיום מכוח הסברה משומת היטב של הארגונים הפלשתינאים, והם נשמעים בכל עוז.

אבל שישאר בינינו.

"הרשת החברתית"

סרט חובה על הסטודנט מהרווארד שהמציא את פייסבוק וחיבר מיליונים רבים של אנשים ב-250 מדינות למערכת חברתית, תוך שהוא עושה מהפכה רדיקאלית באיך דורות שלמים של אנשים מתקשרים ביניהם. אין יום שאינני מקבל הזמנת להיות "חבר" של מישהו במייספבוק. אני אינני עונה כי אין לי זמן לתקשר אפילו עם החברים שיש לי עכשיו, אבל אנשים רבים בני גילי מסתרים לי שדרך כניסה למייספבוק הם יודעים מה קורה בזמן אמת לילדים שלהם! מעניין ומדהים.

הסרט עצמו מרתק, עשוי בקצב מהיר, עם מוסיקה נפלאה.

הנקודה המרתקת ביותר היא זו שהאיש הנאמי שהבין אין צעירים רצים לתקשר כיום- הוא עצמו כמעט לא מסוגל לתקשר וליצור חברים, ומתקשה במנעים חברתיים. כאילו- נאן שלמד אין יצורים, נניד כלבים או דברים, יכולים לתקשר, למרות שאינו מבין בכלם מה הם אומרים.

הוא כיום מיליארדר בשנות העשרים לחייו. האם הוא איש מאושר בקשריו האישיים! תחליטו בעצמכם.

תשע בסולם קורן.

"בקרב תפנשי נבר נבוה וקהה" - וחדי אלן

כמו במין טקס שנתי-אני ממתין בכליון עיניים לסרטיו החדשים של וחדי אלן. סרטו החדש, כמו נם ארבעת האחרונים, איננו מתרחש בניו יורק אלא באירופה, והוא עצמו איננו מופיע בהם. נם המנע- טימור סבדן עם מספר עלילות מקבילות על אהבה, בנידה, אכזבות ותקוות. האלמנטים בכלם מאוד פשוטים, אך וחדי אלן מטפל בהם בחוש ההומור המושחז שלו, תוך רגישות לפרטים הכי קטנים. ולמרות התקציב היחסית נל שיש בידו, טובי השחקנים בעולם מוכנים להופיע בסרטיו כמעט בהתנדבות, מה ששטה את החזיה מעצמו מאין כמוה. המעט מתבלטת נעמי ואטס המדהימה. בראיון עיתונאי היא סיפרה שפנשה את וחדי אלן רק יום לפני הצילומים וכמעט התפלצה מהתרנשות בשלתה את ידו.

שמה בסולם קורן.

Petition sent to Cotler's office for review

Continued from page 1

She then sent her petition to Cotler's office for review, and his office responded saying it was a "strong" document and that the MP for Mount Royal would gladly table it in front of Parliament.

Zerker said the world community has been largely silent on Schalit's four-plus years in captivity and that if no one speaks up more vociferously, the only outcomes that await Schalit are indefinite captivity or his release at the extreme cost of Israel.

Hamas has asked for Israel to release 1,000 Palestinian prisoners, many of whom have been convicted on terrorism charges, and the release of all female and underage prisoners in exchange for Schalit. Israel has balked at the conditions.

"I don't know if [my petition] will make any difference. But my feeling is one has to try and bring this into the international arena, much like you see with other cases of abduction. Those become a focus for international protest, and this has not happened in the case of Gilad Schalit," Zerker said.

Irwin Cotler

"I can only start this in Canada, but I think it should spread to France, where the Schalit family is from... but we see no action outside of Israel. And I don't think it should be left to only Israel."

Zerker said she's urging the members of her grandmothers' group and anyone else to write their MPs and ask them to act on the petition.

In Parliament last week, Cotler read the petition and said he was "pleased" to table the document, which he described as "grounded in a profound commitment to international law and human rights."

Zerker said she's now planning to make her cause more public.

For more information, visit http://grandmothersforgilad.blogspot.com.

Former BBC official gets jail time

Compiled by CJN Staff

MONTREAL — Bill Surkis, a former executive director of B'nai Brith Canada, Quebec region, and before that, of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre, will likely spend 45 days in prison for his conviction on child pornography charges.

Both the Crown and defence agreed at a sentencing hearing Oct. 28 that the 71-year-old Surkis should receive the minimum sentence allowed by law for conviction on one count each of accessing and possessing child pornography, downloaded from the Internet. The time would be served on weekends.

Prosecutor Cynthia Gyenizse and Surkis' lawyer, Steven Slimovitch, also agreed that he should serve 240 hours of community service and be subject to three years of probation.

Surkis, a former executive director of B'nai Brith Canada, Quebec region, and before that, of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre, will be sentenced Dec. 9.

Still to be settled are certain probation conditions, such as whether Surkis can have a computer at home and whether he should be listed on the national sex offender registry.

He apologized and expressed remorse for his crimes at the hearing, saying he was ashamed and broken.

Former federal cabinet minister Gerry Weiner was among eight people who wrote letters of reference on behalf of the defence, supporting Surkis' character. However, a pre-sentencing report described Surkis as having always been interested in pornography involving adults and migrating to child pornography out of curiosity.

For full story, please go to cjnews.com

Equal access strategy

Family Matters

by

John Syrtash

B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 30 years

Question: I was married for almost 10 years and have a six-year-old son. My wife was having an affair with a close family "friend" which resulted in the birth of a baby girl. The truth came out about the affair and the baby girl in May when the baby was seven months old, making it an affair of more than two years.

Now my ex wife is on maternity leave and she has more time with my son in a new house into which she moved with the boyfriend, baby girl and my son. I am trying to get 50 per cent of access time with no luck. How is that possible? What are my rights?

Answer: The problem in getting "50 percent" access is that you appear to be seeking advice after the most significant event has already happened and a period of time has elapsed since she left you. This is a crucial mistake most men make. She has no legal right unilaterally to leave with your child without a court order or your express consent. But because you appeared to acquiesce to her doing so a "status quo" situation has now developed and it is now difficult to undo the damage.

Normally, I advise clients that if their spouse attempts to take matters into their own hands, to make an urgent application to locate the child. They should also apply to a court for sole or shared custody on the basis that their spouse has attempted to leave without prior consent since, in law, both parents are presumed to share the child's time equally until a court orders otherwise. I give this advice even if such a parent leaves by giving notice of where they are going because I take the position that, in the absence of violence or the threat of violence, no other parent has the right to unilaterally take a child away from the other parent without prior consent or a court order. It's often not in a child's best interests.

In your case you are best to have your lawyer assemble good witnesses about your relationship with your son. Alternatively, you may ask the court to order the Children's Lawyer to investigate your relationship with the child or to order a private clinical assessment with a social worker or psychologist to do so. These clinicians interview everyone and then make recommendations to the court that can often maximize your time with your son.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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Sponsored by the Community for Jewish Culture of B'Nai Brith Canada.

Anti-Israel BDS conference termed a dud by QIC

CUPW chair skips scheduled speech

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A three-day conference held at the Université du Québec à Montréal Oct. 22 to 24 to promote the boycott of Israel in Quebec was a bust, the Quebec-Israel Committee (QIC) says.

"The conference was a dismal failure, and it's clear that the boycott is not only not gaining momentum in Quebec, as the organizers claim, but has been marginalized," said QIC executive director Luciano Del Negro.

Luciano Del Negro

The attendance peaked at about 200 at the opening Friday night panel discussion, where the most prominent speaker was Omar Barghouti, a founder of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, said Del Negro, and the closing plenary on Sunday barely mustered 100 people. The QIC had an independent observer at the conference.

The workshops on the Saturday were also poorly attended and one that was to have been addressed by Québec solidaire leader Amir Khadir was cancelled.

The provincial party adopted a resolution a year ago supporting the so-called international boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel, and Khadir, the party's sole MNA, has been trying to get the National Assembly to consider a motion on the issue.

Absent were Quebec union leaders, including those of the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ), which last year also passed a resolution supporting the BDS campaign.

That federation represents some 170,000 workers in the education, health and social services, and other public sectors, Del Negro noted, adding that he knows its membership was informed of the conference.

"It's clear that CSQ could not mobilize their people, and, given that 90 to 95 per cent of the conference was in English, we think that one-third of those attending came from outside Quebec," he said.

Moreover, the conference received no coverage from the mainstream media, he added.

The conference, which began its publicity almost a year ago, was organized by a number of organizations, principally the Coalition for Justice and Peace in Palestine, which includes the CSQ; the Montreal Council of the Fédération des travailleurs and travailleuses du Québec; Fédération des femmes du Québec; Palestinian and Muslim, left-wing, international aid groups; Jewish groups against Israeli government policies, and Tadamon, an anti-Israel group that wants Canada to de-list Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

The Ottawa-based Canadian Union of Postal Workers, which endorsed the BDS movement in April 2008, the first national union in North American to pass such a resolution, was also listed as an organizer. Its president, Denis Lemelin, was supposed to be at the conference, but he did not speak as scheduled.

The QIC is concerned that the conference adopted a position in support of South African union leader Bongani Masuku, who has been accused of making menacing comments directed at Jews and Israelis. Last year, the South African Human Rights Commission upheld a complaint of hate speech against him filed by the South African Board of Jewish Deputies.

Masuku, the international secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, was originally on the Montreal conference's program. That was changed prior to the conference and another congress representative was substituted.

"To think that they are supporting a man with a history of anti-Semitic utterances, that they claim he is the victim of a defamation campaign, is quite rich," said Del Negro.

"The BDS campaign is built on sand. Its handful of promoters thrive on bombastic rhetoric, but really there is nothing there," Del Negro said. The fact is that since the campaign was launched in Quebec, relations between Quebec and Israel have only been strengthened, he added.

In 2007, an agreement between Quebec and Israel on economic, cultural and scientific exchange was renewed and expanded, he pointed out. The following year, then-Economic Development Minister Raymond Bachand led the largest commercial delegation ever from Canada to Israel.

That trip was the subject of a 16-page supplement in *Les Affaires*, Quebec's leading business magazine, and last month – on the eve of the BDS conference – *La Presse* published a 10-article section touting Israel's innovation as a business model for Quebec.

On Oct. 22, Bombardier announced a $185-million contract with Israel Railways to build coaches, Del Negro added.

In contrast to the BDS conference, that same weekend 450 Quebecers attended a symposium held in Quebec City, organized by a new politically conservative movement called Réseau liberté Québec. Its guest speaker was an anglophone Jew from Calgary, Ezra Levant.

Chassidic school fights to keep going

MONTREAL — A Quebec court will now decide whether a nearly 60-year-old chassidic school can continue to operate as it has historically, or will be closed because it does not conform to the law.

Over three days last week, Superior Court judge Gerard Dugre heard arguments from lawyers for the Toras Moshe Academy, a Satmar community boys' elementary school founded in 1952, and the education ministry.

The school, which has about 200 students, is refusing to fully teach the government-prescribed curriculum under the Education Act, devoting more time to religious than secular studies.

The children receive some instruction in French, English and math – but not at the level required – and a little geography and history, but no science, except that which can be derived from the Talmud. The school does not teach the ethics and religious culture course introduced two years ago.

Government lawyer Eric Dufour told the court the children are receiving 35 hours a week of religious instruction and only six hours of secular studies.

The government minimum for compulsory subjects is 18 hours, whether the school is public or private, subsidized or not. Toras Moshe has never received government funding.

— J.A.

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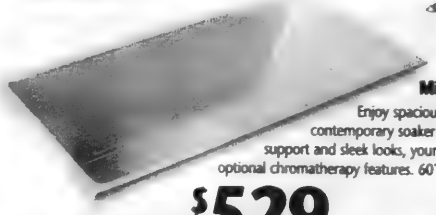

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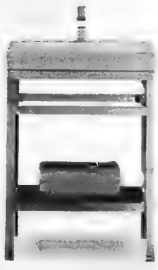

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Guests are pampered at Muskoka's Trillium Spa

Spa Life
By KATHRYN KATES

The Trillium Resort & Spa sits on 86 acres of woodland on the banks of Clear Lake in Muskoka, Ontario's cottage country.

Located in Port Sydney, Ont., the full-service luxury spa is housed in a modern but "countrified" three-storey, 5,000-square-foot post-and-beam, reddish-brown building with a view of a pristine waterfall.

"We have five treatment rooms, including a relaxation room, two pedicure and two manicure stations," says Betty Ballantine, the Trillium Spa's manager.

"There are a number of large windows. Our relaxation room and our couples' treatment suite have lake views. Within the spa building, we have a hot tub and steam room. There's also an outdoor wood-fired Finnish sauna and a swimming pool. In the summer we use our screened-in porch for treatments as well.

"The spa is designed with lots of natural wood and earth tones... it blends in well with the woodsy outdoor area. The ambience is very laid-back. There are four full-time therapists and others available, as needed. So, if we have a large group, we are certainly able to accommodate them," Ballantine says.

Services at the Trillium Spa include makeup, body wraps, facials using the Guinot product line from France, express and deluxe manicures, pedicures and depilatory waxing. The most popular treatments are hot-stone treatments, facials and body wraps. The spa retails Guinot, Organic Bath Co. and, for nails, OPI.

The spa caters to locals and resort guests, many of whom are repeat customers.

About 15 to 20 per cent of the spa's clients are men. Its couples business is growing. It offers couples packages in the couples room, with the use of the Jacuzzi tub, as well as chocolates and non-alcoholic champagne. One treatment offers side-by-side couples' massage, and the other includes a spa package with back scrub, back hot-stone massage, express facial and a paraffin-wax hand-and-foot treatment with pressure-point massage. Healthy spa lunches are available for an extra charge from the restaurant at the spa or in the resort's dining room.

The ambience at the Trillium Spa is relaxed and laid back. ***[K.Kates photos]***

The Trillium Spa is known for its girls' getaway weekends and for its spa parties, perfect for groups of women, birthdays, baby showers or any other special occasion.

"Bring your party to the spa and have a sampling of treatments for the whole group, offered in different price ranges. Some packages will include a spa gift for the special person," Ballantine says.

"We want people to just leave feeling so much better than when they arrived, feeling relaxed and pampered... and have the best spa experience they could ever have."

The Muskoka lodge opened its doors in 1819. It now houses a dining room, a reception area and parlour rooms where guests can play board games, watch DVDs or chat the night away.

To spend time at this resort is to know why it's a Muskoka favourite for weddings and business conferences.

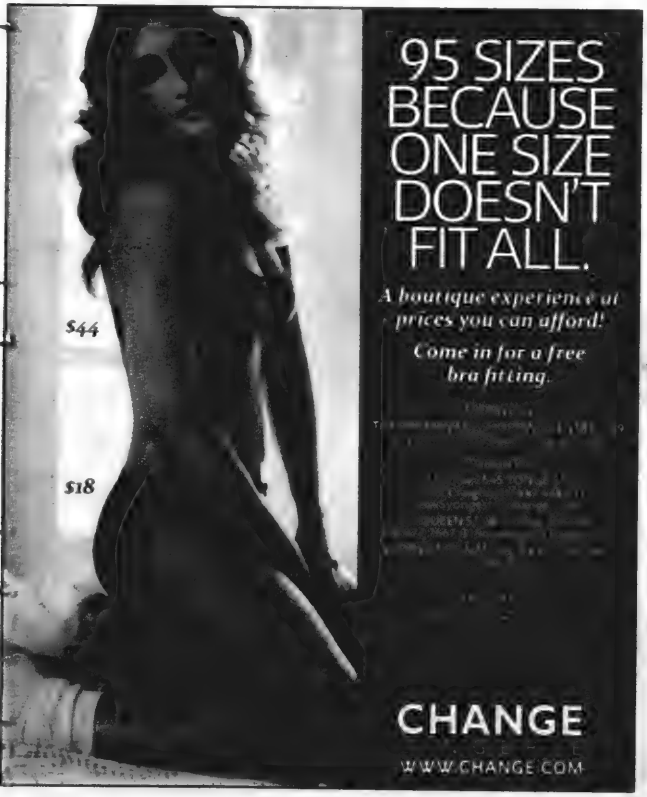
The rustic property includes six spacious waterfront loft chalets and 11 cosy bed-sitting cottages. There's also a fitness centre and tennis courts.

Summer activities include hiking, biking – mountain bikes are available – rock climbing and swimming, Also available to guests are non-motorized boats, windriders, kayaks, canoes and paddleboats.

When winter rolls around, guests can enjoy skating, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. For those who like to shop, Huntsville, now famous for hosting the G8 Summit last summer, is only 15 minutes away and chock-full of boutiques.

For more information or to make a reservation at the Trillium Resort & Spa, call 1-800-263-6600 or visit www.trilliumresort.com.

Spa packages include pressure-point massages.



Beauty must haves

News Canada

The change in seasons can wreak havoc on your hair and skin. The lack of humidity in the air can strip away moisture from any available source, causing dull, dry and itchy skin and hair issues such as split ends and static. However, it's easy to stay summer fresh as the temperature drops by using the key beauty essentials already in your makeup kit.

When your skin is depleted of moisture it can become flaky and itchy. Avoid harsh scrubs and soaps and keep skin moist with a cream-based cleanser and a rich moisturizer. Choose a cream such as Pond's Dry Skin Cream—without harsh, irritating chemicals—that is designed for dehydrated and sensitive skin and deep overnight hydration.

Next, revive your dry summer locks with a polished coif. Attempt to leave more time between washes, so that the natural oils in your hair can prevent dryness. When washing, follow this simple routine:

• Wash your hair with a mild shampoo and follow with a deep intensive conditioner.

It's easy to keep your skin dry using the key beauty essentials already in your makeup kit. ***[NC photo]***

• After washing, wrap your hair in a towel for ten minutes, which will create a humid environment, allowing the conditioner to penetrate into the hair follicle.

• Rinse with cold water to lock in the moisture and add shine.

• Blow-dry the hair thoroughly on a cool setting with a flat paddle brush, smoothing as you dry from root to end.

Finally, focus on reviving lacklustre and grey-toned skin with fresh berry-stained cheeks.

• Dip one end of a Q-Tips cotton swab into Vaseline petroleum jelly and place on the back of your hand.

• Then, with the wand of a Q-Tips cotton swab gently scrape the back of your favourite lipstick shade—and mix it into the Vaseline.

• Apply with your fingers on the apples of your cheeks to give you a pop of colour with a gorgeous dewy finish.

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Bringing the fashion of Shenkin Street to Toronto

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Two Toronto women are bringing unique Israeli fashions to Canada. Ariella Moss and Ellie Stern are the founders of ShenkinWest, a new boutique that exclusively features Israeli clothing, shoes, jewelry and handbags. The store, named after Shenkin Street – Tel Aviv's most fashionable street – has been open since August.

Stern met Moss, who is originally from Israel, through her daughter, who made aliyah to Israel. When she came to Israel, Moss would take her shopping in off the beaten track places.

Before opening ShenkinWest with Moss, Stern, who has more than 30 years experience in the fashion industry, ran a store called Ellie's Closet.

"We thought it would be a great idea... in the sense that for designers in Israel it's so amazing for them to have this exposure abroad," Moss said.

"We get requests from designers everyday."

ShenkinWest currently stocks six Israeli clothing designers including Ronen Chen, Sigal Dekel, Kedem Sasson and Rina Zin. Their jewelry designers include Ruby Star, Shuna and Mira Mori. The store also carries Achat Achat shoes and Gal handbags.

Aside from supporting Israeli designers, it's important to show that there is more to Israel than just politics, Moss said.

"We believe that these designs aren't only for the Jewish community," she said.

ShenkinWest features a variety of Israeli clothing, jewelry, shoes and handbags.

"Fashion is just another channel to show that there are other things going on in Israel. As somebody from Israel, many times you hear Israel and automatically think about the violence, the terror, the politics. There are amazing things coming out of Israel, whether it's medical innovations or technological, but also the fashion is absolutely up there."

"At a time when there is so much negative attention on boycotting Israeli products, we would like to promote 'Buy Israel,'" Stern added.

"Women love fashion and love to shop. Why not support Israel at the same time and enhance Israel's image in a positive fashion."

An important aspect of the business is the personal shopping aspect, Moss said. ShenkinWest has regular business hours and also schedules appointments. Their weekly newsletter includes their hours for that week, as well as a special promotion.

"We very much like to focus on the one-on-one."

They are also very excited by the opportunity to share Israel's fashionable side with Canadians.

"I see ShenkinWest as an opportunity to expose as many people as possible who have not seen this side of Israel to its amazing fashion industry," Stern said.

For more information visit the ShenkinWest website at www.shenkinwest.com. For store hours call 416-932-9778.

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Achat Achat shoes in the designer's Jaffa studio.

Top designers embrace velvet this fall

By ANITA SZABADI-GOTTESMAN
Special to The CJN

Follow the fashion blogs of the season, and you will find everyone atwitter about the versatility, style and sheer wearability of velvet.

The luxurious feel and elegance of velvet and its fanciful draping qualities have seen it come and go as both a fashion staple and a must-have accessory. Fall and winter 2010 see velvet and its cousin, velour, return in a big way.

Velvet was traditionally woven from silk fibres. Velour is typically made from cotton, but it may also be made from artificial materials such as polyester. Extremely elastic fibres are used by some velour manufacturers to make the fabric a uniquely stretchy and flexible knit.

Soft to the touch, velvet has always been seen as a luxurious fabric. Kings, queens and their courts have always favoured velvet clothing.

Vintage is still the rage, and velvet lends itself beautifully to creating a fanciful yet romantic look. Designers Ralph Lauren, Dolce & Gabbana, Alexander Wang, Karen Walker, Zac Posen and Thakoon have embraced velvet for this fall and winter.

The runways are showing entire women's wardrobes of velvet in dresses, pants, jackets and capes. The velvet colour palette includes basic black, rich red and burgundy, olive green and midnight blue.

Draping is an essential quality of velvet and as such creates a beautiful silhouette on women of all shapes and sizes. And velvet can be worn by women of all ages. Slim legging-style pants, affectionately labelled "jeggings," are a beautiful option in velvet. Paired with high boots and a long top, jeggings are an easy-to-wear stylish look for fall.

Velvet fashions in dresses range from the mini and higher to below the knee and floor length. A royal red mini sheath worn with thigh-high black suede boots is one way to bring velvet back. Or add a long flowing skirt to a short military-look jacket, from last's years collection, with a wide belt and you're ready for a power lunch.

Velvet is versatile, easily transitioning from day to evening. A striking tailored velvet suit is appropriate for the boardroom as well as a dinner party.

Not to be overlooked is velvet menswear. Canadian designer Bustle has introduced a line of men's velvet suits, vests and pants. It's easy to spruce up a tired-looking suit by adding a form-fitting velvet vest and a funky tie. Velvet dinner jackets will add panache to a man's look and take him from an elegant brunch to a candlelit dinner.

If you are not ready to invest in a few signature velvet pieces, try accessorizing by adding a velvet hobo bag or small evening clutch purse. Adding a velvet shawl over a-dress or sweater, and velvet bows in your hair or a plain velvet headband, will give a nod to fall 2010. Try accessorizing a cocktail dress with elbow or shorter-length velvet gloves for dramatic flair.

Proper foot care essential for seniors

By ANITA SZABADI-GOTTESMAN
Special to The CJN

We often think that as we age we can expect to develop foot pain. In fact, foot pain and muscle aches are not normal at any age and are not necessarily a part of aging. Seniors, in particular, can take measures to prevent or fix many foot ailments.

The Canadian Podiatric Medical Association stresses that having healthy feet is an integral part of overall health. The association stresses that the average adult applies over one million pounds of force on their feet daily. The complex structure of the foot which has 26 bones and hundreds of ligaments and tendons can lead to chronic heel pain, Achilles tendon issues, bunions or shin splits.

As we age, foot problems such as high or low arches, hammer toes and bunions, become more acute.

Custom-made orthotics, molded plastic insoles that provide support, are often the answer to prevent or slow down the progress of many debilitating foot conditions. Orthotics allow for better gait and weight distribution.

Additionally, orthotics provide an important extra layer of cushioning, which compensates for the loss of cushioning which occurs in the aging foot. Fitted by a podiatrist or an orthotist, a plaster cast impression is taken of the patient's foot and a plastic insole is crafted for each client.

Montreal based podiatrist, Dr. Bluma Girzon, stresses the importance of the right kind of orthotic for the senior. "An orthotic is not just a mold. There are many different orthotics on the market for a variety of medical conditions. The right diagnosis must be established before the appropriate orthotic is designed to match the condition."

Many off-the-rack insoles are available and should be regarded as a temporary solution. Whether custom-made or off-the-shelf, the proper way to use the insoles is to insert them into the shoe after removing the manufacturer's insole. Good quality shoes will not only perform better for the wearer but always allow for the insole to be removed. Choose top quality running shoes or shoes designed specifically for walking.

As baby boomers age and want to lead more active lives, more and more fashionable, yet functional walking shoes are appearing in the market place. Fashion-forward, functional shoes with removable insoles have flooded the marketplace and are easily accessible at the local mall or a multitude of speciality shoe websites.

Seniors suffering from diabetes must pay special attention to foot care and maintenance. The proper use of orthotics will safeguard the feet against many problems that can lead to more serious consequences of diabetes, such as blisters, dry, cracking skin and unchecked ulceration.

"Wearing an improperly fitted orthotic can have side effects especially for diabetics," says Dr. Girzon. "If pain persists, the orthotic needs to be modified."

Custom-made plastic orthotics fit in most shoes creating stability and improving gait and overall foot health.
[Anita Szabadi-Gottesman photo]

The Public Health Agency of Canada has issued a foot care information-sheet for seniors. The agency suggests that many foot problems can be avoided through basic foot care: check your feet every day; don't wait until your feet hurt; and take a few minutes every day to look for cuts, blisters, bruises, sores, infected toenails or swelling.

Wash your feet every day using warm water, but do not soak feet longer than 10 minutes or the skin will get dry and start to crack. Dry well between your toes.

Keep feet soft and smooth using cream on the tops and bottoms, paying attention to wipe off excess cream and not applying between the toes. Use talcum powder if your feet sweat a lot.

Wear comfortable shoes and socks with proper support and grip; wear a clean pair of socks every day; and avoid socks with ridges or an elastic at top that can irritate or restrict circulation.

Take care of your toenails, cutting or filing nails regularly with appropriate nail care tools, trimming them straight across and never shorter than the end of the toe.

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Beit Issie Shapiro aids disabled in Israel

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

If you've never heard of Beit Issie Shapiro, you're not alone. But if you have friends or family in Israel, they probably have.

The Israeli you know may well be among the 30,000 people whose lives are touched each year by this multi-purpose organization serving children and adults with developmental disabilities.

For 30 years, Beit Issie has helped many mothers like Yulia Ben Moshe, whose son, Lavi, was born with Canavan disease, a degenerative neurological condition. For her, Beit Issie "combines the qualities of a professional organization with the love and warmth of a family."

Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro hosted a kosher tapas reception on Oct. 21 at the Avenue Banquet Hall, on the theme "The Art of Entertaining." The evening featured as hosts, cookbook author Fay Lewis and event designer Craig Gruzd of Designing Trendz, who offered their insights into planning an event.

One-on-one hydrotherapy at Beit Issie Shapiro

Both were thrilled to be able to help raise funds and awareness for Beit Issie. "I consider myself privileged to be associated with this organization," said Lewis.

Beit Issie offers Israel's most vulnerable residents special-needs hydrotherapy; early-intervention daycare; Snoezelen multi-sensory environments (in which children and adults with disabilities enjoy gentle stimulation of the primary senses); dental services; social and recreational clubs and even university programs.

Founding director Naomi Stuchiner, who spoke at the Toronto event, has made Beit Issie, the legacy of her father, the late Issie Shapiro, her life's work. Before making aliyah in 1977, Shapiro established the Selwyn Segal Hostel in South Africa for people with special needs. He moved to Israel with the dream of establishing a similar organization, but died three years later, on a fundraising trip, and never saw it become a reality.

He would certainly be astonished by the breadth of its services and programs today. But none of the programs is as significant as Beit Issie's work in changing attitudes and influencing public policy.

It hasn't been easy, says Stuchiner. Israeli society values achievement, and it's hard to accept that "some people are not going to achieve in the same way." Parents used to feel ashamed, but now "there's much more understanding [that] one has got to make space for people with special needs… and demand what they should be getting."

Thirty years ago, most government funding went to residential programs. Beit Issie has successfully fought for the idea that "there are better options for children with disabilities than institutionalization." In 1980, early intervention before age five was non-existent; these days, it is viewed as an urgent priority, since therapy and stimulation can make a world of difference to a child's quality of life.

There are still many frontiers, Stuchiner believes. "There's work to be done… There still aren't enough services. There are new challenges and new breakthroughs."

Beit Issie is instrumental in research and training – including holding international conferences on developmental disabilities. The last, in 2006, brought more than 1,400 participants from around the world to Tel Aviv to share and learn together. Another conference is planned for 2011.

One of Beit Issie's more recent initiatives is a therapeutic daycare for special-needs children from Arab communities, where stigma is still common. The program has won recognition from government officials as a model of co-operation.

As Stuchiner told attendees at the Toronto event, the organization's growth has been nothing less than astonishing. "We started with 16 children" in a small group home in Herzliyah. "We never dreamed we would serve 30,000." She credits it all to her father's faith in "families being able to raise children in their homes with dignity."

Lewis (http://faylewis.com), a recent transplant from South Africa to Boston, brought her light-hearted energy to the evening with delightfully common-sense food and entertaining tips drawn from her cookbooks, including her latest, this year's *Be My Guest*.

Her cooking philosophy boils down to "if you can't fit a recipe onto one page, it's not worth making." All her advice was just that down-to-earth. When you know your guests, understand their tastes and plan well, your event is almost bound to be a success. Even an amateur cook can create a menu offering tasteful colour, flavour and texture variations. And small details such as table-setting still count, Lewis says. Do it right, and then opt for the simplest, freshest presentation you can.

Gruzd offered "insider secrets" for hosting with flair. When entertaining at home or away, it's easy to build in the "wow factor" – even on a limited budget.

Beit Issie Shapiro offers opportunites for international participation, including bar/bat mitzvah twinning projects and dedication and sponsorship opportunities.

For more information about Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro, visit www.beitissie.org.il/eng or e-mail cfobis@rogers.com.

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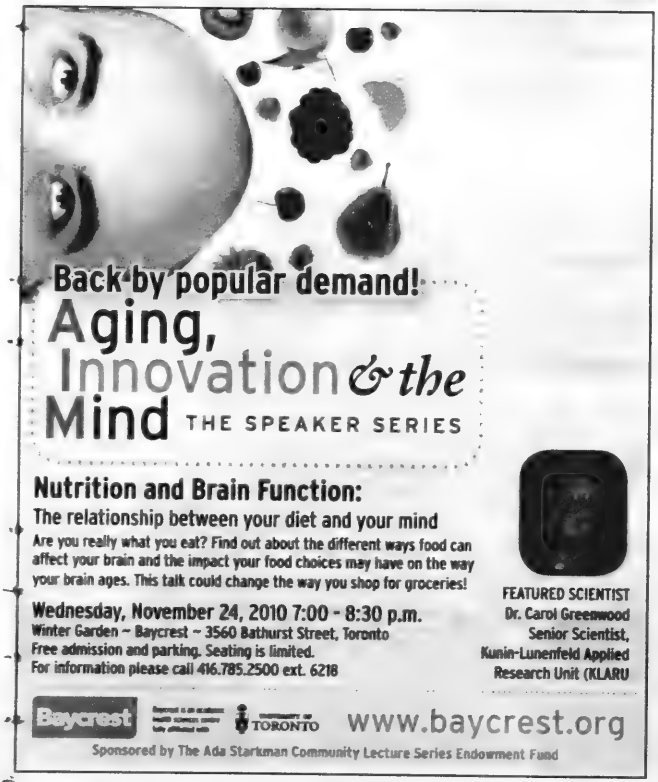
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U.S. official warns of more mail bombs

JTA

WASHINGTON — More mail bombs such as those that were mailed to synagogues in Chicago may be out there, a top U.S. security official told news shows.

John Brennan, the deputy national security adviser, said on Sunday morning American news programs that there might be more mail bombs like the two discovered last Friday. He added that the potential attacks are characteristic of the group Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

"They are a dangerous group. They are a determined group. They are still at war with us, and we are very much at war with them," Brennan told *Meet the Press*. "They are going to try to identify vulnerabilities that might exist in the system."

In Canada over the weekend, Canadian Jewish Congress issued an alert directed to Jewish community institutions asking them to implement "security protocols we've put in place over the last several years," said Congress CEO Bernie Farber.

"We issue alerts based on an abundance of caution. But sadly, we understand that Jews today have to be especially careful," he said.

Asked if Congress had been alerted by Canadian security services over the weekend about any similar threats aimed at the country's Jewish institutions, Farber said it had not.

Also Sunday, Yemen security officials released a Sana'a University engineering student who had been arrested after being suspected of mailing the bombs. Hanan Al-Samawi, 22, was released after protests by her fellow students. Police now believe that another woman used Samawi's name and identity, Reuters reported.

Samawi's mother, 45, was reportedly also arrested, according to reports, but there was no word about whether she was released.

U.S. President Barack Obama said last Friday in a televised news conference that the packages headed for the United States constituted a "credible terrorist threat" and had been addressed to Jewish organizations in the Chicago area.

One of the reported targets was Congregation Or Chadash, which serves gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Jews, and shares space with Emanuel Congregation, a Reform temple, in a building along Chicago's lakefront, according to the *Chicago Tribune*.

A second targeted synagogue reportedly was in Chicago's East Rogers Park neighbourhood, according to the *Tribune*, though the newspaper reported that no synagogues have been operating in the neighbourhood since 2002.

The head of Emanuel, Rabbi Michael Zedek, said he received information from a reliable and well-placed Jewish community source that it appeared Or Chadash was one of the bomb plot targets. Rabbi Zedek called it a wake-up call for the Jewish community, saying it must recognize this new reality and plan accordingly.

Jewish community leaders in Chicago had been warned to be on alert for suspicious packages addressed to synagogues in the city, even before the explosives were found. The executive vice president of the Chicago Jewish Federation, Michael Kotzin, said the community had been told to maintain high security alert around synagogues and pay particular attention to the handling of mail.

One of the bombs, which was identified and defused last Friday at a FedEx way station in the United Arab Emirates, bore the hallmarks of an Al Qaeda bomb, Dubai police said, according to reports. A second, similar bomb was located on the same day in London.

The mail bomb found in Dubai reportedly travelled on two passenger planes to reach the country, Qatar Airways reportedly said Sunday.

Hidden inside printer cartridges, the explosives were large enough to bring down an airplane and could be detonated by remote control.

Brennan said that officials are trying to determine whether the planes or the synagogues were the intended targets.

With files from Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf and Ha'aretz.

Rudd to lead Australian delegation to Israel

JTA

SYDNEY, Australia — Australia's foreign minister will lead the largest-ever parliamentary delegation to Israel.

Kevin Rudd, the former prime minister, will lead 17 members of the house of representatives and senators from both sides of the political aisle to Jerusalem next month to participate in the Australia Israel Leadership Forum, a two-day conference to discuss "issues of mutual strategic interest," according to its chair, Albert Dadon.

Kevin Rudd

The 40-member Australian delegation, which also will include businesspeople, power brokers and media representatives, will engage with a similarly high-profile delegation of Israelis.

During the trip, the Australians will attend a ceremony at Yad Vashem to honour William Cooper, an Aboriginal elder who in December 1938 protested to the German Consulate against the persecution of the Jews just weeks after Kristallnacht. It's the first time Israel's national Holocaust memorial has recognized an indigenous Australian.

Palestinian statehood gambit puts Israel against wall

By LESLIE SUSSER
JTA

Analysis

With talks at a stalemate and no agreement from the Israelis to reinstate a settlement freeze, the Palestinians are playing a new card: an end game to statehood through an appeal to the international community.

The card hasn't actually been played, but the mere threat that the Palestinians would push for international recognition of a state from the United Nations has been enough to push the Israeli government to reconsider options to return to the negotiating table.

On Sunday, partly to pre-empt a Palestinian move toward statehood that would bypass negotiations with Israel, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he is working intensively with the Obama administration on a formula to restart the stalled peace process.

"We are in close contact with the American administration with the aim of restarting the peace process," Netanyahu said at his weekly cabinet meeting. "Our aim is not only to renew the process, but to renew it in such a way that it won't collapse in a few weeks or in two months, but that we will go into a full year of serious negotiations on the core issues in an effort to reach a framework agreement on the way to a peace deal.

"Any attempt by the Palestinians to circumvent this process by going to international organizations," he said, "is not realistic, and will not in any way advance a genuine peace process."

Israeli, Palestinian and U.S. leaders all say publicly that a negotiated peace deal is much preferred to unilateral steps that could spark a sharp response from the other side. But the Palestinians warn that if the direct peace talks remain on hold, they will consider approaching international bodies for recognition of a Palestinian state along the 1967 borders with eastern Jerusalem as its capital.

It isn't clear whether this is merely a tactic to frighten Israel back to the peace table – talks that were renewed in early September broke down four weeks later over Israel's refusal to extend a building freeze in the West Bank – or part of a new strategy aimed at achieving a better deal for the Palestinians through the international community.

Either way, given Israel's precarious position on the international stage and the lack of international support for its West Bank settlement construction policy, the Palestinian threat carries weight and is being taken very seriously in Jerusalem.

Much depends on the American stand, which gives the Obama administration added leverage over Israel.

PA President Mahmoud Abbas

The new Palestinian thinking has been evolving over the past few years and is based on two key principles: winning enhanced international support for Palestinian goals and, in parallel, building the institutions of a functioning Palestinian state from the bottom up.

The idea is that if the American-mediated peace process with Israel proves fruitless, the Palestinians can invoke Plan B: gaining the world's approval for an already functioning Palestinian state, on conditions favourable to the Palestinians, at a time of their choosing.

With Palestinian confidence in the Israeli government on the wane and Israel's international standing in decline, Plan B has emerged as a genuine threat to Israel.

Last week, the Palestinians made their first significant move for recognition as a state by approaching the International Criminal Court at The Hague to urge recognition of the Palestinian Authority as the equivalent of a full-fledged state government. That designation would enable the Palestinian Authority to press war crimes charges against Israel for its conduct in the 2008-09 Gaza war because only states have standing before the court.

Recognition of the Palestinian Authority by the international court not only would open a crack for the possible prosecution of Israeli civilian and military leaders, it also would hand the Palestinians a major public relations victory in their quest for internationally recognized statehood. The Palestinians would be able to cite the court's recognition as legal backing for their case for a state.

Last week the court's prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo of Argentina, heard arguments from legal experts, backed up by non-governmental organizations, from both sides. The Israeli side argued that the Palestinian Authority is not a state and therefore cannot claim standing before the court, and that in any event, the court is not empowered to prosecute a state like Israel, which has effective and credible legal mechanisms for dealing with suspected war crimes.

A decision is not expected for several weeks.

If the Palestinians do press ahead in earnest with Plan B, the United Nations will be the main battleground. Given the certain backing for a Palestinian state by the non-aligned and Muslim states, the Palestinians easily would be able to secure a majority in the General Assembly – the same body that granted Israel international recognition in November 1947 by a vote of 33 to 13.

But the Palestinians want more than mere recognition: they want a binding allocation of territory based on the 1967 borders. For that they will likely seek a resolution from the UN Security Council, whose votes are binding. Such an effort likely would be blocked by the United States, which has veto power in that body. Therefore, for such a gambit to work, it would need to have the backing of the Obama administration. That's unlikely.

In the run-up to a crucial Arab League meeting in early November that will discuss the stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, PA President Mahmoud Abbas has been canvassing Arab leaders on his UN strategy.

The Palestinians see an important convergence in early November of key events for the future of the peace process: the Arab League meeting and the U.S. midterm elections. They believe that after the midterm elections, Obama will have a freer hand to deal with Israel and will press Israel to return to the negotiating table on the Palestinians' terms to head off any UN strategy.

For Israel this constitutes a major headache. The Netanyahu government fears that many countries, including the Europeans, would go along with the Palestinians and recognize a Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 border between Israel and Jordan.

If Israel remains in control of large swaths of the West Bank after a Palestinian state is declared and recognized, even if it's just in the General Assembly, it would further sink Israel's international reputation and provide additional fodder for the campaign to delegitimize Israel.

"The Palestinians will declare a state. Virtually the whole world will recognize it. And we will be left without security arrangements," Israeli Trade and Industry Minister Benjamin Ben Eliezer said Monday.

Israel's response to the challenge has been a combination of defiance and diplomacy.

"Like [prime minister David] Ben-Gurion, Netanyahu will not allow the United Nations, or any other organization, to dictate our borders," Israel's U.S. ambassador, Michael Oren, said last Friday. "They will be determined through negotiations."

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Russian census to find large Jewish drop, expert predicts

JTA

MOSCOW — The Russian census under way will show a Jewish decline of as much as 25 per cent, a specialist on Russian Jewish demography predicts.

The estimate for the 2010 census by Mark Kupovetsky, director of biblical and Judaic studies at the Russian State University for the Humanities, is based on the stable decline of the Jewish population in Russia over the past years, as death rates rise and birth rates fall.

Kupovetsky told the Russian news agency RIA Novosti at a news conference last week that he believes the current census will show 40,000 to 60,000 fewer Jews than the 233,000 Jews from the most recent Russian census, in 2002. The first post-World War II census, in 1959, revealed 875,000 Jews.

Census workers frequently fail to ask respondents to declare their ethnic origins, Kupovetsky said.

Evgenia Mikhalyova, head of the Federal Jewish Cultural Autonomy, told JTA that she declared herself Jewish only to be asked by the interviewer, "Are you positive?"

Kupovetsky said the Jewish birth rate is dropping because the majority of the Jewish population is urbanized and families have one or two children.

According to the demographer, half of the Jewish population in Russia lives in Moscow and its suburbs, and 20 per cent lives in the St. Petersburg area. The rest reside in cities with populations over one million.

Ongoing assimilation is another reason for the decline of the Jewish population in Russia, according to Kupovetsky. Up to 90 per cent of Russia's Jewish children now come from mixed marriages, he said.

In addition, between the census of 1989 and that of 2002, about 40 per cent of the Jewish population left the country.

The potential inaccuracies notwithstanding, the census will serve as the only source of information about the numbers of the Jewish population in Russia because since the 1990s, no statistical data on mortality, marriages and birth have been collected based on ethnic groups.

Israel Briefs

Israeli team in Haiti

An Israeli team left last week for Haiti to assess Israeli aid programs in the aftermath of last winter's devastating earthquake on the island. The team from IsraAID – The Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid left despite a cholera outbreak in Haiti that has killed more than 200 and reached the outskirts of the capital city, Port-au-Prince. IsraAID medical staff members on the ground have been attending United Nations meetings to discuss the effect of the cholera on its aid programs in the region. IsraAID has had Israeli staff on the ground in Haiti since Jan. 16, four days after the earthquake. Its teams have provided services to thousands affected by the earthquake. From Haiti, the team will travel to New Orleans to take part in the Jewish Federations of North America's General Assembly.

Jordan bars kippot

Israelis have been asked to leave their kippot at the border when entering Jordan, Ynet reported. An Israeli businessman told Ynet that his kippot were taken and put in a safe upon entry into Jordan, with a police officer telling him that it was for his own good. Tfillin and other religious articles also aren't allowed into the country. A spokesperson at Israel's Foreign Ministry, told Ynet that there were "disagreements with our Jordanian counterparts in regards to Jewish religious objects" entering the country. "We receive a growing number of complaints by Israeli visitors who report of religious items being confiscated at the border crossing 'for security reasons,'" he told Ynet. "They explain this by the need to protect visitors carrying 'obvious Israeli identification means.'"

Aliyah funds pledged

The Jewish Agency for Israel has pledged funds to bring the remaining Ethiopian Jews waiting in transit camps to Israel. Some 8,700 Ethiopians claiming Jewish ancestry are waiting to make aliyah. The Jewish Agency allocated $4.7 million to assist in bringing the Ethiopians, known as Falash Mora, to Israel during a vote last week at the organization's board meeting in Jerusalem. The Israeli cabinet is expected to approve the absorption of the remaining Ethiopians during next week's regular meeting. Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar and Rabbi Ovadia Yosef have confirmed their Jewish status. Israeli officials have said this will be the last mass immigration of Falash Mora.

Hezbollah spy convicted

A leading Arab-Israeli political activist has admitted to spying for Hezbollah. Amir Makhoul, director general of Ittijah-the Union of Arab Community-Based Associations, an umbrella group for Arab non-governmental organizations in Israel, admitted to charges of espionage, contact with a foreign agent and conspiring to assist an enemy in a plea bargain reached in Haifa District Court. Makhoul reportedly gave his Hezbollah handlers the exact location and layout of two Shin Bet facilities and a Mossad intelligence agency office. He reportedly admitted to meeting with a Hezbollah operative in Denmark, when he agreed to start collecting information on Israeli security services for the terror group. Sentencing is Dec. 5. The state is seeking a 10-year jail sentence, the maximum, while the defence wants seven.

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It's Time to Return Home

The Government of Israel has formulated unprecedented Benefits and Assistance especially for Israelis who have lived abroad for more than 5 years and want to return home.

And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

'Outdoors guy' goes climbing for cancer

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

When Hart Togman's cousin was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma, he went climbing for the cause.

Through his charity Summit for SickKids, the 23-year-old has to date raised $14,764 for the Hospital for Sick Children. The money is being split between the hospital's cancer genetics program and the oncology division at the hospital.

The cancer genetics program is the first of its kind in a pediatric academic health sciences centre. The program helps people with a family history of cancer by assessing how at risk they are for developing cancer and makes recommendations for monitoring high-risk patients and their families.

Togman's desire to raise money for the hospital came from seeing first-hand how SickKids staff looked after patients.

"After being at SickKids for a while and seeing [my cousin] go through what he went through and the care that SickKids gave to every one of their patients... I decided that I wanted to do something to help out."

In September, Togman and a friend climbed Mount Rainier in Washington state on what was initially supposed to be a climb of 3-1/2 days.

"Late into the second day... some weather blew in. We didn't hit the summit, which was our original goal, only secondary to raising the money. We had to weather out a storm, which ended up being 150-kilometre-an-hour winds, with temperatures dropping way into the minus... On our guide's advice, we had to come off the mountain," he said.

Hart Togman, left, and Itan Saffer climbed Mount Rainier in Washington state to raise funds for the Hospital for Sick Children.

Despite not reaching the mountain summit, Togman still reached his "financial summit," as he put it.

"My personal goal was to raise $14,411, which equals $1 per foot of the mountain... Because we financially 'summitted' the mountain, we started planning for a 2011 climb.

"The experience was life changing," he added.

Togman has previous mountain climbing experience – he climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania in 2008 – but said climbing Mount Rainier was an entirely different experience.

"This was my first real alpine environment," he said. "It wasn't as intense of a climb [as Kilimanjaro], though it was higher. It's a very different environment. This climb was glaciated... and the weather was a lot harder to deal with."

Training to take on the 14,000-foot mountain was an intense process that began five months in advance. It consisted of Togman going to the gym three days a week, doing a lot of cardio exercises and spending one day every two weeks hiking. About a month before setting out on the real climb, he started climbing ski hills around Toronto.

"I would go out for the day and put on a pack and do two, three, sometimes four – once or twice five hours – up and down the ski hills," he said.

For Togman, being outdoors is something he's well acquainted with. Aside from mountain climbing, he is an avid rock climber, camper and hiker. "Pretty much a typical outdoors guy," he said.

The Summit for SickKids is still accepting donations – the goal is to raise $25,000 – and will continue to do so until the end of November, at which point a teaser page for the 2011 climb will go online.

Of the almost $15,000 raised so far, more than $5,000 of that came from a fundraising evening, Party at Base Camp, held at Toronto's London Tap House this past August.

With the success of the 2010 summit, Togman hopes to turn the climb into an annual event. Planning for 2011 has already started, with more climbers taking part this time around.

"We're going to start over again. We're adding to our climbing team, there are a couple more guys that want to come out. Hopefully, we're going to grow from here."

Togman, who works at the advertising agency MacLaren McCann, hopes to get the Jewish community involved in the Summit, especially now that he hopes to make it a yearly event. Volunteers are always welcome, especially to help out with fundraising and event planning.

Togman's goal for the Summit for SickKids, he says, is to help out not only now but in the future as well.

"My idea was not only to help the kids in the department today, but to hopefully do something for future generations."

Visit www.summitforsickkids.com for more information about the Summit for SickKids. The Hospital for Sick Children's Cancer Genetics Program website is at www.sickkids.ca/cancergeneticsprogram.

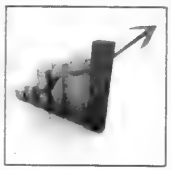
Business

Innovation summit aims to link Israeli, Canadian firms

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The government of Ontario spent north of $1 billion on eHealth with little to show for it, but in Israel the electronic collection of medical data is a done deal. An Israeli high-tech firm accomplished what we are still waiting for in Ontario, proving there is plenty Canadians can learn from Israelis when it comes to implementing good ideas in high tech.

So said Jerry Grafstein, the retired Canadian senator who partnered with Raphael Hofstein, president and CEO of MaRS Innovation, to put together a one-day "Innovation Summit" last week. Speaking at the MaRS Discovery District on College Street, Grafstein told *The CJN* the summit was meant to promote the creation of high-tech jobs in Canada and increased co-operation with Israeli firms active in knowledge industries.



"Within 100 yards is some of the best research in the world, but they are slow to bring it to commercialization. Canada is great in per capita education and in research," he said. "We fail in transferring research from universities to commercial applications."

The summit examined a number of startups and looked at the financial and mentoring support they required to become successful enterprises.

The event, given the theme "Creating Jobs in the Knowledge Economy," brought together representatives from a number of Toronto hospitals, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and government officials. It also included an Israel-focused panel discussion on "Modern Approaches to Technology Transfer." Panelists included Yigal Erlich, CEO of Yozma Ventures; Nissim Darvish, CEO of Orbimed (Israel) and Yaacov Michlin, president and CEO of Yissum of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Hofstein served as moderator.

Michlin noted that Yissum, the technology transfer company of Hebrew U, has been responsible for registering 6,100 patents, 1,750 inventions and 450 licenses, while spinning off 68 firms.

It is among the top 15 technology transfer companies in the world.

Yissum aims at finding a practical, commercially viable application for the scientific research conducted at Hebrew U, he continued. Hebrew U is responsible for 43 per cent of Israel's biotechnology research and 30 per cent of all Israeli academic scientific research.

Historically, scientists came up with a good idea, patented a product and waited around for outsiders to request a licence to use it. Yissum, Michlin said, "takes products off the bench" and commercializes them.

Unlike the older, passive approach, Yissum goes out to find funding for projects at different stages of development, assures adequate research and development support, and makes sure the project get proper consulting advice.

Looking at 2009 alone, Michlin said 120 new projects were created, 90 of them with potential commercial value. Sixty of those required further R&D and funding, and 30 were eventually commercialized, either through licensing agreements with other firms or by creating spinoffs companies to produce and market the products.

Orbimed CEO Darvish said the company is a venture capital firm that invests in small businesses, grows them and sells them to larger businesses in the field. According to its website, Orbimed is the world's largest health-care investment firm, with more than $50 billion (US) under management.

Yozma CEO Erlich said that "Israel has complete solutions for seed money and for transfer of technology. There is funding for venture capital and private equity. All you need to start a company is there."

Yozma, perhaps the earliest Israeli entrant into the venture capital field, makes equity investments in technology companies, particularly in communications, information technology, and the life-sciences sectors.

Asked why there seemed to be a pattern of Israeli companies being sold off before they got very big, Erlich replied it was something that "does not bother me. I think this is something you can't mix into. It's natural.

"As a venture capitalist, you do not know if a company will succeed or not."

He said the Israeli economy has benefited from the entry of large foreign firms that acquired Israeli startups. Prior to the 1990s, there were maybe 10 international companies in the country. They came for the cheap workforce and government research funds. Today, there are about 300 big-name foreign companies doing business in Israel. "Most came by acquiring smaller companies," he said.

In concluding remarks, Israeli economic consul and trade commissioner Jonathan Levy suggested Israel had become an international innovation hub because "there is tolerance for failure. That's something crucial and in entrepreneurship, that is part of the learning process."

In addition, Israel is a small market for local companies, who have to think internationally to do well.

Levy said that in recent years, the premiers of Quebec and Ontario have visited Israel with an eye to examining Israeli innovations, while premiers from British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Alberta are expected to visit soon.

Two Canadian business delegations are participating this week in a nano-technology conference and in a homeland security conference this week, while Israeli software firms visit Toronto.

High tourism volume stresses hospitality industry

By IRIT ROSENBLUM
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd*

JERUSALEM — October could turn out to have been the country's best month for tourism in a decade, approaching the record set in October 1999 on the eve of the second intifadah, with more than one million hotel nights.

But the 350,000 tourists are maxing out the capacity of the country's hotels and placing incredible stress on service, which is suffering as a result, industry professionals say.

Hotel capacity in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv is approaching 90 per cent. Jerusalem hoteliers are begging their peers in the city to take their overflow, since they're subjected to heavy fines if they book rooms for groups they later have no room for. Tour guides and drivers are being sent to sleep at their own homes, not at hotels with their groups.

Some tourists are even being sent to sleep in Ashkelon and Be'er Sheva, instead of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

This year, Israel is expected to host more than 3.2 million tourists, said Tourism Minister Stas Misezhnikov at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) tourism conference in Jerusalem recently.

That's 500,000 more than visited in 2009. Now that Israel has joined the OECD, which officially makes it a developed country, it's pulling in more tourists. May and October are peak tourist season in Israel.

"The demand shows that we don't have enough hotel rooms and that we're at maximum capacity in peak tourist season," said Oren Drori, head of the ministry's marketing division.

Israel is seeing an increase in tourism from the United States and Russia, as well as from emerging markets including Brazil, India and South Korea. They include pilgrims as well as people interested in Israel's culture, he said.

The country is planning to build another 9,000 hotel rooms by 2015, said Misezhnikov.

It's not the quantity of tourists that matters, but who the tourists are, said Ami Etgar, the director general of the Israel Incoming Tour Operators Association.

Visitors in October rent more hotel rooms than summer tourists, many of whom are French Jews who own or rent apartments, he said.

The country doesn't have enough infrastructure to handle the amount of tourists in October, Etgar said.

"The quality of service in October isn't good," he added. "Groups are waiting an hour and a half at Ben-Gurion International Airport and the Old City of Jerusalem is very crowded."

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Saul Mimran brought affordable fashions to Canadians

Mimran Group cranks out an eclectic line of licenced products

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Saul Mimran has changed the face of the Canadian apparel industry.

By all accounts, he and his brother, Joe, brought the concept of affordable, ready-to-wear fashion – some call it "cheap chic" – to consumers in Canada.

In league with designer Alfred Sung, Saul and Joe, who work independently today, unveiled a line of simple yet elegant clothes in 1985 with the launch of Club Monaco, which has since been purchased by the American company Polo Ralph Lauren.

Although the brothers parted ways after selling Club Monaco – which took the Canadian market by storm and set new standards of style – they remain partners in the Mimran Group, of which Saul is president.

The proprietor of the Alfred Sung trademark, the Toronto-based, privately owned Mimran Group cranks out an eclectic line of licenced products ranging from clothes and fragrances to eyewear and fashion accessories.

The licencing system, which supplanted the factories closed by the Mimran Group in 1990 and 1991, has been successful.

"We just changed our strategy," said Saul in an interview in a midtown café. "We reinvented ourselves into a modern entity."

Born in Morocco, Saul has been in the fashion business since 1976, the year he and his mother, Esther, a designer/couturier who worked for a French fashion chain in Casablanca, joined forces to create Ms. Originals.

Saul, 60, and his family arrived in Canada shortly after Morocco was granted independence by France in 1956.

Before he and his mother created Ms. Originals, Saul – a York University dropout who had studied sociology – was a concert promoter, having brought performers such as Santana and Chicago to Toronto. He was also, albeit briefly, an advertising salesman for *The CJN*.

Saul learned the fundamentals of the business by talking to people in the needle trade. "I found them to be interesting and smart," he recalled. "They were my inspiration."

Ms. Originals, which was eventually folded into the Mimran Group, specialized in cocktail dresses.

Esther designed the gowns, and Saul was in charge of sales and promotion. Joe, an accountant, came aboard in 1978 as an equal partner.

Saul's father, Elie, worked in warehousing and administration for a grocery chain. He was never involved in Ms. Originals.

Ms. Originals evolved into something much bigger after Alfred Sung was hired in 1979. Born in Shanghai and raised in Hong Kong, Sung studied in Paris and New York before becoming a designer for a Manhattan dress manufacturer and Toronto sportswear firm. Veering off on his own, he opened a small boutique, Moon, in Yorkville, a fashionable district in downtown Toronto.

Joe, taking a stroll in Yorkville one night after dinner, stumbled upon Moon. It was a revelatory moment that would rock Canadian fashion.

Saul, like Joe, was impressed by Sung's exceptional fashion illustration skills. "I thought, 'This is a real talent,'" said Saul.

By coincidence, the Mimrans were searching for a new designer. "We invited Alfred to meet us," said Saul.

The meeting went well and Sung joined Ms. Originals as an equal partner.

"Right off the bat, we got along well," said Saul. "And after 30 years of partnership, I'm proud to say that we have a close, collaborative relationship. We respect each other's abilities."

In 1980, they formed the Monaco Group, which would develop the Alfred Sung brand and the stylish yet affordable collection of tailor-made clothes for working women.

Not long afterward, the Alfred Sung label was introduced in the United States through such major department stores as Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy's, Bergdorf Goodman, Neiman Marcus and Nordstrom's.

Club Monaco, which ultimately ballooned into a 125 global store chain, soon emerged. Thanks to an aggressive advertising campaign and the allure of lower-cost, off-the-rack clothes, which were made in Hong Kong, Club Monaco was an immediate hit and flourished.

"We were astounded by the reception," said Saul. "Shoppers were interested. We felt we had a future."

In 1986, the three partners diversified, launching a series of signature perfumes. Today, through about 10 licencees with factories mainly in China, the Mimran Group sells dozens of products, including home décor, kitchenware, furniture and bedding.

Two years ago, with an eye on competitors such as H&M and Zara, the Mimran Group unveiled the Pure Alfred Sung line at Zellers. This past August, the Moon line went on sale at the Bay.

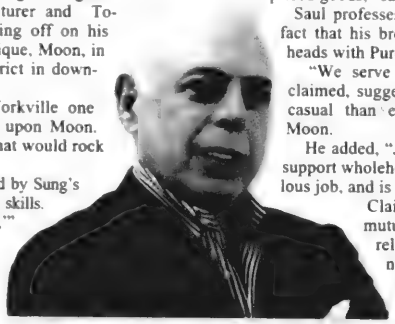
"Today, there's no shame in selling lower-priced goods," said Saul. "They're popular."

Saul professes not to be bothered by the fact that his brother's Joe Fresh line butts heads with Pure Alfred Sung and Moon.

"We serve two different markets," he claimed, suggesting that Joe Fresh is more casual than either Pure Alfred Sung or Moon.

He added, "Joe chose to go solo, which I support wholeheartedly. He's done a marvellous job, and is a true talent."

Claiming that he and Joe have a mutually loving and supportive relationship, he brushes off the notion that sibling rivalry defines their relations today.



Saul Mimran

Much to his delight, two of his three children work alongside him. "I feel blessed working with them," he said.

Jordin, 28, a graduate of the Ontario College of Art and Design, is the creative director of Moon and a designer of the home line. Tamara, 26, a McGill University graduate who majored in business, heads the merchandising department of Moon and Pure Alfred Sung.

Zoe, 22, a recent McGill graduate, is forging her own path. "She's looking to be a competitor. She wants to do her own thing. She loves fashion. It's in her blood."

Saul described his wife, Ann, as the "home manager." He said always consults her when he is ready to make a business decision.

Nearly 35 years after forming Ms. Originals, his first foray into the world of fashion, Saul is still going strong.

"I feel energetic," he said. "There is still plenty of stuff to do."

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Madness film fest features two Jewish-themed movies

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The 18th edition of the Rendezvous with Madness Film Festival is showcasing two movies that will be of particular interest to Jewish filmgoers.

The first, *Prisoner of Her Past*, focuses on a Holocaust survivor suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. The second, *On Leave*, is about an emotionally disconnected Israeli soldier.

Both will be screened on Sunday, Nov. 7, starting at 1 p.m. at Workman Hall, 651 Dufferin St.

Howard Reich's *Prisoner of Her Past* concerns his mother, Sonia, a prickly widow who refuses to acknowledge, much less discuss, her horrific past as a Jewish child in hiding.

Reich, the jazz critic of the *Chicago Tribune*, has had a fraught relationship with her.

"I'm absolutely not crazy," declares Sonia, who has lived in a nursing home since the death of her husband, the only person she ever fully trusted.

Though she's not deranged, Sonia has been markedly affected by her experiences during the war.

She was born in Dubno, a town in eastern Poland before World War II. Certain that the Nazis would murder its 12,000 Jewish inhabitants, Sonia's mother sent her away, hoping she would somehow survive. Sonia's mother was right. The Jews of Dubno, having been stripped naked, were machine-gunned and thrown into pits.

The details about Sonia's flight from the ghetto and her survival in a hostile environment are absent from the film, since Sonia won't talk about them.

Sonia is "fighting" the past, refusing to come to terms with it. And therein lies the problem of her secret childhood.

The symptoms of her debilitating disorder are apparent. She's paranoid, convinced she's still being stalked by Nazis. She stares out the window, "guarding" her dwelling and "protecting" her two children. She hoards bread, lest there is no food tomorrow.

One-third of the way into this absorbing documentary, Reich travels to Poland and Ukraine, where Dubno is now located due to shifting borders. He hopes to unravel the mystery of his mother's childhood.

His travelling companion, Leon, is a resident of Warsaw and a blood relative who grew up with Sonia.

Though they gather some information about the Holocaust in Dubno, a miserable backwater, they are no wiser about Sonia's childhood.

Sonia Reich in *Prisoner of Her Past*, to be screened at the Rendezvous with Madness Film Festival in Toronto.

She remains an enigma. Had she been medically treated, she might have been receptive to her troubled past.

• • •

Asat Saban's 20-minute Hebrew-language short, *On Leave*, unfolds menacingly.

Yotam, an Israeli soldier completing his national service, returns home for a break. His parents berate him for not having been in touch. He hardly says a word. He and his girlfriend, Noa, spend time together, taking a motorbike ride and making love in a field. Noa wants to talk, but Yotam is characteristically monosyllabic. Returning from their jaunt in the countryside, they go back to his parents' house. Table talk ensues, followed by an utterly shocking event.

The ending is explosive yet hackneyed, marring *On Leave*.

For more information about the film festival, visit www.rendezvouswithmadness.com.

Taut thriller about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction

Doug Liman's taut political thriller, *Fair Game*, unfolds as the 2003 war in Iraq draws menacingly closer.

Scheduled to open in Toronto on Nov. 5, the film rehashes the controversy over Iraq's alleged arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

It also brings into focus the attendant scandal that engulfed Valerie Plame, a covert Central Intelligence Agency agent assigned to monitor Iraq's nuclear program, and her husband, Joe Wilson, a former U.S. diplomat whom the CIA recruited to corroborate rumours that Baghdad had acquired fissile material from Niger.

The scandal erupted when Robert Novak, a syndicated columnist, blew Plame's cover and forced her to resign. She was, as the film's title suggests, "fair game." Novak obtained the scoop from highly placed U.S. government officials, including the vice-president's chief of staff, Lewis Libby, who sought to punish Plame's husband by "outing" the agent.

Wilson incurred the wrath of the Bush administration by publishing an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* denying that Iraq had acquired 500 tons of yellowcake uranium ore from Niger, an impoverished African country.

Wilson's article undercut claims by the United States that Iraq was working to build an atomic bomb, one of the reasons cited for launching the invasion of Iraq. With the scandal simmering, Libby was convicted of obstruction of justice, fined and thrown into prison. President George W. Bush commuted his sentence, spelling finis to a sordid chapter in American politics.

Fair Game, which is set in Washington, D.C., Kuala Lumpur and three Arab capitals, opens as Wilson (Sean Penn), a retired diplomat once posted to Baghdad, is asked to investigate allegations that Saddam Hussein has bought yellowcake ore from Niger.

As he pokes around Niger, a nation whose hotel bathroom taps emit muddy water, Plame (Naomi Watts), who is blessed with brains and grit, engages her colleagues in a debate as to whether Iraq is already in the process of manufacturing a nuclear device.

In the quest to answer this burning question, Plame contacts an Iraqi nuclear scientist in Cairo who's passing himself off as an innocuous Egyptian scholar, and tries to recruit the sister of an Iraqi nuclear physicist working for Saddam.

Plame's intention is to compile a list of Iraqi nuclear scientists and whisk them out of Iraq for debriefings and resettlement in the United States. As she goes about her business, Libby attempts to determine whether aluminum tubes purchased by Iraq can be used in a centrifuge to enrich uranium.

Having ascertained that Iraq's nuclear program was destroyed in the 1991 Gulf War and its aftermath, Plame informs her boss that Iraq is free of atomic weapons. Wilson, meanwhile, submits his piece to the *New York Times* after Bush, in his State of the Union speech, falsely claims that Iraq bought yellowcake ore from Niger.

At this point, *Fair Game* goes into high drive as Plame's elaborate cover is blown away and her career and marriage unravel.

The film, in essence, is a cautionary tale and object lesson in betrayal.

Plame, having been reassigned after Novak's exposé, can no longer assure the personal safety of the Iraqi scientists and expedite their flight to the United States. "It's all over," her boss says coldly, leaving Plame high and dry in questionable moral terrain.

Plame, unlike her voluble husband, remains silent and loyal to her masters, refusing to sully the image of the CIA. "You can't pick a fight with the White House," she says, imploring Wilson to be quiet. But eventually, she has a change of heart.

Fair Game, whose realistic tone includes news clips of Bush and his vice-president, Dick Cheney, adopts a hard-hitting approach to the topic at hand, and is critical of U.S. foreign policy. Top-drawer performances from Watts, Penn and the rest of the cast enhance its quality.

Fair Game is the latest addition to a fairly long list of Hollywood films whose theme has turned on the war in Iraq. More are bound to follow. – *S.K.*

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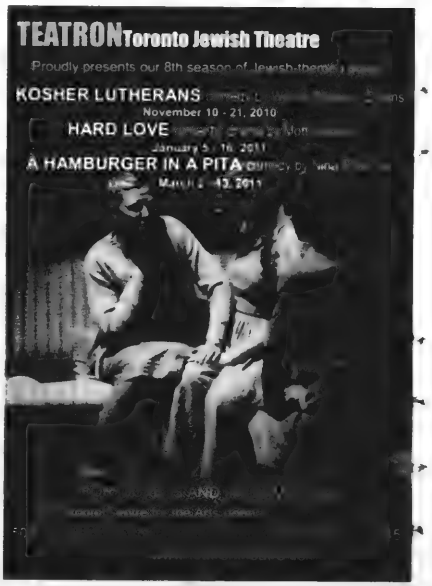


EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

HAROLD GREEN JEWISH THEATRE PRESENTS EVENING WITH ANDREA MARTIN

Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company presents One Night Only, The Sequel – An Evening of Songs from Jewish Composers, hosted by **Andrea Martin**. Performers featured at the fundraising event include the Yiddish group Sisters of Sheynville and the Toronto Music Theatre Youth Choir. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre, Monday, Nov. 22, 7:30 p.m. $118, $154. 416-366-7723, www.stlc.com

• • •

Choosing Life in Canada: Robert Eli Rubinstein discusses his book, *An Italian Renaissance: Choosing Life in Canada*, an account of how his Holocaust survivor parents succeeded in reconstructing their shattered lives in Toronto. Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, 470 Glencairn Ave. Free admission. Sunday, Nov. 7, 8 p.m. 416-633-5770, www.torahinmotion.org

• • •

Dead Sea Scrolls Online: As part of its 20th anniversary celebrations, the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) is launching a unique project, the Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library, to make all of the Dead Sea Scrolls available over the Internet.

With major funding from the Leon Levy Foundation and others, the IAA is using advanced technologies to "image" the entire collection of 900 manuscripts comprising about 30,000 Dead Sea Scrolls fragments in hi-resolution and multiple spectra. The Google R&D Centre in Israel is assisting the IAA to upload the digitized images to the Internet in a fully searchable format.

• • •

Names in the News: Singer-songwriter **Evan Malach** took a wrong turn last winter while working for the Olympics in Whistler B.C. He found himself lost in Blackcomb Mountain backcountry and spent 28 frigid hours in the wilderness without food, water or a cellphone before finding tracks that led him to safety.

After coming face to face with his own mortality, Malach says he has found the inspiration to kick his music career into high gear. Feeling "a newfound respect for the preciousness of time," he decided to finish his band Stone Angel's first CD.

Malach performs with several local musical acts on Nov. 11 at the Cadillac Lounge, 1296 Queen St. W. $10, $15; doors open 7 p.m. The story of his survival quest that has fuelled his new outlook on life is being featured in SUN TV's new series *Callout*, Sunday, Nov. 21.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Planet Music is a series of three lectures on world music for the armchair traveller. Miles Nadal JCC, three Thursdays, Nov. 4, 11 and 18, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Drop-in fee $18 per lecture. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• *Lenin's Embalmers* is an "absurdist, savagely funny dark comedy" about two Jewish scientists chosen by the Committee for Immortalization to embalm **Vladimir Lenin** after his death in 1924. Presented by the Harold Green Theatre Company at the Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. On stage now until Nov. 21. $49 to $76. www.stlc.com, 416-366-7723.

• Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** discusses "The Cinema of Israel" and shows film clips in a Media Monday presentation at the Miles Nadal JCC. On Nov 8., 7 to 9 p.m., the topic is "Political Films" (*Cup Final, Walk on Water, Waltz with Bashir*) Drop-in fee $12. 416-924-6211, ext. 606, www.mnjcc.org.

Fern Lindzon

• **Fern Lindzon** performs A Little More Brazilian Music with **Bill McBirnie**, **Louis Simao** and **Silas Silva** at Chalkers Pub, 247 Marlee Ave. at Glencairn; cover $10. Saturday, Nov. 6, early evening to 9 p.m. Lindzon also performs with Sisters of Sheynville at the Reservoir Lounge, 52 Wellington St. E., cover $5. 416-955-0887.

• • •

Passages: Joseph Stein, author of *Fiddler On The Roof* and more than a dozen other Broadway musicals, has died in Manhattan at the age of 98.

Stein won a Tony Award for Best Author of a Musical when *Fiddler* first debuted in 1965. The show pulled in another eight Tony awards.

After earning a degree in social work at Columbia University in 1937, he worked as a psychiatric social worker for a decade before branching into musical theatre. He began by writing some material for actor **Zero Mostel**, who played the original Tevya in the first Broadway production of *Fiddler*. He also wrote *Enter Laughing*, based on an autobiographical book by **Carl Reiner**, as well as the shows *Zorba* and *Rags*.

Singer-songwriter 'pushes out' her ninth CD

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Singer-songwriter Susan Cogan is launching her new album, *The Fields of Friendship*, on her daughter's birthday.

Her daughter, Ora, turns 28 on Nov. 7, the date of Cogan's CD release concert at Hugh's Room in Toronto.

"Twenty-eight years ago, I was going push, push, and now I'm pushing out *The Fields of Friendship*," says Cogan with a chuckle.

Born in Toronto but now based in British Columbia, Cogan has been working on the CD for a couple of years with Bob Cohen on guitar, Michael Rosen on drums and David Woodhead on bass. The songs fuse folk, jazz and world music.

"The uniting factor of these three guys is that they are all pros, fabulous musicians and that they all started out together in a high school band in Montreal," Cogan says.

"They hadn't played together since, but I was the link between them and it unfolded in this project. It was kind of a thrill to put these old friends together, and they sound really good. So, we recorded in Toronto, and it was really quite fun and fun for me to watch the reunion."

Other people playing on the album include daughter Ora, who sings and plays guitar on one track, as well as Cogan's friends, Tara MacLean and Brent Titcomb.

Ora, MacLean and Titcomb are slated to join Cogan on the Hugh's Room stage.

The Fields of Friendship includes 15 tracks, including a song in Hebrew called *If The Wind*, along with an English spoken-word poem recited by poet Joe Chandler.

Susan Cogan

"I get a lot of feedback from people who say they like to hear me sing in Hebrew, whether they are familiar with Hebrew or whether it is just an exotic sounding language for them," Cogan says.

After the release concert, she will be touring until the spring in support of the CD, her ninth, both as a solo act and with Cohen, Rosen and Woodhead, who are collectively known as The Weeds.

Cogan plans to release two more CDs soon: *Lady Slipper*, a jazz album, and an English version of the album *Merciful Me* in Canada, along with a Hebrew version in Israel.

For tickets to Cogan's record release, visit hughsroom.com/wordpress or call 416-531-6604. www.susancogan.com

Godard won't go to L.A. to pick up Oscar

JTA

LOS ANGELES — Film director Jean-Luc Godard will not appear in person to accept an honorary Oscar that some have urged be withdrawn because of views deemed anti-Semitic.

The news announced last week by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences elicited little surprise in Hollywood and came exactly two months after the academy's invitation to Godard kicked off a lively discussion about the New Wave filmmaker's alleged anti-Semitism and acknowledged anti-Israel record.

The charges were first examined by the *Jewish Journal of Los Angeles* and the *Forward*.

The Zionist Organization of America and other critics have pressed for the withdrawal of the award for the French-Swiss director.

Godard was to have been honoured at the academy's Governors Awards dinner in Los Angeles on Nov. 13, but he left the academy hanging for two months regarding whether he would attend.

Though an early admirer of Hollywood films, Godard in recent decades has expressed his contempt for the movie capital and harshly attacked director Steven Spielberg.

Cabaret performer releases her debut CD

BY KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Gabi Epstein is releasing her debut CD, *Show Off*, next month, and that's exactly what she's planning to do – show off her sultry voice to a wide audience.

Show Off, a cabaret CD filled with standards from the musical theatre repertoire, and sprinkled with pop and jazzy tunes, will be launched on Nov. 7 at Revival, 783 College St., Toronto, at 8 p.m.

After graduating from Montreal's McGill University with a bachelor of music degree, Epstein, an actor and singer, took to the musical stage, and to cabaret rooms, making a name for herself as one of Toronto's leading young solo cabaret performers. Epstein has performed at popular Toronto venues, including the Pantages Hotel, Trane Studio, and the Toronto Centre for the Arts, as well as at the historic Algonquin Hotel in New York City.

Show Off is produced by Canadian jazz singer John Alcorn and features Mark Kieswetter on piano, Artie Roth on bass, and Davide Direnzo on drums and percussion. Epstein's favourite track on the CD is *You're Gonna Hear From Me*, by André Previn, from the 1965 Natalie Wood movie, *Inside Daisy Clover*. Epstein was unfamiliar with the song before recording *Show Off*.

In addition to standards, Epstein also sings contemporary tunes on the CD, including the track *I Would Have Wanted*, written by her friend and colleague Zachary Florence.

"It became very apparent to me at an early age that other people were better writers than I was, and I was a better song stylist and reinterpret other people's material a lot better than writing my own," Epstein says.

"I especially love taking someone's brand-new material and making it my own. The song that Zachary wrote, I actually sang on a demo CD of his, of his brand-new material.

"The title *Show Off* is tongue-in-cheek, and is meant to let people know that I am a serious artist, but I don't need to be taken all that seriously," insists Epstein.

"It's fun and it's me. I never wanted to do the pop route. I love performing live in stage musicals, and this is an extra layer of that. In addition to performing as other people, when I'm acting in a musical, this is me performing as myself… sort of a heightened version of myself."

Epstein hopes that the release of *Show Off* will result in bookings of her live solo cabaret show both in Canada and the United States.

"One of the big influences of mine when wanting to do this record was the early albums of Barbra Streisand," says Epstein. "She just had that great Jewish cabaret flare that I love. So, what we actually wanted to do was to do a contemporary version of one of the very early Streisand records."

Epstein has a strong Jewish identity. "I kept my last name Epstein, because that is who I am and that is who I wanted to be through this album," she says.

"There are a couple songs that show my Jewish side, like *I Would Rather Cha Cha Than Eat*, and the last song on the CD, *Laila Laila*, is a Hebrew lullaby a song I used to sing at Camp Gesher, that I thought would be a nice way to end the album."

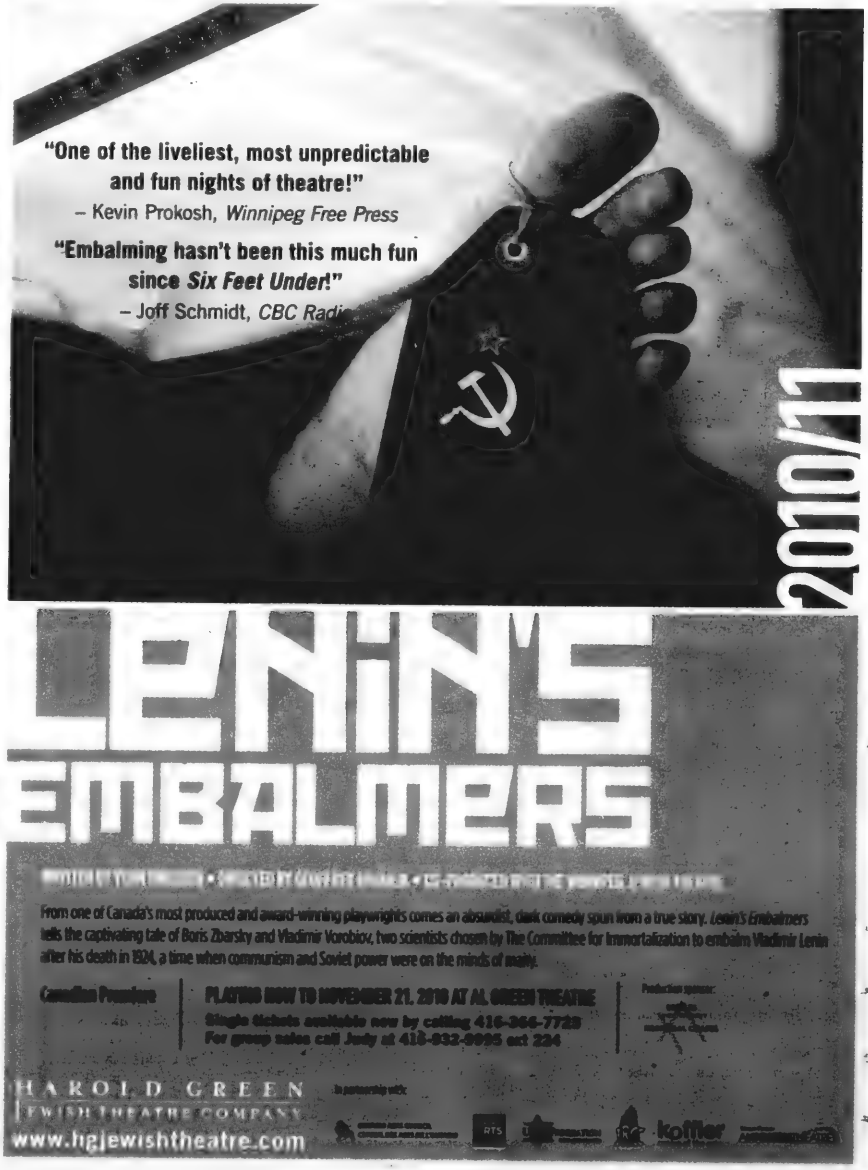
Epstein, who lives in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood, is also a children's vocal coach. She's the daughter of author Kathy Kacer and lawyer Ian Epstein, and the sister of the actor, singer and musician Jake Epstein.

Visit www.gabiepstein.com for more information about Epstein.

The Cover of Gabi Epstein's *Show Off*

On cjnews.com

Chicks in Jeeps: Find out what happens when writer Rena Godfrey goes trekking in the Negev Desert on a jeep expedition.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Soviet Jewish region in Siberia was a failed experiment

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Birobidzhan, the Jewish autonomous region established by the Soviet Union during the heyday of communism, was a flash-in-the-pan historically speaking.

But when this project was at its apogee in the 1920s and 1930s, it garnered the support of a surprising number of Jews in North America.

Two organizations in the United States devoted themselves body and soul to Birobidzhan's success – the Association for Jewish Colonization in the Soviet Union, which appealed to first- and second-generation working-class Jews of eastern European origin, and the American Committee for the Resettlement of Jews in Birobidjan, which catered to native-born, middle class Jews.

Henry Srebrnik

The two groups merged in 1946, but disbanded five years later amidst the raging Cold War and increased evidence of state-sponsored anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.

Henry Srebrnik, a Canadian scholar, has written an original and absorbing book about their rise and fall. *Dreams of Nationhood: American Jewish Communists and the Soviet Birobidzhan Project, 1934-1951*, published by Academic Studies Press, is the first volume of its kind.

"My research aims to rectify this major gap in our knowledge of the Jewish left," writes Srebrnik, a professor in the department of political studies at the University of Prince Edward Island whose previous work, *Jerusalem on the Amur*, dealt with the pro-Birobidjhan movement in Canada.

Birobidzhan, in the sparsely inhabited wastes of eastern Siberia, was ostensibly a noble concept, coming to fruition after the Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin acknowledged that Jews were a legitimate nationality. In this spirit, a big chunk of territory was set aside for Jewish settlers willing and able to build socialism in an extremely remote region.

To calculating politicians in Moscow, Birobidzhan was not just a gauzy utopian experiment.

It was, in fact, a creature of Realpolitik, formed to help safeguard Siberia against a possible Japanese or Chinese invasion and neutralize Zionist fervour among Jews in the Soviet Union.

In an effort to attract still more Jews to Birobidzhan, Moscow promised to convert it into a full-fledged republic when its Jewish inhabitants comprised a majority of its population.

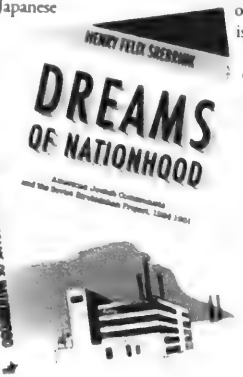
As might have been expected, Birobidzhan aroused widespread interest among Jews, both in the Soviet Union and abroad. Jews of all stripes, from liberals to Communists, responded to Soviet requests for support and material aid.

The Association for Jewish Colonization in the Soviet Union, known as ICOR, was founded in 1924. The American Committee for the Settlement of Jews in Birobidjan, or Ambijan, was created in 1934.

To Srebrnik, the formation of these groups remains a cautionary tale, at least in retrospect.

In an allusion to the Soviet Union, he observes, "It illustrates how otherwise intelligent, critical people were misled by an unscrupulous, indeed murderous, regime, and placed their hopes for a better world in the hands of people who turned out to be political criminals."

ICOR, with 12,000 members in 100 branches before World War II, was dedicated to achieving four objectives: assisting Jewish pioneers build a socialist Jewish republic in Birobidzhan; persuading Jews in the Diaspora to sympathize with and defend the Soviet Union, which was allegedly dedicated to eliminating anti-Semitism; helping Jewish victims of anti-Semitism, and exposing Zionism as a flawed, capitalist ideology.



Ambijan, boasting a membership of 1,000 in eight branches by 1939, was a popular-front organization that focused more on anti-fascist politics than on programs dealing with socialist construction. Its members regarded Birobidjhan as a potential haven for persecuted Jews in Europe.

A cavalcade of top-flight personalities embraced their vision, including the physicist Albert Einstein, the painter Marc Chagall and the U.S. senator Claude Pepper.

ICOR and Ambijan, as well as the entire Jewish Communist movement, were damaged by the Soviet Union's non-aggression pact with Germany, signed on the eve of the war. It was not only a bombshell but a devastating blow to their beliefs.

By the end of 1940, ICOR faced financial ruin, while Ambijan was forced to cease operations for a few years, Srebrnik says.

Their attitude to Zionism was ambiguous.

With the Holocaust having claimed the lives of six million Jews and with the Soviet Union having endorsed Jewish statehood in Palestine, pro-Birobidjhan figures could no longer perpetuate their hostility to Zionism. Indeed, Ambijan would eventually support "progressive" voices in Israel.

As Srebrnik points out, the postwar era would prove to be chilly for Jewish groups sympathetic to the Soviet Union.

Susceptible to the accusation that it was a dupe or agent of Moscow, Ambijan was increasingly marginalized. Not surprisingly, the Federal Bureau of Investigation monitored it closely.

Growing anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, as exemplified by the Doctors' Plot, the closing of Jewish institutions, the purge of Jewish Communists and the murder of the actor Solomon Mikhoels, took its toll as well.

Ambijan closed in 1951, when animosity between the United States and the Soviet Union was at its height.

Amid all these adverse developments, Birobidjhan fared badly. When a *New York Times* correspondent visited Birobidjhan in 1954, he observed that it was bereft of "Jewish character" and had "lost its significance as a Jewish centre a long time ago." In a parting shot, he wrote that Birobidjhan was now part of the Soviet gulag system.

Summing up an experiment in social engineering that ultimately failed, Srebrnik writes: "As the State of Israel became the central and most important feature of postwar Jewish life, Birobidjhan receded into the mists of memory."

He tellingly adds, "The Jewish Communists, for all their ideals, their cleverness and their efforts, were never able to prove that a Soviet Jewish republic had actually emerged in the Far East. As Israel's star rose, so did groups like Ambijan ossify and wither away."

Touché.

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Travel Talk

By BILL GLADSTONE

ISRAEL CONTINUES TO SET NEW TRAVEL RECORDS

For several months this summer, Israel welcomed record-breaking numbers of visitors. In July, some 280,000 visitors arrived, and a similar number arrived in August. Both of these figures are significantly above last year's figures and also higher than 2008, the best year ever for travel to Israel until now.

There is a Dickensian irony in this: it is the best of times, yet also the worst of times, since Israel is continuously being maligned in the public sphere. Fortunately, it seems that many people have recognized that there is no better time to visit Israel, despite the vociferous anti-Israel campaigns that are fuelled by a deadly combination of malice and ignorance.

Visit the website www.goisrael.ca and start planning your trip to Israel today.

• • •

Archeological News from Israel

• The Israeli Antiquities Authority recently uncovered a 1,500-year-old Samaritan synagogue during excavations southwest of Beit She'an. A 16-by-20-foot hall in the synagogue faces southward toward Mount Gerizim, a Samaritan holy site. Among the uncovered items was a colourful mosaic decorated with a geometric pattern, with a Greek inscription that reads: "This is the temple." The synagogue evidently played an important part in the lives of the farmers who inhabited the region, serving as a centre of spiritual, religious and social life.

• Recent excavations at Herodion National Park, near Gush Etzion, uncovered a royal box at the upper level of King Herod's private theatre. The 26-by-23-foot royal box is the central space among a group of rooms, and some of its walls are adorned with paintings and plaster mouldings never before seen in Israel. The box also features a series of windows painted with naturalistic landscapes, including scenes of the countryside, the Nile River and a nautical tableau in a style familiar in Italy about 10 BCE. The Israel Museum in Jerusalem is planning to mount a first exhibition of the finds of Herod's grave.

• A 2,000-year-old stone bearing the image of Cupid was exhibited for the first time at the recent City of David Archeology Conference in Jerusalem. The semi-precious cameo, measuring one centimetre in length, features an image of Cupid engraved in blue, with Cupid's left hand resting on an upside-down torch. Likely once part of a piece of jewelry, the stone was discovered in the Givati parking lot excavation site at the Jerusalem Walls National Park.

• A priceless 2,200-year-old gold coin was discovered this summer during excavations at Tel Kedesh in northern Israel. The coin is believed to have been minted in Alexandria by Ptolemy V in 191 BCE. The head of the coin depicts the wife of King Ptolemy II who ruled Egypt from 283 to 246 BCE. "This is the heaviest gold coin with the highest contemporary value of any coin ever found in an excavation in Israel," said Dr. Donald T. Ariel, head of the coin department of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

• Archeologists from Bar-Ilan University have discovered a 10th-century Philistine temple in the ancient city of Gath in southern Israel. The temple is believed to be reminiscent of the architectural image described in the biblical story of Samson and the Philistines.

• • •

Exhibitions

• Budapest-born poet and diarist Hannah Senesh volunteered for a mission to rescue downed Allied fliers and Jews from Nazi-occupied Hungary, and became an enduring symbol of courage and determination. *Fire in My Heart, The Story of Hannah Senesh* is on view at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Place, New York City, until August 2011. www.mjhnyc.org

• An exhibition featuring the works of renowned female Jewish cartoonists opened recently at The Cartoon Art Museum in San Francisco. *Graphic Details: Confessional Comics by Jewish Women* includes works by Canadian cartoonists Bernice Eisenstein, Miriam Libicki and Sarah Lazarovic. The exhibition continues in San Francisco until January 2011, then moves to Toronto's Koffler Centre. www.cartoonart.org.

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Kolel & Prosserman JCC Tours: The Kolel Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning and the Prosserman JCC offer an Israel Culinary Tour, Feb. 7 to 14, 2011, led by Rabbi Elyse Goldstein and Bonnie Stern. This all-new itinerary includes a workshop in northern Israel with chef Erez Komoravski; a "shuk and cook" adventure in Jerusalem's bustling market; visits to Tel Aviv's hippest new restaurants; and a visit to one of Israel's first kibbutzim. Info session at the Bonnie Stern School of Cooking, 6 Erskine Ave., on Nov. 28, 4 p.m., by RSVP only. 416-922-0116 ext 1.

A second tour, Tikkun Olam: Guatemala, is co-led by Rabbi Elyse Goldstein and Adrienne Rosen. This "voluntour" takes in gorgeous lakes, cloud-forests and Mayan ruins while providing an opportunity to meet indigenous native Jews and help build a school in a small rural village. Travel dates April 29 to May 8, 2011. For both tours, contact Michelle at Payless Travel, 416-922-0116, ext. 1.

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Travel Briefs

• The first section of the new 80-mile Sea of Galilee Mountain Bike Trail opened this summer in the Upper Galilee region. Stretching from Capernaum to the Arik Bridge, the first leg features several rest and picnic areas, easily navigable trails and unrestricted access to beaches and nature reserves. Once completed, the trail will bring cyclists through Tiberias, the Golan Heights, Ein Poriya, the Kinneret, the Yardenit baptismal site on the River Jordan, Almagor, the Church of the Beatitudes, Mount Arbel and Kfar Hittim.

• Hapag-Lloyd Cruises is bringing back Great Lakes cruises in 2011 via their ship, MS Columbus, which was specifically designed to navigate the locks of the Great Lakes. The company offers two itineraries that take in seven U.S. states, two provinces and all five lakes. A highlight of the journeys comes when the ship navigates the eight locks of the 28-mile-long Welland Canal, tackling a height difference of some 328 feet. www.hl-cruises.com

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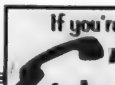
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CHAT golfer wins TDCAA tournament

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Sam Harris got a relatively late start at golf – at least when compared to Tiger Woods.

Woods is famously remembered for being only two years old when he first appeared on television to wow spectators with his ability to hit the ball. Harris had already hit the ripe old age of 12 when he first picked up a club.

Still, that's pretty young for a sport more commonly associated with, let us say, more mature individuals. Now 16, Harris is a member of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's four-man golf team, and last month he surprised a lot of people, including himself, when he shot 77 and tied for first place in the TDCAA fall playoffs at Station Creek Golf Club.

TanenbaumCHAT's Brandon Lustig scored an 85, good for 15th, and TanenbaumCHAT finished sixth out of 17 schools in the team competition. The TDCAA is a sports league that includes athletes from mostly Catholic high schools.

Harris' performance earned him a place in the two-day OFSAA Golf Festival at the Barrie Golf and Country Club. Overall, he played well, except for a disaster on one hole that left him a disappointing 54th.

On the first day playing the par-5 12th, one error led to another, which led to another and so on until Harris entered the dreaded realm of double figures. He scored an 11 en route to a disappointing 85. He parred the hole the second day and scored a 78, but it was too late. The 11 killed his chances for a good finish. A par or even a bogey on the hole probably would have left him around 13th place, the same score that guys with U.S. golf scholarships registered, he said.

Harris – who admits he "tried to be a hero" and played "stupid shots" instead of safer ones – learned an important lesson.

"I don't need to overpower courses in order to succeed," he says now. "Just stick to the game plan and putt well."

Although only 5-9 and 147 pounds, he's quite a ball striker. He can drive the ball 280 to 290 yards and his seven irons fly 175 yards. (What are they feeding kids these days?) He clearly has the tools to be a really good golfer.

His accuracy is pretty good, but one area of his game that he admits needs work is his chipping and putting. "I hit farther than my coach does, but he's a more consistent ball-striker, chipper and putter," Harris said.

"You lose confidence if you begin missing putts."

Bill Walsh, a club pro at Beacon Hall Golf Club, has been working with Harris for almost four years. "He's made a lot of progress," Walsh said. "Every shot he hits, he tries his best, which is a great trait."

To take the step to the next level, "he has to understand the mental aspect," Walsh said.

"He goes for everything, and he has to learn golf is not always about the perfect shot. He wants the perfect swing, but golf is about a repeatable swing that won't melt under pressure."

Course management is key for a player of Harris' abilities, Walsh said, and that can only come by playing more.

"He spends a lot of time at the range. He needs to play more," Walsh said.

Harris got into golf "because I wanted to do something with my dad." His father, a nine-handicap, is a member of Beacon Hall in Aurora, a bit of a shlep from their home in the Yonge and York Mills area.

His interest in swing mechanics started early, when his father got him a golf magazine with instructional photos featuring pros Colin Montgomerie, John Daly and Ernie Els.

Harris particularly liked Els' smooth motion, and practised it over and over again, watching himself in the reflection of a glass door.

Harris played in his first tournament at the end of Grade 8 and shot an 86. His scorecard was marked with three or four birdies, but it also had a few double and triple bogies. The next day, he scored a 95.

It was "a learning experience," he said, and now he knows, "everything counts and you need to focus and pay attention to details. It takes a lot of tournaments to know how you can do."

The next year, he twice broke 80 in tournaments, but he still wasn't playing like he hoped.

This year, he believes, he really turned his game around. At the Ontario Junior Qualifier at Bushwood Golf Club, he shot a 74, and at the Ontario Match Play Qualifier at Glenway Country Club, he scored 76. He continued to show consistent play at a subsequent CJGA tournament, scoring 77 and 76.

"In the middle of the summer, I was playing good golf," he said, but he felt he was also getting worn out. He was at the Beacon Hall range almost every day for up to six hours at a time.

After a disappointing performance at a tournament in mid-August, he took more than a month off, not striking a ball again until TanenbaumCHAT's school trials at Oakdale.

He made the team, and he won the TDCAA event "because I didn't make any mistakes."

"I didn't have any expectations for it, and I didn't think about my score."

"To score well, you have to limit your mistakes and think your way around the course. I only hit driver twice that day, because I wasn't hitting it well. I kept the ball in play, hit greens and made a couple of putts."

Entering Grade 12 next year, Harris is hopeful he can improve his play and attract attention from golf recruiters at NCAA Division I schools.

"Of course," he replies when asked if he'd want to one day play golf professionally. "I think I'm good enough. I barely practised for 1-1/2 months and shot a 77 when it was rainy and cold. I can compete with kids with Division I scholarships."

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NEW TEAM HAS A BALL!

The Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School boys soccer team enthusiastically joined other Jewish day schools at the TanenbaumCHAT Junior Soccer Invitational Tournament. It was the first time Paul Penna took part in the annual event, which brings together teams from Associated Hebrew Schools, Robbins Hebrew Academy, Netivot HaTorah Day School, Leo Baeck Day School, the Toronto Heschel School and Bialik Hebrew Day School. Although the downtown boys failed to win a game, their spirit remained high. The boys' championship game saw Associated B defeat Leo Baeck's south campus, while Heschel defeated Leo Baeck north campus in girls' competition.

Artwork saved centenarian's life

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Irene Greenbloom, who turned 100 years old on Sept. 28, says without hesitation that her artwork saved her life.

Born in Lodz, Poland, Greenbloom studied art in France before the war broke out and she was taken away to Auschwitz.

"I survived because the Nazis used me to make greeting cards."

She also saved two other women, she said, because they helped her make the cards.

Greenbloom, who speaks Russian, Polish and French in addition to English, credits her art with helping her to carry on after she lost her first husband, seven-year-old son and parents in the Holocaust, and later when her second husband – who was saved by Oskar Schindler – died at age 62. She met him when she went back to Lodz after the war, looking for family.

"I always did art. It kept me alive," says Greenbloom, who has two children – her eldest, a daughter, was born in Poland – and a 24-year-old grandson.

A resident of Baycrest's Apotex Centre for about six years, she continued painting and creating pottery until the last couple of years, when her eyesight began failing.

Her room is decorated with her paintings, and she has a file folder filled with art that she hasn't framed. Each work is signed "Irene."

She says she's especially proud of a painting of her father that she reproduced from a small photograph she was able to save throughout the war.

Irene Greenbloom holds a painting she painted of her father.

Greenbloom, who goes to her daughter's home for dinner weekly, says she is always happy to eat there, "because she cooks delicious, low-fat meals – lots of vegetables and fruits. I get too many carbs here."

She appreciates everything, she says. "I don't complain, and I don't let things get to me. There's no point.

"I went through the war, but I don't believe that all people were bad. A German person kept my husband alive. To be alive after the war is a miracle. I'm not bitter."

After celebrating her birthday at three parties and attending a Baycrest concert where 300 people sang *Happy Birthday* to her, Greenbloom says that "suddenly I'm old."

POTATO PARSNIP LATKES

Recipe is for one batch; make multiples as necessary

1 lg baking potato
1 tblsp fresh lemon juice
2 medium parsnips, peeled and coarsely grated
1/4 c flour
2 lg eggs, lightly beaten
3 tblsp finely chopped fresh chives
3/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp black pepper
3/4 c vegetable oil

Peel potato; coarsely grate in food processor. Add lemon juice. Drain mixture very well in towel. In large bowl, stir potato with parsnips, flour, eggs, chives, salt, pepper until combined well.

Heat oil in nonstick skillet over moderate heat. Carefully spoon mixture into skillet, flatten to 3" in diameter. Cook until golden, about 1 1/2 min. on each side. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Make more latkes in same manner. Accompaniment: applesauce and/or sour cream.

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About Life

Dear Ella,

Adam and I have been together for a year. We're both divorced and have children from our previous marriages. Adam is a wonderful man, and he tries very hard to be a good dad. He has one six-year-old boy, Josh, who is capable of being a sweet kid, but is usually an intolerable brat. I'm embarrassed to say that I can't stand being around this kid. As I see it, Adam parents with guilt as his guide. Because of his limited visitation, he tries to be a Disneyland dad, doing only fun things and letting Josh run amok. Adam rarely corrects Josh and feels terribly guilty when he upsets his son, and Josh knows it. When I try to intervene, I end up being seen as the bad guy.

I love Adam, but I'm not sure if I can commit to a life like this. I welcome any advice so that we can work this out as a family.

Blended Battles

Dear Blended Battles

Blended families have become more common, and along with them come all kinds of problems that don't always exist in a nuclear family. You have two sets of parents in a blended family, and that can be very confusing for children. Since there's no manual, people tend to go with their gut on how to raise kids, and clearly Adam feels that Josh needs fun more than discipline at this stage. Blended families have a whole myriad of challenges. Navigating through parenting differences is probably the biggest hurdle. You and Adam need to come up with a game plan. You need to analyze what works and what doesn't, and survey the results of your parenting actions. Is Adam truly happy with the results he sees in his son?

Guilt isn't a productive emotion. It causes people to make all sorts of bad decisions. Children need consistency and boundaries. They need to know what's expected of them as they transition from one home environment to the other. You and Adam need to explore all these expectations together. This isn't easy for Josh. His stable family environment has been dissolved, and re-establishing a new one will take time.

Setbacks along the way are inevitable, but if you both approach this with the same goal, using tolerance, patience, communication and love, you'll end up with a successful family unit.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *e-mail: eb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

Simple secrets of happy people

I feel very blessed. We are celebrating our son Max's bar mitzvah, and when I look around at the people in our lives, our family, friends, and especially the friends that we have known since the children were little, I am filled with gratitude.

Life Coach Corner

By JUDY SIBLIN-LIBRACH

I felt so happy at my son's tfillin bar mitzvah (the first step in this very auspicious occasion) and realized that what really counts are the moments that make you realize how meaningful and precious life can be. But on a daily basis, it's also important to be happy and to appreciate the little things that make you happy and that bring joy into your life and the life of others.

There are very simple secrets happy people know about, and it often all begins by just believing in your own abilities, talents and special gifts.

We think that happy and unhappy people are just born that way. But through writing this column, I have learned that happy people let happiness come to them and unhappy people continue to do things that upset them.

Every disappointment or hurt can be transformed into such rich learning and joy, and sometimes it's just a matter of waking up one morning and deciding that you are going to be happy.

As David Niven writes in *100 Simple Secrets of Happy People*, there are some basic rules to live by. For one, "You don't have to win every time." He talks about learning how to "accept yourself unconditionally," and choosing your comparisons wisely.

"Many of our feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction have their roots in how we compare ourselves to others. When we compare ourselves to those who have more, we feel bad."

"Don't Dwell on Unwinnable Conflicts" is a wonderful section in the book that reminds us to go to the well for water, not to a stone. "Move on. The problems you spend your time and energy on should be both important and improvable. Otherwise, you are better off moving on to things you can change."

One of my favourite "secrets" in the book is to "believe in ultimate justice. That there are many problems in the world is obvious to anyone, but take comfort in the notion that eventually *good* prevails," Niven writes. "Whether you focus on the criminal justice system or a spiritual system, realize that those who have wronged the world will eventually pay some price."

Sometimes your life is perfect, but you may not realize it and focus on the one element that isn't. Learn to say "whatever" and let it go.

This links beautifully to the section "Don't Let Your Entire Life Hinge on One Element." Niven writes, "Your life is made up of many different factors. Don't focus on one aspect of your life so much that you can't experience pleasure if that one area is unsettled…

"Build your hopes around the many things that are important to you and allow yourself to benefit from the different things that contribute to your life, rather than allowing yourself to be devastated by a single bump in the road."

Try to think less about the people and things that bother you and focus on all the great people in your life. Enjoy what you have. Remember, how we see the world is more important than how the world is. Learn to count your blessings, and don't forget to laugh.

Judy Siblin-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com; e-mail: judyelle@ican.net.

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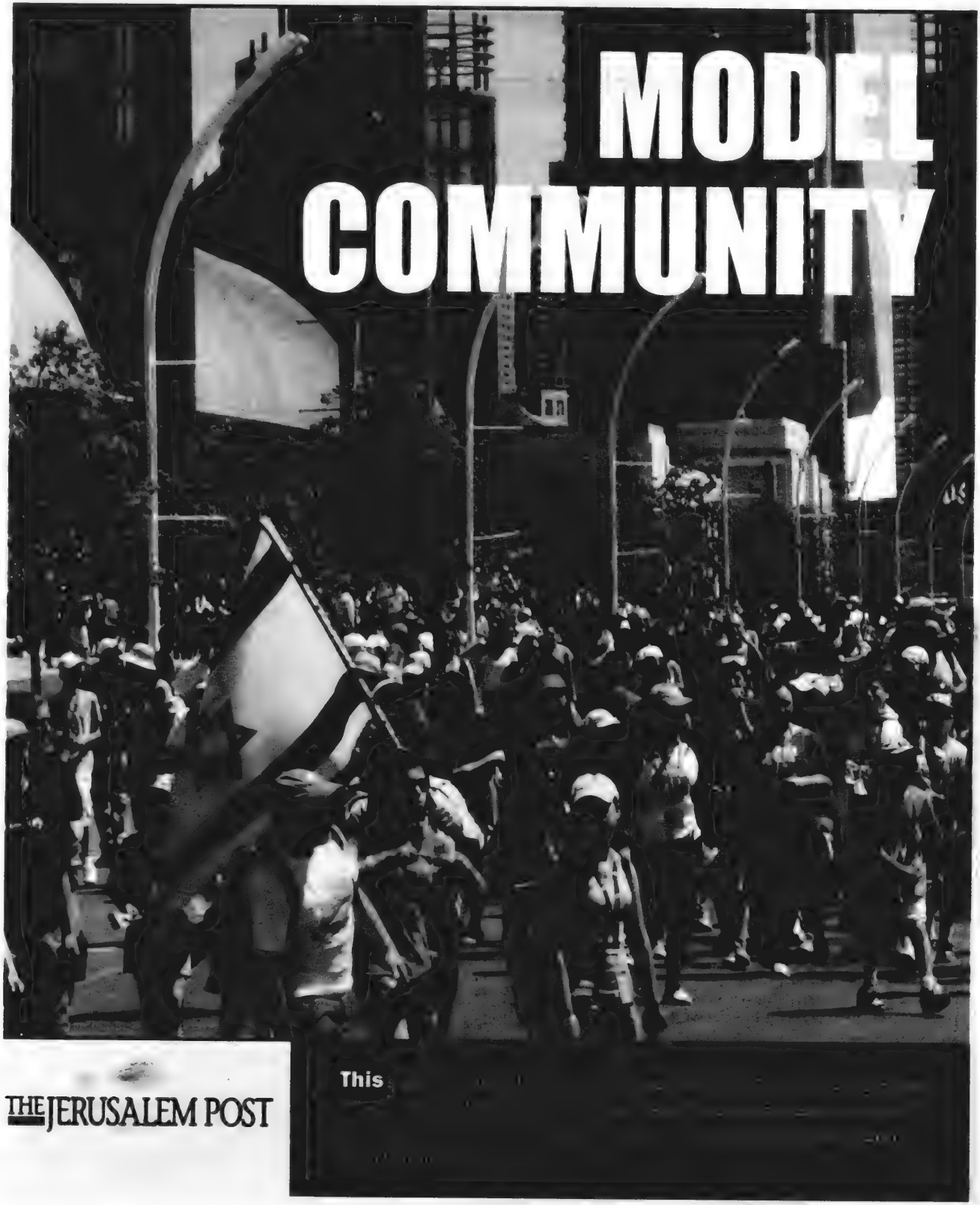


THE JERUSALEM POST

This

MODEL COMMUNITY

Toronto's generous Jewish community has made UJA's annual campaign the 3rd largest in North America only behind New York and Los Angeles.

It somehow seemed appropriate that, two nights before Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu received a hero's welcome from the Toronto Jewish community as he launched the annual Walk with Israel last May, legendary singers James Taylor and Carole King were serenading a Toronto audience at the Air Canada Center with their King-penned signature tune, "You've Got a Friend." Because, the wide world over, Israel may not have a better friend than the 200,000 Jewish residents of Toronto.

And it's not just a "call me if you need me" type of support. It's exemplified on a 24/7 basis: on the ground – with almost 10,000 people, only 24 hours before the Gaza flotilla raid would curtail his Canadian visit, greeting Netanyahu with rapturous applause before walking seven kilometers through Toronto waving Israeli and Canadian flags at the 42nd annual Walk with Israel; in the air – with almost 75 percent of Toronto Jewry having visited Israel at least once, a huge spike over their American Jewish neighbors; and out of their pockets – Canadian Jewry contributes around $60 million to Israel each year, and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto gives more than all the other Canadian Jewish communities combined, to programs developing what they like to call Israel's "frontier."

"We're the third largest Jewish Federation UJA Campaign in North America, only behind New York and Chicago and ahead of many communities much larger than ours. That says so much about the amazing commitment of our community and its connection to Jewish identity and Israel," explained UJA Federation of Greater Toronto president Ted Sokolsky.

Driving north out of Toronto's downtown area along famed Bathurst Street on the way to the Federation's bustling Sherman Campus, there

More than 10,000 participants took part in UJA Federation's annual Walk with Israel in May, 2010.

are indications for miles and miles of a strong, vibrant Jewish community – day schools, synagogues, kosher bakeries and restaurants.

The Sherman Campus is currently undergoing a huge overhaul, and along with a refurbished downtown area Jewish community center and construction under way on the even more northward Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in the heart of York Region – new facilities and services are being created to meet the needs of the diverse and growing community – which now includes an influx of 60,000 Russian Jews and Israelis.

ACCORDING TO Alan Winer, the volunteer chairman of the Federation, the bond between Toronto Jews and Israel is a natural one and, bucking international trends, is being strengthened among the younger generation.

"If I look at the generation before me, it was incredibly Zionistic, incredibly community oriented. And it's been able to pass on that kind of feeling to the next generation. That's been the real success," he said. "The challenge is to make sure my kids or my children's children have that same feeling. So we spend about 20 percent of our budget on Jewish education, on tuition assistance, on programming. And on top of that we spend a lot on supplementary education, formal education, along with a strong camping system and great involvement from parents. It all brings home the message to the kids."

Confident, financially secure and basking in the staunch support Israel receives from the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the Toronto Jewish community is able to put its full and vocal backing behind Israel. The Walk with Israel, undeterred by the protests of a few hundred pro-Palestinian demonstrators, boosted by a contingent of Natorei Karta supporters, was an impressive show of force.

"The Walk is the one time of the year that all the different faces of the community come together," said Sokolsky. "In Toronto, like in Israel, we have a really diverse community, whether it's religious, Russians or Israelis. But when they all come together to walk for a common purpose and love, it's really a heartwarming event."

Understanding the clout of the Toronto Jewish population, a long line of national and provincial elected officials and candidates – including former Montreal Canadiens goalie

Ken Dryden, now a Liberal Party MP for York-Centre – crowded the CNE Direct Energy Center along Lake Ontario to hear Netanyahu speak and to show their support for Israel.

"Nowhere in the world have I met such a strong, well organized and self-confident community," said Amir Gissin, the consul-general for Toronto and Western Canada, who said he receives some 500 requests to attend Israel-related events each year **("I'm starting to be a bit more picky, but I accepted over 200 last year").**

"The Toronto Jewish community is the most Israel-supportive community I've encountered, starting from the percentage of resources of its campaign that goes directly to projects in Israel, through visits, through the centrality of Israel in the Jewish education system."

Gissin always seems to be ahead of the curve. When he served as the head of public diplomacy at the Foreign Ministry, he was on the ground floor of the multi-year undertaking to rebrand Israel as a country not seen entirely through the lens of conflict. He was instrumental in retooling its advocacy doctrine away from the concept of "Israel vs. Palestinians" and toward a more global "moderates vs. extremists" messaging platform. And now, after nearly three years in Toronto, the youthful looking 45-year-old Jerusalemite is touting some new ideas on how to continue improving Israel's image in Canada – by taking Taylor and King's lead and making friends.

Gissin has not had that problem since beginning his stint in Toronto, enjoying excellent relations with the Jewish community and the professional organizations that he deals with on an ongoing basis.

"Toronto has become the most important arena for advocacy work by Israel," said Gissin, sitting in his spacious office in downtown Toronto. "And, as opposed to the general concept of hasbara being seen as constantly failing, here we are winning."
Gissin isn't just saying that because he's in charge. Two days before the Gaza flotilla became an international incident with the deaths of nine passengers, a small group of protesters were demonstrating outside the building calling for the flotilla to be allowed to pass through. But the protest was muted and most passersby stepped away from the curb to avoid the group.

Gissin called the protesters **"the usual suspects. There are many demonstrations of this size, of people who have free time on their hands – and it's always the same people. The important thing is that they're not managing to attract lots of attention. In general, the media find the Middle East conflict less interesting, and 10 or 15 people carrying signs is not a story."**

Indeed, the next day, there's nary a mention of the protest in the daily papers or on the local TV news. There are, however plenty of generally favorable stories about Netanyahu's imminent arrival later that day.

Today, it's a victory – two days later it would be a media disaster following the IDF raid on the Mavi Marmara. It's all part of what Gissin calls a war, and it includes events such as the annual Israel Apartheid Week on campuses, past boycott attempts against the Toronto International Film Festival for its focus on films from Tel Aviv and against the Royal Ontario Museum for its Dead Sea Scroll exhibit.

"There is a war, the most severe war, in North America, in terms of the level of organization and the resources that our adversaries have. I'm not talking about one city or one university. I'm talking about a concentrated anti-Israel effort. Here in Toronto, I believe it is well organized, more than in any North American city. But here again, we're winning," he said.

THAT MAY be in part due to the ambitious pilot project to reframe how Israel is viewed in the eyes of Torontonians that Gissin was finally

model community

The revitalized Lipa Green Centre for Jewish Community Services and the Prosserman JCC at the Donald Gales Family Pavilion on Sherman Campus.

able to implement after developing the concept the previous five years in Jerusalem.

Featuring print ads prominently at bus stops and billboards across the city, along with radio spots and concerted efforts to pitch "non-conflict" stories about Israel to the Toronto media, residents were exposed to a country being portrayed as an innovative leader in technology that brings real benefits to their own lives. One ad depicted an Indian mother and daughter smiling under the words "Coronary stent. Lifesaver," with a logo underneath saying "Innovation Israel," and the tag line "Touching lives."

"In the minds of Westerners, Israel equals conflict. That is the problem. For me personally, the problem is not hasbara, or the level of our sound bites or the English spoken by our spokespeople. The problem is that Israel equals conflict. And we contribute to it regularly," said Gissin.

"Toronto is the first place where there's a real understanding of the need to emphasize Israel through a wider angle than the conflict. There are other places where it's being developed, but in Toronto it's actually happening," he added, refusing to take credit for the movement.

"It's a process that started some years ago, before my time, with a realization in the Jewish community here – including all of the major professional organizations like the Canada-Israel Committee, Canadian Jewish Congress, the Federation, Hillel – that there's a need to find a way to present to the local public opinion arena the idea of this other side of Israel, and they started emphasizing the concept of shared values that Israel has with Canada.

"The branding effort was a development on that, which added one important component – and that is relevancy. On a grassroots level, there is an understanding in Toronto within the Jewish community and among Christian supporters of Israel that to cope with the propaganda campaign against Israel, you have to be relevant. Because most Canadians don't want to hear about conflict – and it's the same elsewhere. And they want to hear about things that are relevant to their lives. The Middle East conflict is not relevant to their lives."

According to Gissin, the year-long campaign has resulted in the perception of Israel shifting within Canada – not only among the rank and file, but in more non-conflict stories appearing in the Toronto media. In September, 2008, 86 percent of the stories about Israel that appeared were about the conflict. In September 2009, it had shifted to 50/50.

Internet-based studies commissioned by the consulate that were conducted following the campaign, showed that more than 30% of those exposed to the campaign think today that Israel is attractive, innovative, creative.

"The attributes which are part of the way we see ourselves and what makes us be proud of ourselves are now being shared by Canadians in a very significant way," said Gissin. "The ultimate result of that is happening right now – the premier of Ontario, Dalton McGuinty, is in Israel right now, saying, 'We came to learn Israel's innovation model.'"

(He was referring to the business delegation led by McGuinty late last month.)

ACCORDING TO Howard English, the Federation's director of strategic communications, the city was the perfect place to test the concept.

"Canadians are to some extent indifferent to the Middle East conflict – they think there should just be peace. On the other hand, we also know that most Canadians don't harbor any innate hostility toward Israel."

Federation president Sokolsky also praised the campaign, but said he would have preferred a lower profile surrounding its existence.

"When you're launching a branding campaign, you shouldn't be announcing that it's a branding campaign," he said.

Despite scattered criticism about the tactics employed, the bottom line for Gissin is that, according to his results, people in Toronto are being exposed to positive things that Israel does that are relevant to their lives, and therefore they look at the country more positively.

"We've made this connection – this is why we're winning the war," he said. "And it's gone far beyond the consulate or the pro-Israel advocacy organizations. It's now a grassroots situation. More than any country, the interest of Canada in Israel is not travelling through the lens of the conflict. That's an achievement and if we can copy that reality to other countries, then I believe that Israel's image will change in the long term."

As successful as the pilot campaign may have been, Gissin is already looking ahead to what he sees as the next way to cement Israel's positive image in Toronto – and the world over. And it's another "ahead of the curve" idea which he sees as the future of the relationship of Israel and the Diaspora, at least from the aspect of advocacy.

"We need to use the Jewish communities all over the world – and I think the Toronto community will be a leader in this – to build bridges to other emerging communities in North America. To do it, we must use the strength of the Jewish community, not in terms of resources or philanthropy, but through its expertise," said Gissin.

"Jewish communities in North America started very low, very poor with lots of anti-Semitism. Look where they are today – very rich, organized sophisticated communities. The knowledge and experience gained during those years from being a neglected, poor community to where they are today, there are so many newcomers to North America that can use this knowledge of building a functioning community, institutions and organizations – all we have to do is share this experience."

Gissin admitted that it will take time to implement his plan because it's not in the DNA of most Jewish communities.

"We have a tendency for self-isolation," he said. "We have our own fears of getting our young generation in touch with the young generation of other communities. It's part of who we are as Jews, we need to secure our youngsters, we're well aware of that.

"But to share information and give a hand to emerging communities on the adult professional level is, I believe, the future of cross-communal relationships that in time will help the Jewish community bring friends on board to support and accept Israel and declare that friendship loudly."

James Taylor and Carole King couldn't have said it better.

CAMPUS CRASHES

Are 20,000 Jewish students taking their lives in their hands by making pro-Israel statements on campus? The reality is considerably more docile.

York University students during Israel Apartheid Week

If Toronto is generally a bastion of goodwill for all – including Israel – the one crack in the surface where anti-Israel sentiments regularly seep through is on college campuses.

Events like the annual Israel Apartheid Week on the campuses of the University of Toronto, York University and Ryerson University, and a widely covered incident more than a year ago at York in which 100 anti-Israel activists surrounded a campus building belonging to the university's Hillel chapter, forcing students to barricade themselves inside, are the manifestations of an organized campaign on the campuses targeting Israel.

While they may lead one to believe that the 20,000 Jewish students at the three universities are taking their lives in their hands by making a pro-Israel statement on campus, the reality is considerably more docile, and according to campus representatives and community professionals who gathered at a roundtable discussion at the Hillel of Greater Toronto headquarters at The Wolfond Center for Jewish Campus Life, the changing attitudes on Toronto campuses is due in part to the outrage caused by the York incident.

For Ryan Luckner, who was the vice president of York's Hillel and one of the students who had run into the Hillel building to avoid the mob, the incident was the culmination of a growing anti-Israel sentiment he's felt during his three years at the school.

"At York, there's a strong anti-Israel overtone and ideal. The York Federation of Students put a motion forward saying it supports the people of Gaza and the people of Palestine and condemns the idea of Israeli apartheid as part of its mandate. That's something we have to challenge every day," he said.

According to Hillel of Greater Toronto director Zac Kaye, the York incident has forced administration officials at all three universities to reassess their roles in curbing the anti-Israel vitriol on campus.

"What happened at York sent shock waves. It caused everybody in the Jewish community, and more importantly at the university, to say 'no more.' It crossed a red line; it has caused the universities to respond in extremely positive ways. Jewish students, just like all students, have a right to feel safe when they enter the campus," said Kaye, adding that a fairer environment on campus has ensued.

All the universities have resisted banning anti-Israel events over the issue of free discourse, but they now certainly try to marginalize the impact of those events. They send out very strong messages, meet with the groups in question, saying we respect the freedom of speech but we expect civil discourse, and this should be the context.

"The administration now has no problem saying, 'You're making Jewish students feel very uncomfortable on campus and that shouldn't be where it's at.' There are red lines, and what the universities didn't do in the early years the anti-Israel campus movement was emerging was to enforce those red lines," Kaye said.

Jordan Kerbel, the national director of public affairs of the Canadian Jewish Congress, stressed that the troublemakers on campus were "small, fringe groups." **"It's important to remember that the vast majority of students could care less. We're talking about**

maybe 200, 300 students out of the 50,000 who attend York," he said.

WITH PRO-ISRAEL students often grasping for direction in ways to defend Israel, Federation system funded organizations like Hillel, the CJC and the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) abet the students in finding ways to go on the offensive – like this year's "Size Doesn't Matter" campaign, timed to coincide with Israel Apartheid Week.

Students from 23 universities across Canada participated in promoting a multimedia campaign that received tons of coverage due to a viral video which touted Israel's achievements in a PG-13 way that some people criticized as lewd, but many saw as innovative.

"We're investing huge amounts of money on student activism on Israel's behalf," said Howard English, the Federation's director of strategic communications. "The Size Doesn't Matter campaign, despite the controversy, certainly struck a chord with students who would otherwise not show any interest in Israel. It showed them aspects of Israel they had never thought of before."

The students, too, were overjoyed at the success of the campaign, especially the YouTube video featuring a strategically placed map of Israel and a young, attractive couple.

"We weren't promoting a negative message. It wasn't, 'We're right and they're wrong.' It was a 'this is what Israel has to offer,'" said York's Luckner.

"It got the message out to people, and everyone was talking about it. They saw the positive messaging from it," added Beca Bookman, a first-year University of Toronto student.

"The video that circulated has something like a million hits worldwide," said Jay Solomon, the advocacy manager of CIJA. "And the Web site during Apartheid Week had 75,000 hits, many of them going to information about Israel pages or to our events page. So it was a positive engagement tool that not only brought people to the site but brought them to see Israel in a positive light because of the information and events that were contained there."

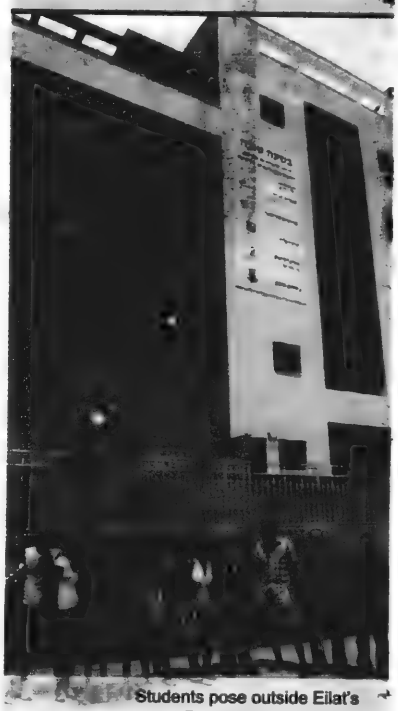
According to Hillel director Kaye, the scope and flavor of the campaign proved that the pro-Israel students can take back the agenda.

"We've always taken the position of being proactive. The problem was that the Israel Apartheid Week was strong and created such a roar it placed us in a reactive mode rather than a proactive one," he said. "So, for a few years, yes, we were on the defensive, but when we pushed back, as we did this year, it showed the strength of Toronto's Jewish students."

"One-hundred percent of the credit has to go to the students," added the CJC's Kerbel. "They're incredibly committed. We've recognized that the anti-Israel environment is doing nothing but creating an extreme way of thinking – there is not intellectual discourse involved – there's just tit for tat going back and forth, and there is no appetite on campus for this anymore. I think they present a shining example of what other pro-Israel students on campuses across North America and the world can do."

THE BANG BEHIND THE BUCKS

"Canadians are used to talking about 'frontiers' and we can understand very well how in Israel the 'periphery' is very much a frontier," says Sokolsky.



Students pose outside Eilat's Ben-Gurion University.

"The term periphery is a difficult concept for Canadians to grasp," says Ted Sokolsky, the energetic president of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "On the other hand, Canadians are used to talking about 'frontiers' and we can understand very well how in Israel the 'periphery' is very much a frontier – in more ways than one."

Sokolsky was explaining how the Federation has succeeded in convincing not only the Toronto Jewish community, but Israeli partners to buy into the plethora of projects it funds in Israel.

In fact, according to Sokolsky, one of the main reasons the Federation has been so successful in implementing projects is through its ability to find compatible partners.

"The bigger component is when you put $1 million into a project and raise two more million with leveraging, and it turns into a $100 million program through either the government or industry. And that's what we're trying to focus on today," he said.

"Whether it's through the Israeli government, organizations in the country or private philanthropists, we've been able to leverage the money we put into projects and get a much better bang for our buck in terms of what you're doing."

THAT BANG is being felt throughout Israel in ways that many of those being affected aren't even aware of. Working through the Magbit Canada office in Jerusalem, the Federation identifies areas in which its involvement can make a tangible difference in the lives of the community.*

For example, proceeds from this year's Walk with Israel have been allocated toward programs for Ethiopian immigrants in Bat Yam, the home of the fastest - growing Ethiopian community in the country, with more than 650 families, 30 percent of whom arrived within the last three years.

After several years of funding a successful program for the Ethiopian community in the Rehovot neighborhood of Kiryat Moshe, the Federation has initiated similar programs in Bat Yam. The Youth Futures program employs professionally-trained "trustees" to serve as big brothers and liaisons between home, school and social services for children. The Mirchav-Spaces program, in partnership with the Rashi Foundation, identifies and monitors the needs of 230 children, and provides a slew of other services aimed at giving the next generation of Ethiopian Israelis a fighting chance.

This past May, the Federation dedicated the first student dormitories on the campus of the Eilat branch of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. They were built at a cost of $4.5 million, including an initial $2.3 million grant from the Federation, which is twinned with the Eilat region through the Jewish Agency's Partnership 2000 program. Additional funding was provided by the Rashi Foundation, Ben-Gurion University and the Eilat Municipality.

"The dormitory project is based on a very ambitious objective of transforming the region from one which is uniformly focused and dependent on tourism into a region that is highlighted by higher education and renewable energy innovation," said Howard English, director of strategic communications.

"So when you think about it, it's actually a startlingly ambitious goal – to take an area which is so strongly associated with tourism and low-paying jobs and to try to transform it. Over the past five years or so, we've been working steadily toward those twin objectives.

"In terms of higher education, we defined it very broadly, not just as a BGU campus in Eilat, but as improving the quality of education in the public school system. The rate of matriculation had been relatively low and the number of kids who went to university

was low. So we work in partnership with the municipality and the Education Ministry on measures to improve the quality of education."

The Federation has also introduced work /study programs which allow young people to work in the tourism industry and attend university at the same time – with the cooperation of the tourism and hotel industry, as well as BGU. And another program enables high-school seniors to attend university once a week.

"I talked to many of these kids when I was there a couple of years ago, and they said things to me that you would never hear in Canada – like 'my mother is so proud of me' – they would never have dreamed that their daughter or son would be at attending a university. The self-esteem gained by making the university so accessible to high-school kids in Eilat was heartwarming and palpable," English said.

IN THE same geographical area, the Federation has committed funds over the last three years to develop the Hevel Eilot region as a leader in the field of renewable energy.

Funding for the Renewable Energy Project has supported research and development at the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, the first renewable energy faculty in Israel where students can obtain a master's degree in the field. The renewable energy initiative also extends to educational programming in high schools and local communities, the goal being to nurture a thriving industry for residents.

"It's been a great success, and today you've got government involvement in building power plants in that area, people like Siemens making major investments in the area, you've got the International Conference for Renewable Energy, a conference that we helped fund initially – it's basically self-supporting today and a profit maker for the city," said Brian Schachter, chairman of the Federation's overseas committee.

Udi Gat, chairman of the Eilot Regional Council, praised the Toronto Jewish community for being the first to believe in the region and its potential with renewable energy.

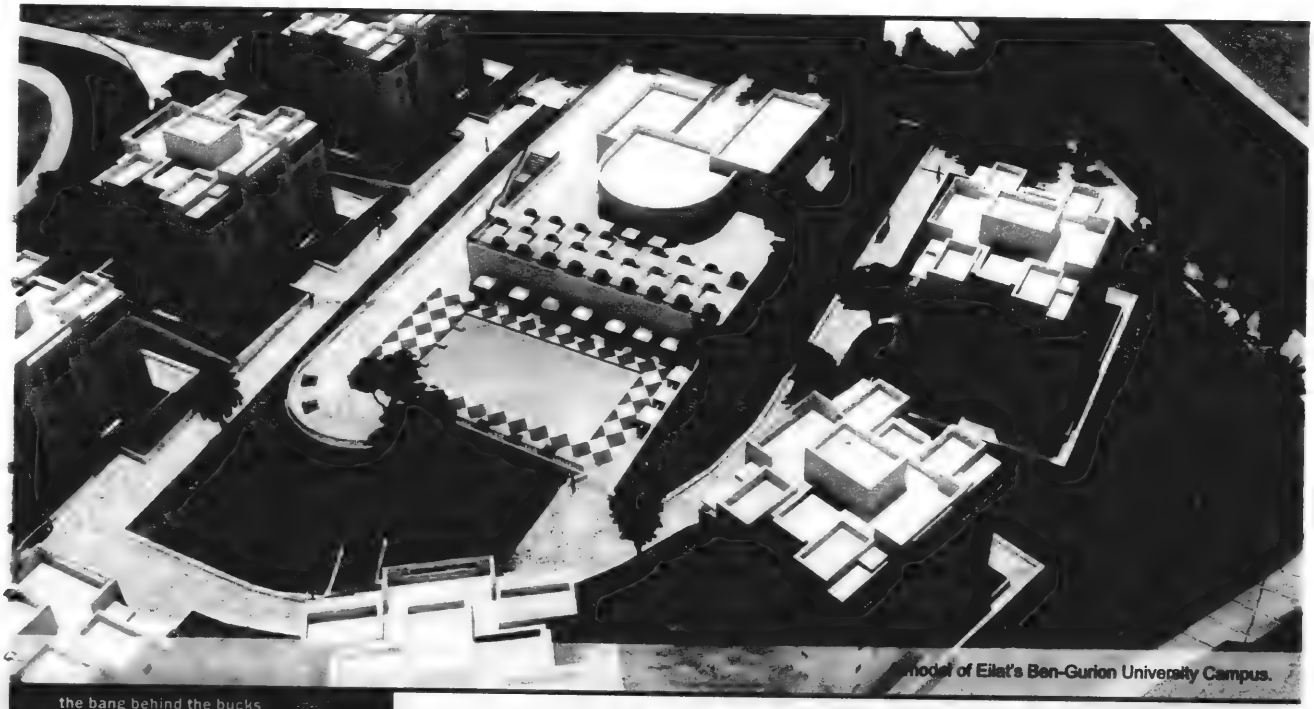
"Renewable energy will generate job opportunities and prosperity for the residents and make us leaders in the global effort to sustain our planet. All of these factors will contribute to establishing the region as the Silicon Valley of renewable energy," he said.

According to Federation chairman Alan Winer, the way the Federation has maneuvered within these various projects to bring in community partners is helping to change the way philanthropy for Israel is perceived.

"I think our relationship historically, between the Diaspora community and Israel, has been more like a poor cousin type of relationship," he said. "And I think it's developed a lot more into partnerships, into helping disadvantaged people in Israel, and in a lot of our projects now, whether they be in Bat Yam or Eilat, we really partner up."

Gissin agreed that the Federation has been especially adept at finding the right projects in which to invest and promote. **"There's a real understanding here of the strengths and weaknesses of Israeli society. The true partnership is the development of more than the traditional model of philanthropy; it's a real two-sided relationship," he said.**

Members of the overseas committee of the Federation travel to Israel a number of times



Model of Eilat's Ben-Gurion University Campus.

a year to monitor the various projects and, according to Winer, roll up their sleeves to volunteer.

"I went on one of these 'holiday' trips – and you're working literally 14-16 hours a day – and you're going down and meeting your partners and making a difference in lives," Winer said. "When you meet with the people in Bat Yam for example, or go to the Eilot region and visit some of the projects in the schools, and you see it really makes a difference in peoples' lives. Unlike here in Toronto, where the people benefiting from social services don't really come out and talk to you, there they'll bring out the parents and the kids who are impacted and you see firsthand how lives are being changed. It's really rewarding.

The approach that the Federation takes with its projects is similar to the way the founding fathers of the country developed the infrastructure, claimed Schachter.

"The two big picture concepts in our approach involve vision and expanded partnerships. What we were doing in the past was meeting immediate needs. We would go to the Eilat area and we would receive presentations on its immediate needs and we'd agree and help to fix the immediate needs," he said.

"But where was the vision, the big idea? In a sense this new approach was very Israeli. We now go into an area with an approach that's like the foundation on which Israel was built and continues to thrive – which is to think as big as you possibly can – to think of everything that could be possible and then design the mechanism to achieve it."

The end result, according to Sarah Mali, director of Israel engagement at the Federation, is an expanded sense of community.

"That's the added value of what we do behind the dollars – one of real conversation and dialogue, encouraging community," she said, referring to another project, the current upgrading of the emergency room facilities at Eilat's Josephthal Hospital.

Neglected and unprepared to fill the community's growing needs, the emergency room comprises only eight stations in a single hall separated by curtains. Women giving birth can find themselves next to patients with contagious diseases. Through the Federation's involvement, construction is now under way to expand the emergency room by 500% and introduce sorely needed state of the art equipment.

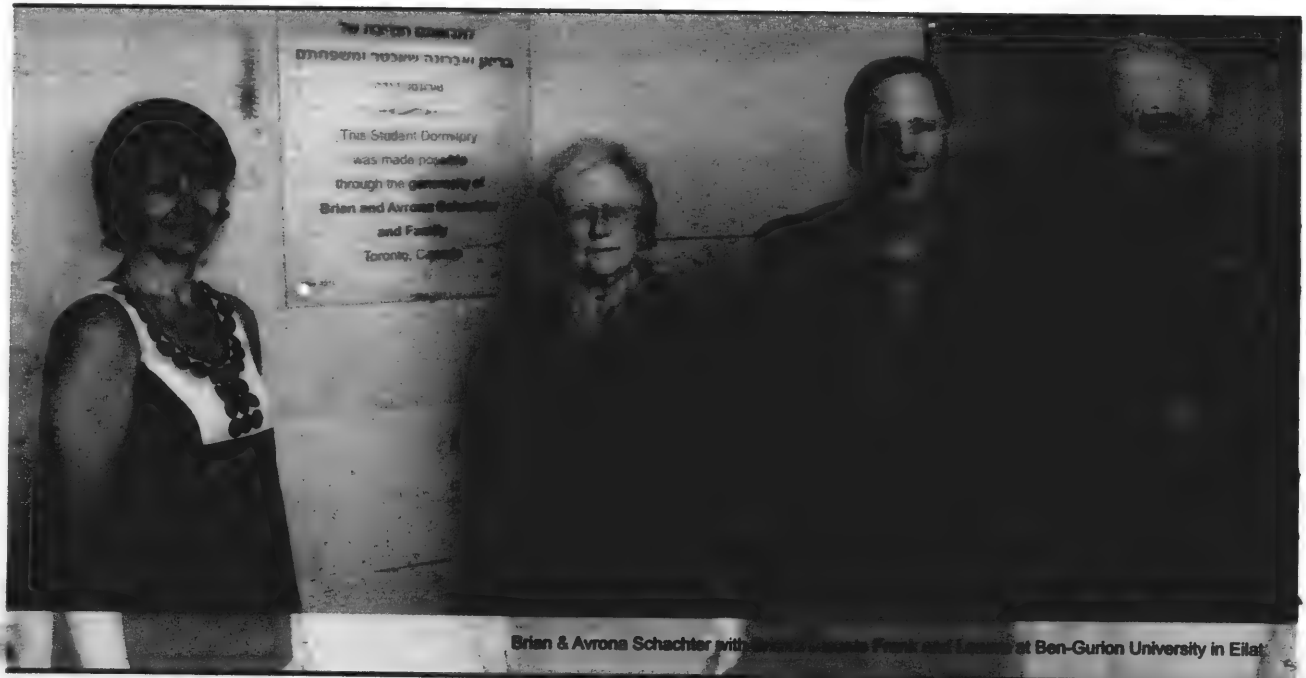
"We got involved with both the government and the Clalit Health Fund and leveraged our offer of first funding into building a new emergency department in Eilat," said Mali.

According to Schachter, it's all about partnership and involvement.

"Instead of saying, 'Here's some money and I'm going to tell you what you're going to do with it,' we really work very differently," he said. "We're sitting around a round table and we discuss, 'How do we help you, how do you help us, how do we integrate this, how do we create something?' When we come and sit with mayors or other leaders of the community, it's so unbelievable when you hear them talking as a we.'"

**Funds raised by UJA for Israel and overseas needs are allocated to United Israel Appeal Canada inc. (UIA) for which authorized organizations deliver services.*

The writer was a guest of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.



Brian & Avrona Schachter with [illegible] at Ben-Gurion University in Eilat.

SABRAS AND MAPLE LEAFS

18.06.2010

"Because the Israelis that come here are, on the whole, young, we emphasize the issue of developing young leadership," says Toronto UJA director.

Strolling along picturesque Lake Ontario during the Toronto Jewish community's annual Walk with Israel this past May, the dominance of English among the nearly 10,000 participants receives some stiff competition – not from French, the other official language of Canada – but from Hebrew.

The number of Israelis living in Greater Toronto has expanded to almost 30,000, with around 500 new families arriving each year, according to Galya Sarner, the director of the Israeli Council of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, who is in charge of attempting to implement the seemingly contradictory tasks of integrating the transplanted residents in their new community and helping them keep strong ties to Israel.

"Since many Israeli Canadians are very secure in their Israeli and Jewish identity, they feel that they don't need to actively maintain it, and as a result, their children are very vulnerable to losing that connection," said the Jerusalem-born Sarner, 48, who moved to Canada four years ago with her husband, Robert, a former IBA TV anchorman, and their three children.

Because Israelis also shied away from getting involved with communal Jewish activities through the traditional Federation avenues, there was rarely an overlap between Toronto Jews and the burgeoning Israeli community in their midst. After a study that UJA Federation of Greater Toronto commissioned from the Board of Jewish Education five years ago revealed that Israelis felt excluded by the Jewish community, the Federation's president, Ted Sokolsky, hired Sarner to establish the UJA Israeli Forum Committee to do something about it.

"Ted recognized the potential power of the Israeli community here, he understood that they could provide a certain infrastructure, and instead of being a separate entity, they were an integral part of the Jewish community," said Sarner.

Through programs aimed at Israelis – ranging from establishing a center for Hebrew and Israel studies for children through eighth grade called Kachol Lavan, the strengthening of the Tzofim movement, the Mifgash program aimed at bringing together adult members of the Jewish and Israeli communities and a Hebrew community theater program in conjunction with the Cameri – there's been success in bringing them into the community, according to Sarner.

"Because the Israelis that come here are, on the whole, young, we emphasize the issue of developing young leadership, the goal being that they end up taking major roles in the future of the Federation," she says.

"Galya's done an amazing job in integrating the Israelis who have moved to Toronto within the Jewish community here," says Sokolsky. "In addition, whether it's the Walk with Israel, the annual Yom Hashoah ceremony, or special campaigns we had to help Israel during the Second Lebanon War and Operation Cast Lead, the Israeli community plays a leading role."

The Federation programs for the Israeli Canadians have proven to be so effective that they've rekindled in some the lost spark of Zionism, resulting in 700 people returning to Israel last year, according to statistics provided to Sarner by the Israeli Consulate in Toronto.

"In many ways, in terms of Zionism, our project is a great tool," she says.

"We think that the place for Jews is Israel and we've passed that on to our children. But if we do live here, for whatever reasons, we never forget our roots and we'll always be Israeli first. We always put the option on the table of them going to Israel and giving back to the country what we received by living there."

UNITED JEWISH APPE
OF GREATER

Walking the fine line between making them feel at home by creating attachments to the Jewish community and safeguarding and strengthening their already established ties to Israel, Sarner thinks she has found a happy medium that meets many of the needs of the Israelis living in Toronto.

"What we're really saying is okay, we have a large number of Israelis that chose to leave their country and live here. But let's not close the door on them, let's open it – in both directions."

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PM pledges government's support for Israel

Prime Minister Stephen Harper speaks at the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism conference in Ottawa. *[Herman Cheung/PMO photo]*

By MORDECHAI BEN-DAT
Editor

OTTAWA – Prime Minister Stephen Harper pledged on Monday that his government will always stand up against the campaign of demonization, double standards and the delegitimization of Israel.

"When Israel – the only country in the world whose very existence is under attack – is consistently and conspicuously singled out for condemnation, I believe we are morally obligated to take a stand," Harper said at the Ottawa Conference on Combating Antisemitism.

"It is a responsibility of us all," the prime minister added, to stand up to what he referred to as the "three D's" – demonization, double standards and delegitimization.

More than 150 parliamentarians from 53 countries were on hand to hear Harper speak. They were in Ottawa to take part in the conference, which was organized by the second Inter-Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism (ICCA). The inaugural conference was held in London, England, last year. The co-founders of the conference are John Mann, a Labour party MP from the United Kingdom, and Irwin Cotler, the Liberal MP for Westmount.

Referring to Canada's recent loss in its bid for a seat on the United Nations Security Council, Harper said: "Whether it is at the United Nations, or any other international forum, the easy thing to do is simply get along and go along with this anti-Israel rhetoric, to pretend it is just being even-handed, and to excuse oneself with the label of 'honest broker.' There are, after all, a lot more votes in being anti-Israel than in taking a stand. But as long as I am prime minister, whether it is at the UN or the Francophonie or anywhere else, Canada will take that stand, whatever the cost."

Harper said that he had just returned from an official visit to Ukraine, where he laid a wreath at the monument at Babi Yar, the site of a massacre where more than 30,000 Jews and thousands of non-Jews were slaughtered. He referred to it as "a place of evil, evil at its most cruel, obscene and grotesque."

He spoke emphatically about the importance and the need to remember the Holocaust. "Remembering the Holocaust is not merely an act of historical recognition.

Continued on page 35

Legislators meet in Ottawa to discuss anti-Semitism

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

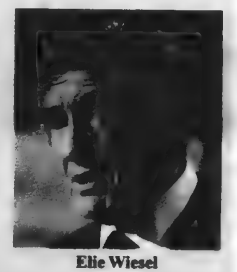
How best to fight anti-Semitism?

That was the burning question addressed by some 250 politicians, observers and experts from 53 countries as they gathered in Ottawa earlier this week for the 2010 Conference on Combating Antisemitism.

Sponsored by the government of Canada and organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Anti-Semitism (ICCA) – a group co-founded by Canadian Liberal MP Irwin Cotler and British Labour MP John Mann – the Nov. 7 to 9 conference was billed as the world's largest gathering of delegates dedicated to eradicating the age-old hatred.

"Anti-Semitism is the oldest and more enduring of hatreds – a lethal obsession, as it has been called – which has caused untold catastrophes," Cotler said in a statement. "As it has been said, 'while it may begin with Jews, it doesn't end with Jews.' We ignore anti-Semitism at our peril."

The Ottawa meeting is the second such event of its kind. The inaugural ICCA conference was held in London last year and resulted in the "London Declaration," signed by lawmakers from around the world who pledged to "affirm democratic and human values, build societies based on respect and citizenship and combat any manifestations of anti-Semitism and discrimination."



Elie Wiesel

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Federations' General Assembly opens in New Orleans – please see pages 45 and 46

The News in Brief

Canada

Symphony Performs

OTTAWA — The Raanana Symphonette Orchestra made its Canadian debut this week at the Nov. 9 opening of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa's Holocaust Education Week. The 46-member ensemble, established in 1991, performed at the Shenkman Centre in the suburb of Orleans in a concert that paid tribute to Alma Rose, a prominent violinist virtuoso from Vienna and niece of composer Gustav Mahler, who died in Auschwitz. Before her death, she formed an orchestra, and many of the musicians chosen for it were able to avoid death as a result.

New 'Buycott' Guide

TORONTO — The creators of the Buycott Israel campaign have issued a guide to help supporters of Israel counter backers of the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign. *Divest This! How to Stop the Global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions 'Movement's' Attack on Israel and Ensure Its Second Decade of Defeat* is described as a "comprehensive, colourful guide designed to help everyone dealing with BDS in their community."The 41-page document has sections on talking points, case studies of successful anti-BDS campaigns on campuses, strategies and tactics and answers to frequently asked questions. It's available free at buycottisrael.ca/alerts.

Geldof Speaks

TORONTO — Bob Geldof, the musician and activist who organized the Live 8 concerts in 2005 and the Band Aid and Live Aid fundraisers for African relief in the 1980s, was the keynote speaker Nov. 7 at a fundraiser for Ve'ahavta – the Canadian Jewish Humanitarian & Relief Committee. The Irish-born Geldof, who was also the lead singer of the British rock band the Boomtown Rats, was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1986. The event's MC was David Shore, creator, writer and executive producer of TV's *House*.

World

Rutgers Gaza Event

NEW YORK — A student group at Rutgers University held a fundraiser in support of a blockade-busting flotilla to Gaza. The Nov. 4 event, which featured a halal buffet, was held by the campus organization BAKA: Students United for Middle Eastern Justice. The dinner and speakers were advertised as in support of the group U.S. to Gaza, which plans to sponsor a boat in a flotilla to break Israel's Gaza blockade. BAKA reportedly used student activity fees to sponsor the event. The Anti-Defamation League reportedly and Rutgers Hillel opposed the event.

Former President Recalls Rabin Fondly

NEW YORK — If Israel and the Palestinians cut a peace deal, Syria likely would ally itself with the West over Iran, and Lebanon would be truly independent, Bill Clinton said.

Bill Clinton

The former U.S. president also warned that Israel will need friends in the region for a future when attacks from Gaza are conducted, not with crude, inaccurate rockets, but with rockets that inevitably will make use of technological advances to stage GPS-like precision attacks.

Clinton spoke at a Nov. 4 memorial service in New York aboard the U.S.S. Intrepid marking the 15th anniversary of the assassination of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. He said Rabin recognized early on that demographics in the Holy Land made a Palestinian state necessary to preserve Israel's democratic and Jewish character.

Calling the day Rabin was shot "one of the saddest days of my life," Clinton shared personal memories of Rabin, who died Nov. 4, 1995, after a peace rally in Tel Aviv.

Clinton said he thinks of Rabin all the time, including five minutes before the wedding of his daughter, Chelsea, to Marc Mezvinsky, her longtime Jewish boyfriend. Clinton said he imagined having a conversation with Rabin, who would have said Clinton finally got something right by having his daughter marry a Jewish guy.

Speakers at Brandeis

BOSTON — Two Jewish student groups sponsored Israeli Occupation Awareness Week at Brandeis University. Students for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voices for Peace co-hosted four days of speakers and films on what they said is the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands. The events at the school in Waltham, Mass., a non-sectarian university founded by the American Jewish community, took place Nov. 8 to 11.

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Canadian Muslim author fights anti-Semitism

Fatah maintains Qur'an essentially preaches respect for Judaism

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

In an era when anti-Semitic notions and reactionary beliefs are prevalent in the Islamic world, Tarek Fatah, a Canadian of Pakistani Muslim ancestry, stands out boldly and courageously as a refreshing exception.

Fatah, a founder of the Muslim Canadian Congress, is a secular liberal democrat who upholds social and political pluralism, promotes progressive ideas such as gender equality, despises Islamic radicalism, opposes Shariah law and supports Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state.

Now, in a move bound to rally his friends and upset his enemies, Fatah has written a hard-hitting book, *The Jew Is Not My Enemy* (McClelland & Stewart), in which he roundly denounces and condemns anti-Semitism and hatred of Israel.

Fatah claims anti-Semitism is "endemic" in Islamic societies and quite common in Canada among Muslims.

"So much so, I had to write a book about it," he said in an interview last week. "I wanted to put this information out into the open."

According to Fatah, Muslim anti-Semitism is largely rooted in the Hadith, a collection of the Prophet Muhammad's oral proclamations written centuries after his death. Israel and its policies have contributed to anti-Semitic feelings, he noted.

Although he admits the Qur'an contains "some pretty harsh language about Jews," he maintains it essentially preaches respect for Judaism.

Far from considering himself a lonely voice in the wilderness, Fatah, a journalist and broadcaster who worked in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia before settling in Canada, says his unorthodox views are not really that uncommon among his fellow Muslims.

Tarek Fatah

"In my fight against Muslim anti-Semitism, I am not alone," he writes in his latest book. "Muslim voices around the world are making brave attempts in the face of intimidation and slander to fight the rise of jihadi Islamism."

Although he has never personally met an anti-Semitic Iranian, Indonesian, Turk or Bosnian, Fatah believes anti-Semitism enjoys a disturbing degree of acceptance in Canada's Muslim community.

The virus has particularly affected young, Canadian-born Pakistanis, who cloak their animus in leftist rhetoric. He branded them "the foot soldiers" of Islamic radicalism.

Fatah denounced Omar Khadr – the Pakistani-Canadian Al Qaeda recruit who gained notoriety and a long prison sentence after killing a U.S. soldier in Afghanistan – as "a very dangerous man" and "self-confessed killer" who has never renounced the doctrine of armed jihadism or Shariah law.

Describing himself as "a thorn in the side" of Islamists, Fatah said he has a "moral and ethical duty" to combat Islamic radicals. "They're not just anti-Jewish, but anti-Canadian. I want to drag them out of the ninth century."

Continued on page 18

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Song of peoplehood

From the editor's desk...

The image of the flowing moustache cushioning the riveting, pinpoint eyes, inset, is the visual signature of the American folk-rock band of songwriters and musicians, Safam. (Safam, in Hebrew, means moustache. Hence the image.)

The group was founded some 36 years ago. It was after the Yom Kippur War, a time when Israel's enemies, with increasing audacity and mendaciousness in their hearts, began their program of peddling anti-Israel rhetoric and propaganda in North America.

Zionism-as-racism was the rallying cry of the impassioned, yet unknowing social activists on campuses across the continent. For the ill-informed, highly agitated campus ideologues who saw Yasser Arafat's people as the newly wretched of the earth of author and revolutionary Franz Fanon, Israel was emerging as the oppressor and the new international villain.

That malign, false image of the Jewish state took root in many poisoned young hearts. The generation that imbibed the Arafatian message – even, alas, including many Jews – has since raised its own children and helped send them to their own campus experience. Almost four decades later, we are witnessing the bitter harvest.

But not everyone who was on campus in the mid-'70s when the PLO leader ascended to the dais of the UN General Assembly, accepted his message.

Many students searching for their own Jewish bearings or for a milieu of peer group, social solidarity found part of the anti-Arafat antidote in the poetry, music and energy of Safam.

They wrote and sang to the very heart of Jewish America, and in particular to inquisitive hearts of young, campus-age Jewish America.

Many were we who marched to the driving beat and inspiring message of Safam's music, the certainty of the justice of Israel's cause stirring our souls to courage and commitment.

Last week, Safam played one of their rare concerts in Canada. They appeared at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, which is known for its musical programming and innovation. How good it was to see them and to feel again the flow of their music coursing with the same electricity as in our youth through our less youthful Jewish veins.

The original founding four of Safam bounded onto stage: Joel Sussman, Robbie Solomon, the group's writers and composers, Alan Nelson and Dan Funk – sparser on top and somewhat rounder at the middle than they were three decades ago.

Very quickly however, it became apparent that their talent and charisma were unabated. Mark Snyder on bass and Bob Weiner on percussion completed the six-person group.

Robbie Solomon sang *World of Our Fathers*, which was, perhaps, the signature piece of their third album, *Sons of Safam*.

"Just keep the faith of your people wherever you go/ There a friend you will find" is the emotional message of the poem/song. It tells the story of a man who immigrated to America, whose children turned away from their traditions to embrace the exhilarating life of the New Land and who eventually lived to see "[his] father's world begin to rise in [his] great-grandchildren's eyes."

Solomon's voice is soft and soaring at the same time. The song sings of the prototypical Jewish immigrant experience at the turn of the last century.

But it ends redemptively with hope and possibility.

Sussman sang *Moranno* from their eighth album, *On Track*. Velvet and emphatic, Sussman's voice virtually caresses the senses. The song tells of a lonely New York boy whose Jewish soul was dead until he falls in love with Maria.

A descendent of Marranos (hidden Jews of the Inquisition), Maria, through love and tender assertiveness, teaches the New York boy "who they are." The song is a moving, expressive peaen to belonging and history.

And so it was the entire night. Alternating between original compositions and their stylized renditions of traditional prayers, Safam performed 20 songs to the great delight of the audience, who clapped, hummed, sang and rocked along with the group on stage.

"Their music has never been duplicated," we were told as the group was introduced. "Safam occupies a vital place in Jewish-American music. They instilled a sense of pride in being Jewish in North America, along with an overwhelming social consciousness and a sense of tikkun olam."

These words were no overstatement. They were and are true. As was once written about them, "the music of Safam gave us courage to contend with intimidation, or just as often, the encouragement to seek our own Jewish paths."

Safam sings about peoplehood.

Thus wherever and whenever Jews, strive to find the pilot light of their respective identities, their music will find a place and will help the flame glow higher.

Safam's music is everlasting.

–MBD

SeeJN

SABBATH QUEENS

To ensure that their Sabbath meals are not lonely, a group of single Jewish women in London, Ont., ranging in age from mid-40s to mid-60s, meet once a month for a potluck Shabbat dinner. The dinners are hosted at group members' homes on a rotating basis, as is the preparation of a dvar Torah. From left are Anna Leich, Rosie Harris, Renee Silberman, Sharon Richman, Robin Israel, D'vorah Elias, Gail Silverman Bass, Gayle Marcus and Jacquie Brodsky.

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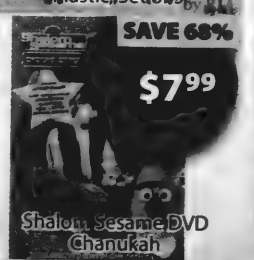
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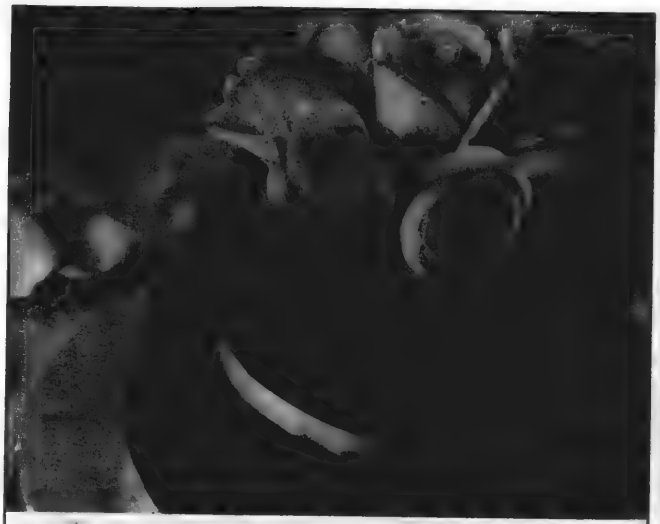

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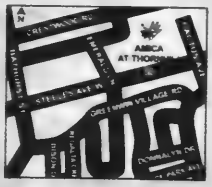

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Israeli rabbi to discuss conversion issues

Conference set for Toronto

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A little while ago, an elite athlete who had been a swimmer for Israel at the Olympics walked into the offices of Itim, the Jewish Life Information Centre in Jerusalem, to ask for help.

The young woman wanted to get married, but she had been stymied in her efforts by the Orthodox rabbi in charge of a local marriage bureau, who demanded she provide documentary proof that her mother was Jewish.

Unable to do so, the Russian-born woman and her betrothed travelled abroad where they were legally married before returning to Israel.

Rabbi Seth Farber, founder and director of Itim, was unable to help her, but he worries about the implications of her story. "Sixty per cent of North American Jews would not be able to break the threshold of proving they're Jews, even though they may care deeply about the Jewish peoplehood," he said. "This is an alarming fact."

Rabbi Seth Farber

Rabbi Farber, who also heads a congregation in Ra'anana, will be in Toronto for two lectures as part of the Renewing Our Spirit 9th annual conference at the Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Sponsored by Torah in Motion, the event will be held on Saturday night, Nov. 13, and Sunday Nov. 14.

Rabbi Farber will speak on "new Halachot emerging from Israel's rabbinic courts" and "the subtle delegitimization of the majority of the Jewish people during the past decade."

Itim helps Israelis navigate the conversion process, but Rabbi Farber admits the athlete's case is still unresolved, even though she considers herself a Jew.

He's worried about the rabbinic attitude that is making it harder to prospective jews to enter the Jewish fold. "It is creating two different Jews here in Israel. They all have seders on Pesach and they celebrate Chanukah, but they don't share the same definition of Jews."

While the athlete was able to resolve her issue in the near term, Rabbi Farber, who is Orthodox, worries about difficulties she and her family may experience down the road. "Her children will not be considered Jewish, and they may be in trouble in the future when can't get married [to other Jews]. They won't be part of this commonwealth. They won't be part of the collective entity called the State of Israel," he said.

While the athlete's case is not strictly one of conversion, Itim's mandate "is to help people navigate the labyrinth of religious bureaucracies in Israel," Rabbi Farber said.

One avenue Itim has been pursuing runs through the secular courts. In April, after more than 40 complaints from people who'd converted to Judaism, primarily in the army, but who were turned down when they tried to marry, Itim sued the Chief Rabbinate and four local rabbis. (In Israel, personal status issues for Jews, such as marriage and burial, are controlled by the Chief Rabbinate, which appoints local rabbis who perform the marriages.)

The first hearing was in September, and the second is expected in the next few weeks.

"We insisted the court discipline the rabbis who refuse to recognize the conversions and provide alternative marriage registration," Rabbi Farber said.

"This has become a very big issue in Israel," he said. "It highlights the difficult place converts find themselves in… because of the politicization of the Chief Rabbinate."

Critics have lamented the apparent "haredization" of official religious authorities in Israel. State-appointed rabbis have rejected conversions by a special Orthodox conversion court set up to address the Jewish status of hundreds of thousands of immigrants, mostly from the former Soviet Union, who are descended from Jews or who can't prove their Jewish lineage. Rabbi Farber calls their status "a demographic time bomb."

"I've been very much on the record opposing the Rotem conversion bill, which sought to improve the conversion situation, but in its latest version makes it more difficult. It allows for the first time in law for a conversion being annulled," he said.

Rabbi Farber, who has lived in Israel for 15 years after immigrating from New York, said Halachah must be flexible to be able to address the current situation.

"Halachah has always had a plurality of opinion," he said. "What makes Halachah so dynamic is the way it is able to respond to different situations. We need today the creative application of Halachah."

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We will remember

It is Remembrance Day. Canadian society no longer sets aside a few moments, stops in its tracks, as it once did each year, at the sounding of the 11th moment of the 11th hour of the 11th month, to remember fallen soldiers. There are indeed ceremonies of remembrance throughout the country. But it would strain truth, alas, to say that we are a society that remembers.

This is both to our peril and to our shame.

It is to our peril because there are vital lessons of history, vital instructions of nation building, we risk never learning by choosing not to remember. It is to our shame because it is egregiously dishonorable not to acknowledge a debt. And there is no higher debt owed than to those who paid for our security, our freedom, our shores untouched by war, with their lives.

World War I, the Great War to End All Wars, came to its shrivelled, scorched close 92 years ago. But it ended no wars. For merely 21 years later, World War II began and a new generation was sent to slog through and die in the mud of many of the same blood-soaked European fields of battle.

Tyrants and dictators – champions of brutality, subjugation, racism and genocide – arose who needed to be stopped. That they were not stopped in the mid-'30s on the fields and cities of Ethiopia or Spain meant that they would be stopped in 1945.

But it was not an anonymous mass of Allied soldiers who stopped them. They were people, individuals we knew and loved, or whom our friends knew and loved. They were our parents, our grandparents and their peers.

They were, for example, as *CJN* reporter Frances Kraft has written in this issue, Harry Ratner of Winnipeg who was killed at the age of 26; Morley Bernard Stock of Regina, who was killed at 21, and Robert Sirluck of Winnipeg who was killed at 22.

And there were so many more, most of them, too, so very young when their lives ended saving civilization from the tyrants and dictators.

Stock wrote four poems in his flight logbook. The *CJN* reporter recorded a portion of one of them called *To The Fallen Pilot*.

"Grieve not, because an eagle
Was from the sky hurled.
His soul will inspire others
To build a new and better world."

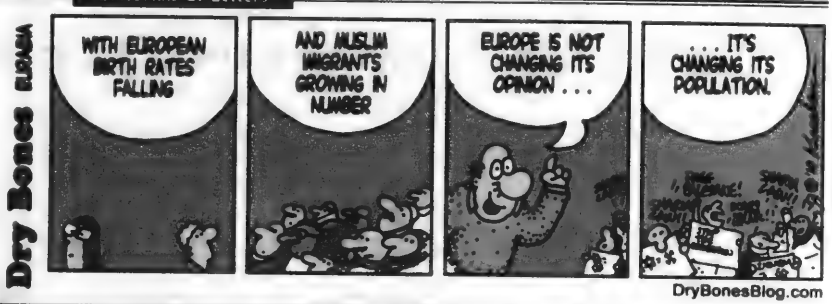
"He wasn't blind to the danger," Ernest Sirluck said of his brother Robert, "but he was very resolute, very clear about the absolute necessity of overcoming that scourge."

The new and better world of which Stock wrote is in fact our world in Canada today. How can we not remember him? How can we not remember them all, from all wars, in which they fell?

Indeed, we will. We will always remember them all.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Mojad Molki, the leader of the four Palestinian hijackers of the Italian Achille Lauro cruise liner who were awaiting trial in Italy, confessed to U.S. authorities that he himself murdered an elderly Jewish passenger, Leon Klinghoffer, a U.S. citizen, on the ship, Rome's *La Republica* newspaper reported.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Ignatieff on Mideast policy

On Nov. 2, I spoke to the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations about rebuilding Canada's leadership on the world stage. In my speech, I discussed Canada's policy in the Middle East. Here's an excerpt.

"Since the State of Israel was officially recognized, Canada has had a bipartisan policy… Two states for two peoples. Recognition of both. Peace, freedom and justice for both. That has always been the basis of Canadian policy. That is a balanced policy.

"But I think that we have to be very clear that being balanced with respect to the Middle East does not mean being neutral. We are not neutral between terrorists and a democratic state. Balance means that there are two peoples and that the land has to be shared – out of fairness for both, and out of a need for security for both.

"In my opinion, what has happened is that the prime minister of Canada has made the Middle East a domestic policy issue for political reasons. And that means that we're starting to get away from the necessary balance that is needed to ensure our influence in the Middle East. And that has been very costly to Canada.

"Losing a seat on the [UN] Security Council has consequences – not only for Canada, but also for our friends in the Middle East. If we want to control the greatest threat to peace in the Middle East, which is Iran, then we have to have a seat on the Security Council. In order to protect Israel against threats, to protect Israel against human-rights resolutions which are not balanced – and also to advance the rights of the Palestinian people – then we need a seat on the Security Council."

Our friends need friends who have friends. Canada will always be a friend to Israel. By rebuilding Canada's leadership on the world stage, we can be a more valuable ally. And by renewing our influence in the international community, we can do more to advance the real objective of our policy in the Middle East: peace.

Michael Ignatieff
Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada.

* * *

Woman desperately needs kidney

Janet Boidman, who attends our synagogue, is fighting for her life and in desperate need of a new kidney. Janet was born on March 3, 1960, in Montreal to Evelyn and Saul Boidman. She is a beautiful lady whose career in early child education at Concordia University was halted due to chronic kidney failure. She is currently on dialysis three times a week. I am calling upon the community to please consider saving this life. If your blood type is A positive and you are in good health and a willing donor, please contact Dr. Barry Barre at the Royal Victoria Hospital at 514-934-1934, ext. 35208, or Dr. Tomoko Takano or the transplant department at 514-934-1934, ext. 34653. If you would like more information about Janet or wish to help in other ways, please contact me at 514-482-3366, ext. 225. Please pass this urgent call to save a life to anyone that you believe can be of help.

Rabbi Asher Jacobson
Chevra Kadisha B'nai Jacob - Beit Hazikaron
Montreal

* * *

Request to Carter about Schalit ignored

As you know, I recently wrote to former U.S. president Jimmy Carter asking that he use his warm relations with Hamas to plead for the release of Gilad Schalit ("Carter urged to take up case of Gilad Schalit," Sept. 16). It was my suggestion that he travel to Gaza and personally offer to bring Schalit out of captivity and safely home to his family in Israel. I received no response to that request nor to a followup letter. I read recently that Carter met with Syrian President Bashar Assad and Hamas leaders residing in Syria. Although he made some anti-Israeli statements about the Israeli blockade of Gaza, he apparently never raised the issue of Schalit. Carter absurdly suggests that the blockade is one the most serious human rights violation on earth. He completely ignores the constant flow of rockets from Gaza into Israel and the fact that the blockade prevents Hamas from acquiring more and more weapons. Carter has lost his creditability as a world leader and a compassionate human being.

Bert Raphael
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Figures wrong

The photo caption "Exhibit chronicles Babi Yar massacre" (Nov. 4) claims that "some 150,000 Jews were slaughtered at Babi Yar, just outside Kiev, over a three-day period." The accepted number of deaths over the three-day period in late September 1941, is just under 34,000. There were other mass murders at Babi Yar during the Nazi occupation, over the following years, but these executions, which might conceivably have reached the number of 150,000, were largely of Gypsies, dissident Ukrainians and other targeted groups, not Jews.

C. Peter Herman
Toronto

LET THEM GO…

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The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

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Perspectives

Obama must not force a final peace deal

By ARI SHAVIT
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

There were no real surprises in the U.S. midterm elections. The Republicans gained control of the House of Representatives but not the Senate, came out strong in Kentucky but not California, grabbed a majority of seats but did not enjoy a overwhelming victory.

President Barack Obama is still there. He's weakened but undefeated, bruised but not beaten – moderately wounded.

If anyone in Jerusalem had hoped the Tea Party would save the settlers' party, they were seriously mistaken. The 2010 midterm election time-out is over.

The real game begins now and the name of the game is Palestine. The endgame: establishing a viable Palestinian state within a year.

Why? Because the incumbent American president identifies with the Palestinians and their suffering and wants to do right by them. Because the American president believes establishing a Palestinian state would placate the Arab Muslim world, which he wishes to appease. Because the American president knows that, in the absence of good news in Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, Palestine is his only chance of making positive headlines.

Only a Palestinian state would justify the Nobel Peace prize he received; only it can give Obama the international legacy he craves; only it can lift the spirit of Obama's self-defined liberal camp.

So in 2011, Palestine will be to the resolute president what health-care reform was to him in 2009. For better or worse, through fire or water, wisely or foolishly, Barack Hussein Obama will see to the establishment of the state of Palestine.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Barack Obama in serious discussion at the White House in September. ***[Israel Sun photo]***

In a certain sense, the president's resolve is to be commended. It's good to have a world leader trying to save the two-state solution at the last moment. It's good to have a world leader willing to invest huge resources to implement the two-state solution. It's good to have a statesman who still has a sufficient sense of justness to understand that the present situation is intolerable. It's good to have a statesman naive enough to think he can fix the world.

But in another sense, Obama's determination is dangerous. Speed is from the devil, as the Arab saying goes. Simplism is a recipe for disaster. The path to hell is paved with good intentions not anchored in reality.

Former U.S. president Bill Clinton tried to impose democracy on the Middle East and failed. If Obama tries to impose an end to the conflict prematurely, he will upset the stability, encourage violence and leave chaos in his wake.

The dilemma is acute: political correctness or political reason, puristic policy trying to build a castle in the sky or sober policy trying to change reality on the ground.

In actuality, the most positive process taking place in the region is Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's. A new, building, thriving Palestinian society is being formed in the West Bank.

Unless the Fayyad process is given a substantial political dimension, it will collapse. But it will also collapse if it is given an an unachievable political horizon. The wise thing to do is to tailor for the quiet Palestinian revolution a political suit that fits it – not to try to resolve the refugee dilemma in two months, not to try to resolve the Jerusalem problem in two weeks, not to let ideology and theology place impassable hurdles before the Palestinians and Israelis.

The only way is to have an interim agreement that would minimize the occupation without ending the conflict and without endangering Israel.

The coming weeks will be decisive. Obama, even after losses at home, has enough power to coerce Israel. He can confront the Jewish state, isolate it and impose a false peace on it.

But Obama does not have enough power to turn the fake into real. He cannot topple Hamas, revoke the demand for return and turn a Palestine into a peace-loving state. So if he insists on forcing the issue, all hell will break loose.

In contrast, if he chooses the pragmatic path, he has a good chance of making a change. Only a partial, not final, peace, will grant the Nobel laureate the peace he is pursuing.

Refusal to extend settlement freeze hurting Israel, Livni says

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JERUSALEM — Israel must yield to the U.S. proposal to extend by two months its recently expired settlement-building freeze, Opposition leader Tzipi Livni said last Friday, blaming Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government for weakening Israel's security and world standing.

Peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians have been deadlocked over Israel's refusal to extend its moratorium on settlement construction, with U.S. President Barack Obama reportedly pressuring Israel to extend the freeze by two months in order to allow recently relaunched direct peace negotiations to resume.

Referring to the reported American offer, Livni, speaking before the Israeli Farmers Association on Friday, asked: "Why not comply with the demand to extend the freeze by two months? So certain people can hold onto their seats in the coalition who would have stayed there anyway? Does that compare to our strategic relationship with the United States? Israel needs to stop defining itself by the threats surrounding it and start promoting a vision. We don't have to be united by threats – that is not a common factor."

Livni continued her attack on Netanyahu's cabinet, saying his "rightist government has been outspoken, pounding on the table, but Israel is weaker for it.

"The government talks tough, but Israel's interests are being damaged. They spoke of security, and damaged security. We can't rally the world by constantly saying no. We need to say yes from time to time, too," Livni said.

She also spoke of the possibility of her party, Kadima, entering the coalition in order to advance Israel's peace drive, saying that Israel wishes to enter talks under "conditions much worse than before.

"I've told the prime minister in the past, and have also told the public, that a completely different government needs to be formed, a Likud-Kadima government, one which would do the right thing in both domestic and foreign matters," Livni said, adding, however, that "the prime minister chose differently, and this is his choice."

In the past few weeks, some observers have speculated that Netanyahu and Livni were trying to resolve differences in an effort to create a new coalition agreement. The Prime Minister's Office, however, has responded to reported contacts between the two, saying that the prime minister is "currently not engaged in any talks to expand the coalition."

In related developments, Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said last Thursday that the Palestinians will give the United States several more weeks to try to relaunch direct peace talks with Israel, but will not buckle on their key demand for a halt to Israeli settlement activity.

An Arab League decision on Oct. 9 giving the United States one month to persuade Netanyahu to stop settlements could pass by, but the core demand would remain unchanged, Erekat said.

"If the Americans need two more weeks they can have the two more weeks," Erekat told reporters after a meeting with U.S. Mideast peace envoy George Mitchell in Washington.

"The key is in Netanyahu's hands," Erekat said. "The choice is his: settlements or peace. He cannot have both."

Netanyahu visited the United States this week to attend the annual gathering of the General Assembly of Jewish Federations of North America and meet with both Vice-President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Direct talks between Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas began on Sept. 2 in Washington but broke down several weeks later when Netanyahu refused to submit to Abbas' demand to extend a 10-month partial freeze on settlement-building in the West Bank.

Netanyahu has resisted U.S., Palestinian and international calls to impose a new building moratorium on settlements in the West Bank. Palestinian officials have accused Netanyahu of destroying prospects for peace by allowing settlement-building to continue on land that Palestinians want for a future state.

Erekat said Palestinians remain focused on the direct talks as a way of achieving a two-state solution that U.S. President Barack Obama hopes will see an independent Palestine living peacefully beside Israel within one year.

But he said the Palestinian leadership is also considering other options, including seeking both U.S. and UN Security Council recognition of a Palestinian state.

"I hope that the United States of America, when we go to the Security Council to seek a full membership for the State of Palestine, will not oppose us," Erekat said.

Erekat did not give a time line for this possible move, which the U.S. State Department said last Thursday could be an unwelcome complication.

"We have made clear all along that unilateral steps, either by the Israelis or by the Palestinians, undermine the direct negotiation which is the only way to resolve the core issues, reach an agreement and end the conflict," State Department spokesperson P.J. Crowley said.

Erekat said other suggested resolutions to the impasse, including that the Palestinians should insist on a "one-state solution" where the Arab majority with Israel demands equal rights, were unrealistic, at least for now.

"Those who continue with the settlement activities may end up with the one-state solution, whether they like it or not. But that's not my option," he said.

Opinions

Pondering retirement

There's a great debate even unrest in France about the age of retirement. The discussions it has generated should provoke some thought of our own on the issue.

What does retirement mean to us as individuals and to our society?

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

Concisely, it signifies the withdrawal from income-producing work. After years of salaried work, people get to pursue other interests, and hopefully one is no longer dependent on wages.

In this scenario, retirement looks rosy. But reality is often not so blissful. Many experience retirement as a time of uselessness, shunted aside like last year's fashions. No one is interested in you, and you're not interested in anything. Although there are all sorts of clubs offering courses and volunteer work to fill up one's time, filling up doesn't equal purposefulness. If you haven't prepared for this phase, it's hard to change the habits of a lifetime.

As to the social implications, caution is advised, as we may be losing our best resources to retirement. How do we compensate for the retiree's lack of place and leadership? Now that they are not "working,"does that mean they can no longer be at the forefront of our community? Do they retire from everything? The question isn't so easy to answer. I know there's a knee-jerk rebuttal to my inquiry, but in all honesty, we do put people out to pasture as they themselves revoke their own active involvement? How can we maximize the resources of our retirees?

My husband retired last year, and he's inordinately busy. He writes. After a life dedicated to study, he's well-suited to the retirement he so richly deserves. Many of my friends are in the process of retiring or have retired. I see successes and problems.

Hence it might seem natural for me to retire. I am of age. But I'm not ready. In fact, I vehemently object. I love teaching and am not ready to relinquish that part of my world. Regrettably, I'll be forced out at a certain age.

In Pirkei Avot, we read that there's an age or time for everything – a time for wisdom and study and learning. I don't see a time for retirement, for withdrawal or detachment. Perhaps we need to view retirement as my husband does: a time for sharing what we know and continuing those processes that deepen our wisdom or our special abilities.

A good retirement is doing something good with your own goodness.

Observing the mitzvah of *ba'al tashchit*

God said to Adam: "Be fruitful and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on earth."

"The Lord God took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden to till it and tend it." (JPS translation).

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

From these simple statements flows an abundance of discussion over what role is assigned to humankind regarding care of the earth.

Our congregation's mitzvah initiative began last year with the selection of two mitzvot, one *ben adam l'chavero* and one *ben adam l'Makom*. This year we continue our collection of food for the Jewish food bank, but what should we choose as our second mitzvah? We decided on the mitzvah of *ba'al tashchit*, our response and responsibilities to the natural world, which we were enjoined to "master and rule," "till and tend," or "work and guard."

I maintain that environmentalism has for centuries been embedded in our tradition, with spiritual guidelines that distinguish it from the modern, secular environmental movement.

Arthur Green, teacher and theologian of Judaism, writes in *Seek My Face: A Jewish Mystical Theology*: "The rabbis tell us that shortly after Adam was created, God walked him around the Garden of Eden and told him to guard the world he was being given. 'If you destroy this world,' he was told, 'there is no one to come and set it right after you.'"

How true that is.

In *A Kabbalah for Tomorrow*, Green writes: "Too much of our communal religious energy is devoted to singing the praises of our glorious past [I admit it, me too] rather than facing the challenge of the present hour. What is the point of observing shmitah, the sabbatical year that gives rest to the land, while using earth-destroying pesticides?… How can carefully pious Jews who take care to wash the bugs out of lettuce to make it kosher go on investing that other green stuff in multinational corporations that daily destroy whole forests?"

"How can we *today* create a civilization and a law that will be *torat chayim*, a teaching that enhances life? Surely a return to the reverence for air, water and soil would be a good place to start."

Full disclosure: I benefit from the modern luxuries of a dishwasher, clothes washer and dryer, garbage disposal, vacuum system and other wonderful inventions typical of a middle-middle class household. Kashrut is a meaningful experience in our home. But – there's always a but – how can I possibly begin to repair the damaged world we live in when I benefit from so many things that can further harm our planet?

The news media tell us that as a species, we have failed in our stewardship of the world we inherited. Our fish are disappearing, our forests are devastated, and our air and water are increasingly dense with pollutants.

The mystic in Green sees the entire world – the biosphere – as a system in which each part of the natural flora and fauna integrates into a whole. While such a view can verge on animism – seeing everything as alive with a cosmic soul – we need not go that far in appreciating the interconnectedness of every living thing.

It's a tall order. Green links our response not just to the need to salvage a planet under great stress because of human actions. Rather, he makes it a direct call to spiritual renewal. We are commanded to repair the world. We are commanded to show love to everything God created. Green writes that "each person or community has to find ways to fulfil these commandments."

So when our congregation chooses the mitzvah of *ba'al tashchit* for this year, we will have plenty of choices. Work on energy-saving? Recycle till it hurts? Make sure that our recycled electronics don't end up in a Third World landfill where starving children poison themselves seeking metals and minerals to resell?

When we've made our choices, may they truly be a mitzvah.

Ethnocultural/religious minorities in Canada

Statistics Canada's population projections, based on the last national census, sets out the demographic makeup of Canada in the years 2017 and 2031. In each case, the future Canada will have a significantly higher proportion of visible minorities than today, primarily as a result of immigration patterns.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

For example, the percentage of the population that is Christian or Jewish will decline, while the percentage that is Muslim will increase. Overall, the Jewish population will become an increasingly smaller proportion of the Canadian population. The result is that our community, as an ethnocultural/religious entity, will experience a minority status. This, in turn, invites a consideration of government policy in respect of the status of ethnocultural minorities in Canada. More specifically, it requires us to examine Canada's multicultural policies.

Canada may be the only country in the world to have adopted multiculturalism as official state policy. The year 2011 will mark 40 years since we did so. On the eve of this anniversary, however, the federal Canada has adopted a new policy in relation to multiculturalism. The government will now fund only multicultural initiatives that are consonant with the objectives of the new policy.

The new policy on multiculturalism has three objectives.

1) Building an integrated, socially cohesive society by building bridges to promote inter-cultural understanding and by fostering citizenship, civic memory, civic pride and respect for core democratic values grounded in our history.

2) Improving the responsiveness of institutions to the needs of a diverse population by assisting federal and public institutions to become more responsive to diversity.

3) Actively engaging discussions on multiculturalism and diversity at the international level.

The first objective represents the most significant element of change. The consequence of this policy change relates to the funding of future multicultural initiatives. Under the Inter-Action Projects and Inter-Action Events program, funding will now be available only if an initiative includes an inter-cultural or cross-cultural component. The corollary, of course, is that the federal government will no longer fund intra-cultural projects and events such as the celebration of the Chinese New Year or similar parochial festivities.

The emphasis is now on the promotion of integration. Integration does not mean assimilation, but rather, greater participation by members of ethnocultural minority groups in the mainstream political and social life of the country. This may not have a significant impact on the activities of Canada's Jewish community, but it does convey a message. In order to underscore and advance the notion of social cohesion, Canada's ethnocultural communities must become less insular. They must reach out to one another and/or embrace mainstream components of Canadian society. Essentially, the new policy may be described as the cultural equivalent of the interfaith movement in the realm of religion.

One continuing component of our long-standing multicultural policy is the Community Historical Recognition Program. Under the program, the Canadian Jewish Congress recently received a grant to establish an exhibit marking the abysmal Canadian policy in 1939 that denied entry to the passengers of the St. Louis, a ship carrying Jews who were desperate to escape the Nazi regime.

The "older" multicultural policy has been described by some as a top-down, elite-generated form of noblesse oblige to satisfy and placate our growing diverse minorities. The newer policy might be described as a retreat from our traditional notion of a Canadian mosaic and somewhat encourages the adoption of an American-style "melting pot" as a means to accommodate our ethnocultural religious minorities. Although I do not subscribe to this characterization, it is important to observe, on the occasion of the upcoming 40th anniversary of official multiculturalism in Canada, that the federal government's multiculturalism policy is undergoing change.

Notwithstanding either the older or the prevailing policy, the reality is that many ethnocultural minorities across Canada are not peripheral, powerless entities. Some communities are politically sophisticated. They possess wisdom and savvy in mastering the art of influencing policy in respect of many aspects of public affairs.

The Kirshner File

A survey of a catastrophe

On Aug. 22, 1939, in a sombre allusion to the growing political crisis in Europe, Chaim Weizmann, the president of the World Zionist Organization, observed, "There is darkness all around us, and we cannot see through the clouds."

Two weeks later, following the outbreak of World War II, the director of a Hebrew school in Warsaw, Poland, Chaim Kaplan, wrote, "This war will indeed bring destruction upon human civilization."

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

He added presciently, "As for the Jews, their danger is seven times greater. Wherever Hitler's foot treads, there is no hope for the Jewish people."

Kaplan's sense of dread was not misplaced. The war proved utterly catastrophic for Jews in Poland and the rest of Nazi-occupied Europe.

Saul Friedlander's magnum opus, *The Years of Extermination: Nazi Germany and the Jews 1939-1945* (HarperCollins), is a survey of the fate of European Jews during this dark period. Based on documents, letters, diaries and memoirs, it is one of the finest single-volume accounts of Hitler's genocidal campaign.

That Hitler intended to murder Jews so as to fulfil his warped racial fantasies is not in dispute. In a prewar speech, he made it abundantly clear that this was his objective. Reacting to his cue, German Labour Minister Robert Ley predicted in 1942 that the war would end with "the extermination of the Jewish race." A year later, the SS commander, Heinrich Himmler, issued a similar comment, prompting the propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels, to remark, "It is certainly a logical solution, even if it is a brutal one."

In his book, Friedlander, a professional historian and a Holocaust survivor, ranges far and wide as he discusses the persecution of Jews in Germany and elsewhere in Europe.

Germany's modus operandi in persecuting Jews was to reduce them to the level of sub-humans so that they would be socially isolated and not an object of sympathy. In this malevolent spirit, Goebbels, an arch anti-Semite who referred to Jews as "a waste product," said, "Pity… is completely out of place in this case."

Once the war started, the Nazi regime struggled to define its guidelines regarding half and quarter Jews, known as *mischlinges*, but these edicts remained confusing.

Germans of partial Jewish ancestry were allowed to serve in the army and could even be decorated for bravery, but they were not permitted to fill positions of authority, while fully Jewish members of their families were mistreated.

Eventually, families where a son was killed in battle were exempted from anti-Jewish measures. In 1940, Hitler tweaked the *mischlinge* policy, allowing only soldiers of one-quarter Jewish ancestry to serve. In the Afrika Korps, commanded by Gen. Erwin Rommel, this rule was entirely disregarded. In the navy, it was postponed.

The "aryanization" of Jewish-owned firms proceeded apace without any problems, says Friedlander. Yet when the world famous Rosenthal porcelain company passed into Christian hands, the new owners insisted on keeping its Jewish name. The Nazis were not pleased, but finally gave in.

Nazi accommodations to the marketplace did not slow the march of anti-Semitic restrictions. By 1942, German Jews were forbidden to buy newspapers, own telephones, cameras, household appliances and bicycles or attend even Jewish schools.

For a while, the Nazis toyed with the idea of deporting Jews to the formerly French island of Madagascar. Genocide became Germany's policy after it conquered the Soviet Union. The atmosphere was such that, in a letter, a German soldier wrote, "The Jews are fair game." Special killing units swept across occupied territories, murdering Jews by the thousands. In at least two cities, Brest Litovsk and Zhitomir, local residents refused to participate in pogroms.

Interestingly enough, Karaites – a Jewish sect that broke away from Judaism – were seen by the Nazis as a Turkic-Tatar group.

Friedlander is keenly attuned to nuances. Writing about the formation of the Council to Aid Jews in Poland, Friedlander observes that one of its founders, Zofia Kossak-Szezucka, perceived Polish Jews as enemies of Poland. Similarly, a representative of Poland's underground dispatched this letter to the Polish government-in-exile in London: "The return of masses of Jews would be experienced by the population… as an invasion against which they would defend themselves, even with physical means."

In Romania, anti-Jewish animus was also deeply entrenched. There was a widespread belief that Jews were a foreign and hostile element who had somehow been complicit in the loss of Bessarabia and Bukovina to the Soviet Union and of northern Transylvania to Hungary.

By 1941, the Jewish population in Hungary, a Nazi ally, had risen to 825,000 with the conquest of territory from Romania, Slovakia, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

The Hungarian leader, Miklos Horthy, enacted a series of anti-Semitic laws and handed over Polish Jews to the SS in western Ukraine.

The ruins of a Nazi crematorium in Auschwitz-Birkenau, where European Jews perished [*Sheldon Kirshner photo*]

He refused to deport native-born Hungarian Jews, but with Germany's occupation of Hungary in March 1944, the rules of the game changed. Deportations to Auschwitz-Birkenau got under way in May, at a rate of 12,000 to 14,000 deportees a day.

Reacting to domestic and international pressure, Horthy ordered a halt to the deportations on July 8. But on Oct. 15, the day he pulled Hungary out of the war, German forces took control of Budapest and installed a viciously anti-Semitic Arrow Cross government, which ramped up the persecution and murder of Jews.

Friedlander is implicitly contemptuous of the leader of France's Jewish community, Jacques Helbronner, describing him as a member of the assimilated "Jewish haute bourgeoisie" who was close to Henri Philippe Pétain, the president of Vichy France.

Helbronner petitioned Pétain to exempt native Jews, but not foreign or recently naturalized Jews, from Vichy's anti-Semitic regulations. Pétain ignored Helbronner's request. Nor did he act on his subsequent "futile and demeaning entreaties."

Friedlander is critical of the Jewish leadership in the United States. He suggests that its embargo on aid to Jews in Nazi-occupied countries, taken in compliance with Washington's economic boycott of the Axis powers, was counter-productive. Friedlander has a point, but could American Jews have realistically defied the U.S. government?

He lauds Italy, Germany's ally, for having played a positive role in saving Jews. In Greece, for example, the Italian consul in Salonika, Guelfo Zamboni, spared no efforts to protect Jews of Italian nationality. His efforts were supported by Italy's minister plenipotentiary in Athens and by the foreign ministry in Rome, but to no avail. The Nazis succeeded in virtually destroying Salonika's venerable Jewish community.

Nazi relentlessness was boundless. Himmler, in the summer of 1942, visited Finland and demanded the delivery of foreign Jews living there. The Finnish secret police compiled a list of 35 Jews, but due to protests, the Nazis could deport only eight Jews, all of whom were sent to Estonia.

The church in Europe was stained by silence. As Friedlander puts it, "Although sporadic protests by some Catholic bishops and Protestant leaders did take place, the vast majority of Catholic and Protestant authorities remained publicly silent in the face of the deportations of Jews and the growing knowledge of their extermination."

Sadly, Chaim Kaplan was right when he predicted a disaster for European Jews.

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Debaters clash over Israel's 'lurch to the right'

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Intellectual sparks flew as two seasoned debaters clashed over reasons why young American Jews appear to be increasingly alienated from Israel.

The topic of the debate at Holy Blossom Temple was "Zion: Home or Harm to the Jews?" It was sponsored by the Gerald Schwartz/Heather Reisman Centre for Jewish Learning.

The moderator was Heather Reisman, founder and chief executive officer of Indigo Books and Music.

Peter Beinart, the former editor of the *New Republic*, charged that Israel's rightward political shift has disaffected Jews in the United States aged 18 to 30.

Last spring, in an essay in the *The New York Review of Books* titled "The Failure of the American Jewish Establishment," Beinart attributed this phenomenon to two interrelated factors: Israel's policies toward the Palestinians and the lock-step support they garner among U.S. Jewish community leaders.

Peter Beinart

Rabbi Daniel Gordis, the senior vice-president of the right-of-centre Shalem Center in Jerusalem, generally agreed that American Jews in this age category have grown distant from Israel.

Describing himself as a liberal Zionist, he linked Israel's "lurch to the right" to the outbreak of the second intifadah and Palestinian recalcitrance.

Kicking off the debate, Beinart – a senior political writer at the Daily Beast blog and an associate professor of journalism and political science at City University in New York – accused the American Jewish establishment of trying to "desensitize" young Jews to Israel's post-1967 occupation of Arab territories. They have been asked to "check their liberalism at the door" while supporting Israel, he declared.

Citing a recent survey, Beinart said only 16 per cent of young secular Jews feel close to Israel. The corresponding figure among young Orthodox Jews is much higher.

Zionism in the United States is vibrant only in the Orthodox Jewish community, he added. But in these circles, the connection is not to a liberal, democratic and humanistic Israel, but rather to a Jewish state upholding traditional Jewish values, he suggested.

Rabbi Daniel Gordis

Beinart praised Israel's "flourishing democracy," but voiced regret that no such thing exists in the West Bank.

Echoing warnings by Ehud Olmert, Israel's former prime minister, and Ehud Barak, its current defence minister, Beinart claimed that Israel will become an "apartheid state" if it continues to occupy the West Bank without granting its Palestinian Arab inhabitants the right to vote in Israeli elections.

Calling for "a rebirth" of liberal democratic Zionism, Beinart likened Israel to an ideological battleground in which Israelis who love liberal democracy struggle against Israelis who hate it.

Rabbi Gordis, an American who made aliyah in 1998, acknowledged young Jews are "turning away" from Israel. Such Jews, he said, were raised in homes where universal rather than clannish values were cherished.

He wants Israel to be a liberal Jewish state, but realizes that anti-democratic currents and latent hostility to Israel's Arab minority are present in Israeli society today.

He conceded that Israel's electorate has moved to the right, but chided Beinart for not having offered an explanation for this trend in his essay.

In a reference to the second Palestinian uprising, Rabbi Gordis said "four years of horrific war," punctuated by a spate of suicide bombings in buses and restaurants, have disillusioned, exasperated and frustrated Israeli Jews.

The land-for-peace formula, which he said he endorses, was undermined by the Palestinian Authority's refusal to strike an agreement with Israel during the Camp David summit in 2000.

Criticizing Beinart for not having defended Israel in the pages of the *New York Review of Books* as it was being attacked by the left and the right, Rabbi Gordis said liberal values cannot be promoted when Israel is under siege and is being delegitimized by its enemies.

"Israel is vulnerable again, and the Jewish people is hated again," he observed. For the liberal brand of Zionism to thrive, Israel as a Jewish state must be able to survive.

"We can't figure out how to end the conflict," said Rabbi Gordis in a lament, explaining that Israel can't afford to

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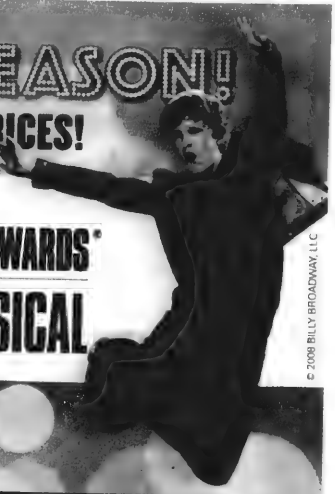

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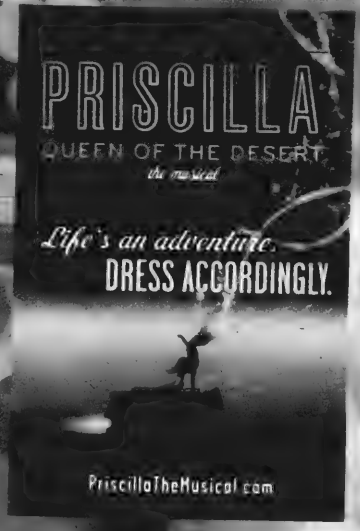

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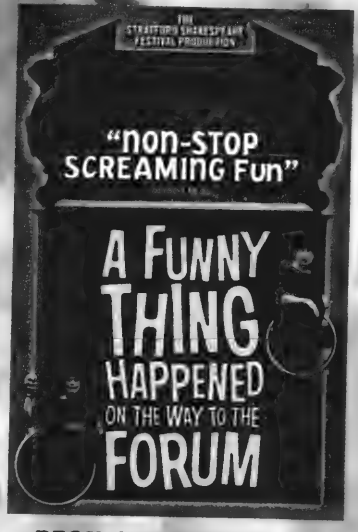

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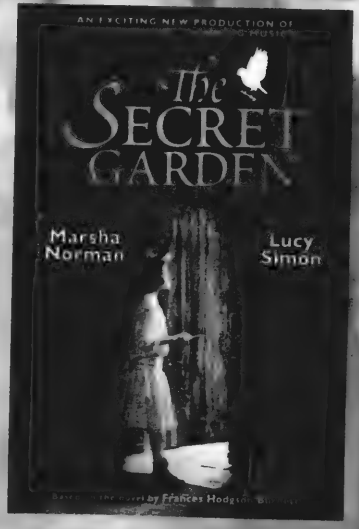

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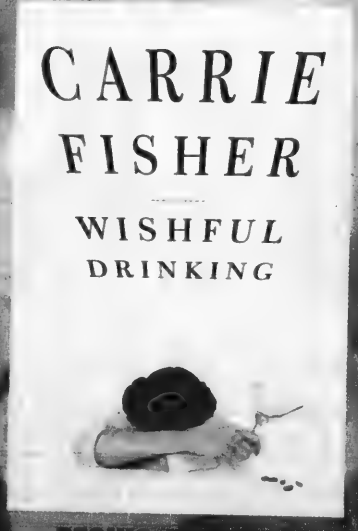

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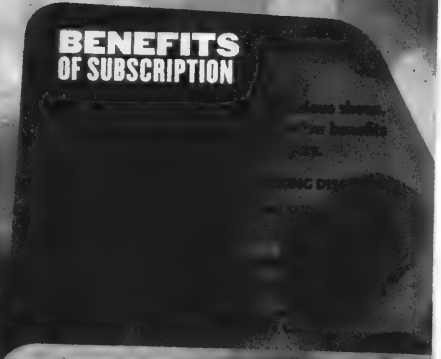

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Adbusters pulled from Shoppers' shelves

JTA

A leading drugstore chain has pulled a controversial magazine from its racks, but it insists the decision has nothing to do with complaints that its latest issue contained anti-Semitic images.

Shoppers Drug Mart said last week it will no longer sell *Adbusters*, an anti-consumerist/activist magazine based in Vancouver.

Lisa Gibson, a spokesperson for Shoppers, told the *Globe and Mail* that the decision was unrelated to a campaign by Canadian Jewish Congress against the magazine, which in its last issue ran a photo essay equating Israel's military actions in Gaza with the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto.

Congress and Honest Reporting Canada had urged supporters to "take the magazine up the cashier, open it to the appropriate page and tell the clerk or the owner that "this is anti-Semitic and shameful,' and walk away."

"We only have a certain amount of magazine shelf space allotted to us in each store," Gibson explained, "so we do a fairly regular review of the magazine assortment and look at sales and other things. So it was actually pulled as part of that review."

Congress CEO Bernie Farber denied his organization had lobbied Shoppers to pull *Adbusters*.

In 2004, *Adbusters* was condemned in Jewish circles for running a list of influential neo-conservative U.S. policymakers and placing an asterisk next to the Jewish names.

Responding to the move by Shoppers, *Adbusters* asked its supporters to "send an e-mail to Shoppers Drug Mart's CEO Jürgen Schreiber and tell him that until *Adbusters* is back on the shelves, you won't step foot in their store.

"Then send a note to the Canadian Jewish Congress... reminding them that in a free country, we debate rather than censor."

Interpol seeks Hossain

Compiled by CJN Staff

Interpol has issued a warrant for the arrest of a Bangladeshi-born former student at York University who authored a website that called for the mass murder of Jews.

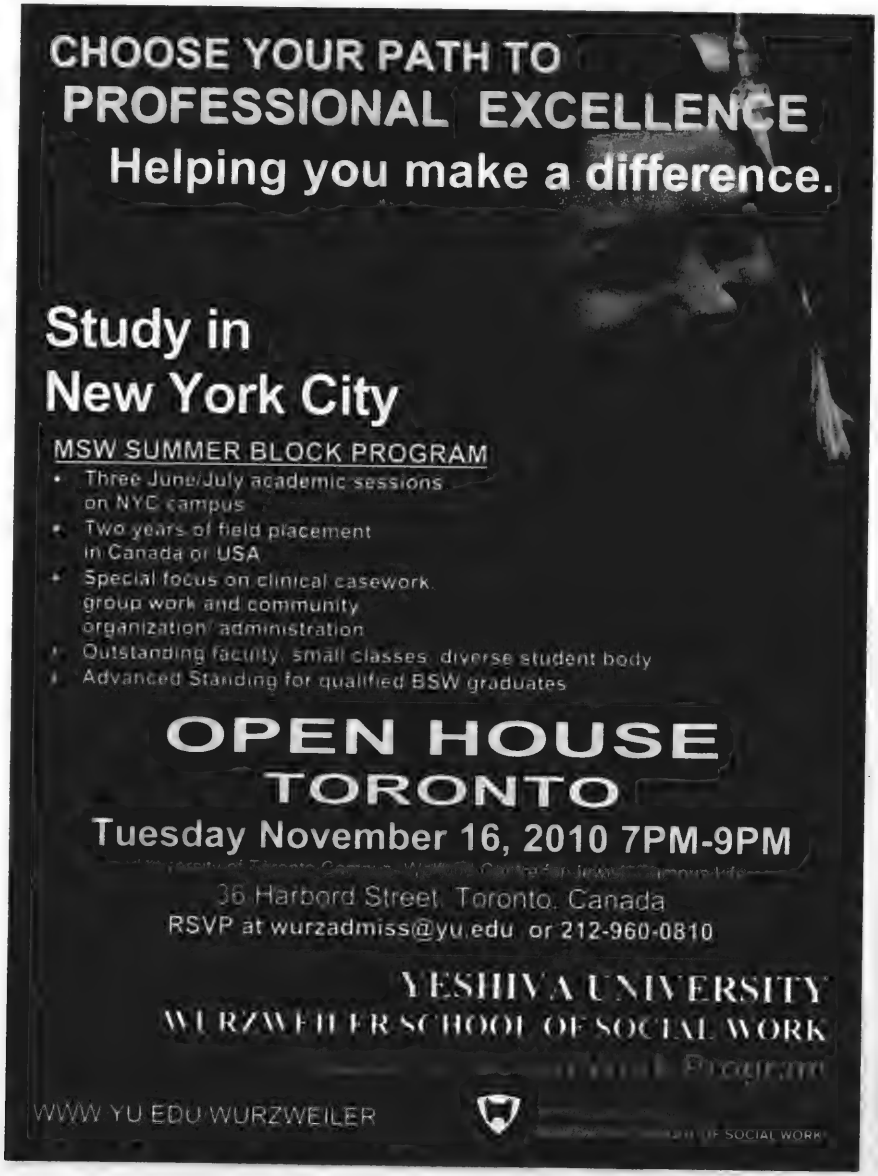
Salman an-Noor Hossain, 25, was added to the international police organization's database of fugitives at the request of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP).

Last summer, the OPP charged Hossain with promoting hatred against Jews and advocating genocide. It is believed to be the first time anyone was charged with promoting genocide under Section 318.1 of the Criminal Code.

On his website, "filthyjewishterrorists.com," Hossain openly called for the mass murder of Jews and their supporters – even after he was charged. In a posting dated July 8, he responded to the OPP's charges by stating: "It has very little to do with calling for the revenge slaughter of the Jews and their Allies. Of course by calling for their extermination and genocide, I did the right thing."

Hossain first came to the attention of police three years ago over postings to a website that attacked Jews. Following an investigation, OPP recommended to Ontario Attorney General Chris Bentley that Hossain be prosecuted. Bentley withheld his consent for prosecution, saying Hossain could potentially rehabilitate himself.

Interpol described him as 5-2 and 119 pounds with black hair and brown eyes. His photo can be found at www.interpol.int.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Greater Toronto Area

Shomrai Shabbos celebrates 120 years

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Shomrai Shabbos Chevrah Mishnayos is celebrating its 120th anniversary, making it the oldest Orthodox synagogue in Toronto and likely Canada.

To mark the occasion, there will be a fundraising dinner Nov. 17 with guest speaker Rabbi Avraham Twerski, honouring the shul's spiritual leader Rabbi Yacov Felder and his wife, Raisy, as well as 10 congregants: Bentzion and Miriam Heitner, Harry and Shirley Marder, Moshe and Lea Reichmann, Rochelle Reiter, Bonny Silver, and Jack and Ann Weinbaum. Funds raised will support shul programming.

Rabbi Yacov Felder

The synagogue, which recently underwent a major renovation, has been at its current location on Glengrove Avenue West for 40 years, said dinner chair Aaron Wagschal.

The renovation includes an expanded social hall, completed just over a year ago, and a new beit midrash that will allow more programming for men, women and youth to take place, Wagschal said.

As well, a mikvah that will be open Friday evenings – a rarity in the area – is under construction and is expected to be opened in the spring.

Harry Marder

Shomrai Shabbos, with about 350 member families, is "an active member within the Toronto Jewish community," Wagschal said, citing a long history of outreach including Toronto's Orthodox beit din for gittin (rabbinical court for Jewish divorces) and the Kashruth Council of Canada, which was strongly associated with the synagogue and Rabbi Gedalia Felder, the current rabbi's father, who was spiritual leader from 1951 until his death in 1991.

The synagogue's newest initiative is Netzach, created to foster harmonious marriages and home life. The shul also has a number of *gemachs* that provide things such as yom tov necessities, food throughout the year, and funding for members buying homes in the neighbourhood.

"That speaks to the theme of the dinner – building the Jewish community brick by brick," Wagschal said.

The shul serves the full spectrum of the Orthodox community from wearers of *kippot srugot* (crocheted kippot) to *shtreimlach*, he added.

Former president Harry Marder, 81, a member since he arrived in Canada in 1949, says Shomrai Shabbos is "a very warm congregation."

He remembers the senior Rabbi Felder as a man with a warm personality who respected Jews of all religious affiliations – and who also served as his shadchan, having gotten to know Marder's wife's family when he served the Jewish community in Brantford, Ont.

The younger Rabbi Felder, 49, is well-liked and has been instrumental in building up the shul, Marder said.

Rabbi Felder, the current rabbi, said the congregation is diverse in terms of age and background, but that "there's no divisiveness. There's a sense of unity and friendship and working together both for the benefit of the shul and organizations within the community.

"Although the shul is 120 years old, it still remains strong and vibrant… and it continues to play a pivotal role in the community at large," the rabbi said.

He said the original founders "probably wouldn't believe it" if they could see the shul and the Toronto Jewish community today. "I think they would be amazed how from humble beginnings… they planted the seeds, and they continue to blossom over 120 years later."

The original congregation, known as Shomrai Shaboth Anshei Estreich Minhag Sefard, was established by a group of *Galitzianer* immigrants and was first housed in various locations on Richmond Street.

In 1899, a permanent home was purchased on Chestnut Street, in a building with a women's balcony and seating for 100 men. The shul moved to the corner of Brunswick and Sussex Avenues in 1933.

Rabbi Yosef Weinreb served as the shul's first rabbi for more than four decades, until his death in 1942, and the congregation was without a spiritual leader for almost a decade afterward.

"We're continuing from Rabbi Weinreb and my father, and building upon the foundations that they laid – the ideals and the values they set up," Rabbi Felder said.

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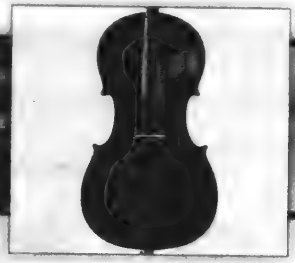

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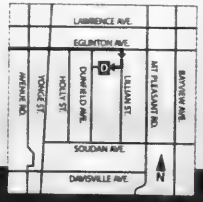

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Marylin and Rabbi Martin Berman

UTJ to honour local rabbinical couple

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Martin Berman, spiritual leader of Thornhill's Shaar Shalom Synagogue, and his wife, Marylin, are being honoured by the Union for Traditional Judaism (UTJ) at the organization's annual dinner.

The Bermans are receiving UTJ's Emunah v'Yosher (Faith and Integrity) award at the Nov. 10 event in Teaneck, N.J.

Actor Mayim Bialik (best known as Blossom Russo in the 1990-1995 television series *Blossom*) is also being honoured at the dinner. The UTJ is presenting her with its MTV (Media and Torah Values) Challenge Award. Bialik is working on the UTJ's MTV Challenge curriculum, a program designed to respond to television and other media from a Jewish perspective.

Rabbi Berman, 60, who serves on the UTJ board, has been involved with the organization since its inception in 1984, a year before the first woman was ordained as a Conservative rabbi, an issue that was part of the reason the organization was formed.

At the time, it was known as the Union for Traditional Conservative Judaism, but later came to include elements of the left wing of the Orthodox world as well, the rabbi said.

Under UTJ's umbrella, members created a rabbinic group called Morashah, of which Rabbi Berman was a founding member. The group brings together like-minded rabbis for study and *chizuk* (moral support), he said.

UTJ members part ways with their more liberal counterparts over issues including homosexuality, particularly as it relates to same-sex marriage and whether gays can serve as rabbis and educators, as well as over new prayerbooks that have eliminated or changed some of the traditional prayers.

The rabbi, who has led Shaar Shalom for 16 years, grew up in a Conservative home in Jacksonville, Fla., and attended afternoon Hebrew school. He and his wife – who now have three adult children and five grandchildren – met at Camp Ramah in 1967, when they were 17.

Later, he studied psychology as an undergraduate at Yeshiva University, considered the flagship institution of modern Orthodoxy. "They had a good program, and I learned a lot," he said.

However, he says, he "wasn't happy with what I saw in those days as a very closed-minded Orthodoxy." His two younger brothers both work at Orthodox yeshivot in Israel, he noted. He described one as "black hat" (haredi) and the other as "*kippah srugah*" (crocheted kippah, or modern Orthodox).

Rabbi Berman was ordained at the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary in 1977 and began his career in Sioux City, Iowa, hometown of rabbi and liturgist Jules Harlow, as well as longtime popular advice columnists Ann Landers and Dear Abby (Abigail Van Buren).

Rabbi Berman also served congregations in El Paso, Denver, and Detroit before joining Shaar Shalom. In El Paso, he served as an adjunct associate professor of religion at the University of Texas, and in Denver, he taught Talmud and Jewish law at a local Jewish day school.

In Toronto, where Rabbi Berman has served as president of the Rabbinical Assembly of Ontario and of the Toronto Board of Rabbis, he has taught the "Introduction to Judaism" class of the Rabbinical Assembly, Canadian region, for many years.

He said that UTJ and Morashah have helped strengthen his traditional commitments. "You have a chevrah of rabbis you get together with most summers... We come at Jewish life from the same direction."

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5.	Nikkei	-41.9%	(-12.7%)

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Did you say "oil and gas" companies? Isn't that for countries in the Middle East other than Israel?

Our world has changed – for the better. As highlighted in the *Wall Street Journal* on October 13th, Israel is now on the brink of becoming a major player in the world oil and gas market. Last February Israel announced the discovery of the Tamar gas find off the coast of Haifa. It was the world's largest in 2009 and has enough gas to supply Israel's needs for the next 50 years. This past June, the initial results of the Leviatan project were announced, with enough oil and gas to cover Israel's needs for the next 100 years.

When these projects come on stream, Israel will become a major exporter of oil and gas. Our funds have invested in these opportunities and we expect excellent returns from these oil and gas investments.

What is the minimum investment and is this fund RRSP and RRIF eligible?

For Accredited Investors, the minimum investment is only $5,000 for non-registered funds and $22,000 for registered funds (this year's maximum RRSP contribution) that are either being transferred in from an existing RRSP account or from new RRSP contributions.

How do I find out more about the HLIF?

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Fatah says Muslims should recognize Israel's legal, moral right to exist

Continued from page 3

Fatah says the doctrine of armed jihadism informs the mindset of the leadership of mosques – imams and boards of directors – across the country.

In his book, he writes "The contemporary narrative of jihad" in mosques around the world has become "a breeding ground for anti-Semitism."

He added, "I don't know of any Canadian politicians, left or right, who have uttered a word against armed jihadism."

Fatah, who has visited Israel, believes Muslims should reconcile themselves to Israel's moral and legal right to exist as a state within secure and internationally recognized borders.

At least two verses in the Qur'an, 5:20 and 5:21, he holds, authenticate Jewish claims to Palestine and Jerusalem.

Fatah does not believe Israel is an apartheid state. "That's bullshit, and you can quote me. If you want to see an apartheid state, go to Saudi Arabia, which is an oppressive society ruled by the religious police, or Iran."

He calls on Israel to end its "illegal and immoral" occupation of the West Bank, saying a "just peace" and the creation of a Palestinian state is not "a favour" to the Palestinians, but "an absolute necessity for the survival of the Jewish state."

Once this happens, he thinks, Muslim anti-Semites will lose "the most powerful excuse to whip up" anti-Semitism.

"Not that Islamist Judeophobia will disappear, but the oxygen that nourishes it will be cut off."

In his view, Islam can be reconciled with modernism and universal human rights through democracy, which, he acknowledged, is sorely absent in the Middle East.

Fatah was born in Karachi in 1949. His ancestors in the Punjab were Hindus who converted to Islam in the 19th century. Although his parents were Orthodox Muslims, they sent him to a Catholic school. His father has an adopted Jewish sister.

At the end of 2001, following 9/11, he and like-minded Muslims established the Muslim Canadian Congress (MCC). Its advocacy of "progressive" forms of Islam, gay rights, separation of religion and state and opposition to Shariah law aroused criticism and indignation in some Muslim circles.

Fatah was the MCC's communications director and spokesperson until the summer of 2006, when he resigned over concerns for his safety.

He stepped down from his position after he and other members objected to the MCC's participation in anti-Israel demonstrations during which banners of Hezbollah and Hamas and posters of Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, were raised.

Last year, in an article in the *National Post*, Fatah accused the Canadian Arab Federation of having turned itself into "a mouthpiece for Hamas and Hezbollah in Canada."

Fatah's first book, *Chasing a Mirage: The Tragic Illusion of an Islamic State*, was a finalist for the Donner Prize.

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Lodz-born rabbi celebrating 90th birthday

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When Rabbi Peretz Weizman used to go on his customary walks down Main Street in Winnipeg, he often sang an unusual song that puzzled the shopkeepers he had come to know.

"What is that tune and why are you always singing it?," they asked him.

Weizman kept mum about it but in an interview with *The CJN* last week, he explained the origins of that unusual melody that had puzzled his friends in the prairie city.

It was an old tune sung by a cantor that he had heard as a youth in his native city, Lodz. As a boy, he loved to attend Kabalat Shabbat services at the city's famous Altshtot, Old City Shul. Although his family attended a simple shtibl, he used to sneak out on Friday night to the ornate and beautiful synagogue, where he was awed by the splendour of the building, the solemnity of the service and the stature of the cantor.

He remembered the cantor's song welcoming the Sabbath and kept it alive. "That was the song I sang on Main Street," he said. "I never walked alone. I saved something from the Old City Shul. I rescued the melody. This Hitler could not destroy."

Rabbi Weizman, who has moved to Toronto to be closer to his family, will celebrate his 90th birthday on Nov. 23. A man of the old school, he recalls vividly the life he led in Lodz before the Nazi invasion of September 1939, as well as the subsequent destruction.

The memory of his beloved synagogue going up in flames in November 1939 is burned into his consciousness. It was so beautiful, "I didn't believe the Temple was nicer than this shul," he said.

"When I saw the synagogue going up in flames, the entire sky was covered in sparks – a remnant. When I say that, I feel that I was one of the sparks."

Like other survivors of the Holocaust, Rabbi Weizman represents one of the ever-declining number of Yiddish-speaking European Jews. Surprisingly, he eschews use of the word "survivor" when describing himself, even though he alone from his parents, brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, cousins – more than 60 people in all – escaped the Nazis.

"I am not a survivor," he said. "Let me explain. I was a nephew, I was a son, a brother. All these titles gone. Only the naked Peretz survived. All the titles are gone. Only a fraction survived, the naked "I" survived... I felt naked, unprotected."

Rabbi Weizman had three brothers and two sisters. His father, Shmuel, was a successful businessman who manufactured and sold chemicals and some pharmaceuticals. At age three, Rabbi Weizman began to attend cheder at the Yeshiva Yesodai HaTorah, where he learned traditional Jewish subjects along with secular material, which was compulsory. The school days were long, beginning at 8 a.m. and going until 8:30 p.m., with a break for dinner.

Rabbi Peretz Weizman
[Paul Lungen photo]

At age 15, his family arranged for a private tutor. "In Poland, in my circle, you didn't study to become a rabbi. If you wanted to be a Jew and respected in the community, you had to be a scholar."

He didn't decide to become a rabbi until after the creation of the Lodz ghetto by the Nazis.

"I felt I should contribute to the Jews, that Judaism will need me, if I survive," he said.

Remembering the cantor's rendition of Kabalat Shabbat was part of that and later, when he met the cantor in the ghetto, Rabbi Weizman recalled that the man, who had seemed so tall and grand in the synagogue, was "shrunken" and beaten down.

"I sang for the chazzan, Kabalat Shabbat, and tears welled in his eyes and he said, 'preserve it.'"

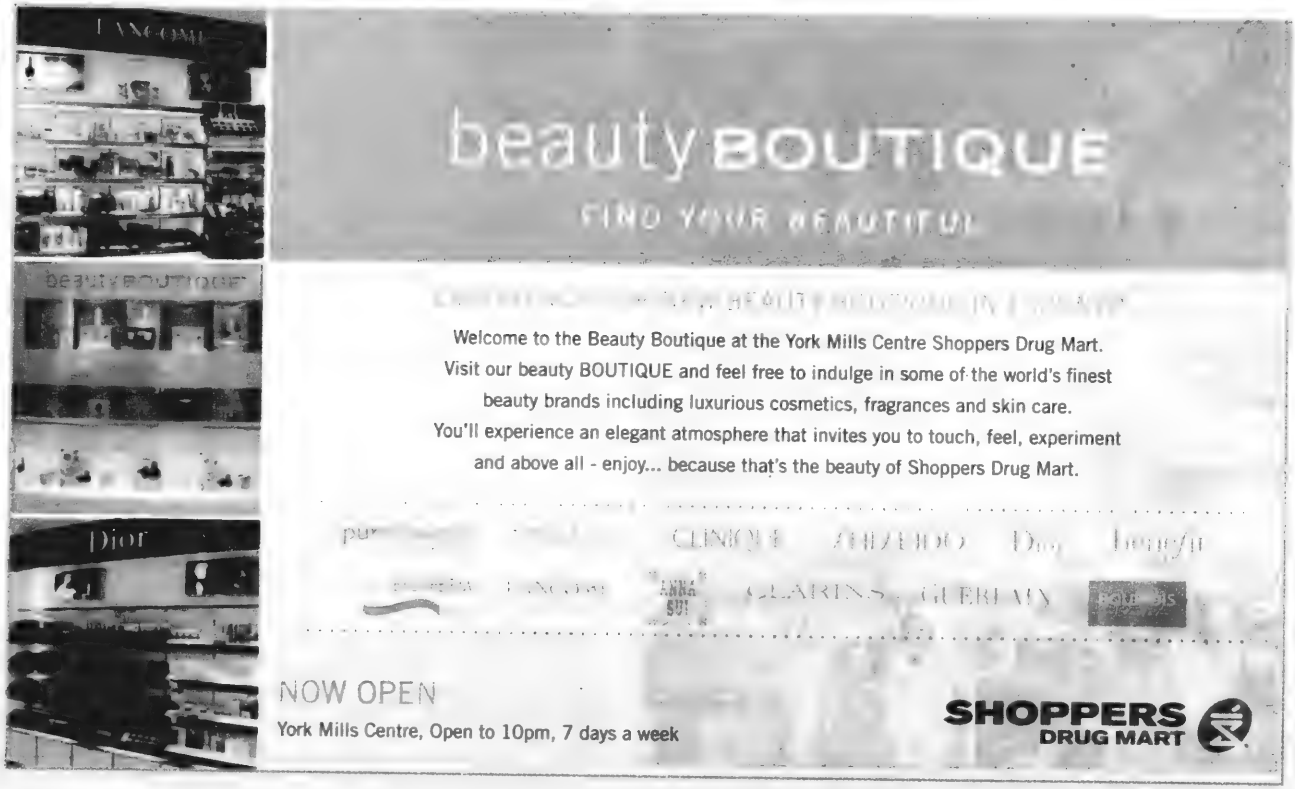
Preserve the song, he did, though all around him was starvation, misery, death and destruction. He managed to survive the war as a labourer in a laundry. "We laundered the garments of the Jews who were gassed and sent it back, cleaned, to Germany. We didn't know they were gassed then, but we noticed five shirts, one over the other, and found diamonds in brassieres, and dollars."

Rabbi Weizman was liberated by Soviet forces and met his future wife, Riva, after the war. After a few years in Europe, they moved to Israel where she had family, but Rabbi Weizman couldn't cope with the hot Mediterranean climate. When he learned of an opening at a synagogue in Winnipeg, they left for Canada, arriving in 1953.

In 1960, he became rabbi at the newly formed Bnay Abraham Congregation, and he served there for almost 40 years.

"I love Winnipeg," he said. "I feel very comfortable there. It has a very nice, comfortable element there. It's heimishe, a cold climate, but warm people."

Continued on page 24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Rosenbergs' son helps kids of targeted activists

By CARA EDELL
Special to The CJN

Robert Meeropol, one of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg's sons, visited Toronto recently for his only Canadian stop on a 20-city tour.

The New York native spoke about his work with the Rosenberg Fund for Children at his Oct. 30 lecture held at the Winchevsky Centre.

Twenty years ago, Meeropol said he was an unfulfilled corporate lawyer with an extraordinary personal history – he was orphaned at age six when his parents were executed in 1953 for conspiracy to commit espionage. To fill the void in his life, he founded the Rosenberg Fund for Children, to help the children of targeted activists.

The fund is an American-based public foundation that provides a supportive community for children whose parents are working for social justice and, as a result, have lost their jobs, freedom, physical or emotional well-being, and even their lives.

It has awarded millions of dollars to benefit hundreds of children whose parents have been targeted because of their involvement in progressive movements. Such causes have included struggles to wage peace, preserve civil liberties and safeguard the environment.

In addressing his own parents' case in his lecture, Meeropol spoke about his past before outlining dramatic new developments that have recently come to light. His memoir, *An Execution in the Family*, was published on the 50th anniversary of his parents' executions.

The U.S. government executed the Rosenbergs for "conspiring to steal the secret of the atomic bomb," Meeropol said. Because the charge was conspiracy, their conviction did not require concrete evidence that they had stolen anything or given it to anyone. The key government witnesses were all charged with the same conspiracy and received more favourable treatment if they testified the Rosenbergs were guilty.

Ethel and Julius Rosenberg

David and Ruth Greenglass, Ethel Rosenberg's brother and sister-in-law, testified that Julius, with Ethel's help, recruited David into an atomic spy ring in 1944, Meeropol said. At that time, David worked in New Mexico, where the first atomic bomb was being built. The Greenglasses swore that David provided a sketch and a description of the bomb to Julius in September 1945, and that Ethel was present to type David's notes.

In return for the Greenglasses' co-operation, Ruth Greenglass, who swore she helped steal what the prosecution called "the most important scientific secret ever known to mankind," was never indicted, Meeropol said. His parents testified and denied all charges.

In 2008, the transcripts of the testimony of 43 witnesses who appeared before the jury that indicted the Rosenbergs were released to the public. This included the testimony of Ruth Greenglass, who had died earlier that year, but not David, who is still alive. Ruth's testimony did not mention the 1945 meeting, any sketches or notes, Meeropol said.

In October 2010, the publication of the book *Final Verdict: What Really Happened in the Rosenberg Case* by Walter and Miriam Schneir revealed that when Julius was fired from the Army Corps of Engineers in February 1945, the USSR removed him from all espionage activity in fear that the United States had discovered he was an espionage agent. Therefore, the supposed September 1945 espionage meeting between the Rosenbergs and Greenglasses could not have taken place, Meeropol said.

Instead, the Greenglasses, without the Rosenberg's involvement, met with Soviet agents and delivered the sketch that the government called "the secret of the atomic bomb" three months later. This new information supports that neither Julius nor Ethel was a member of an atomic spy ring that stole the secret of the atomic bomb, Meeropol said.

In recent years, we have witnessed "the most rapid and widespread erosion of our civil liberties since the 1950s," he said. "Those who speak out in opposition to our criminal war abroad and the growing repression at home are condemned as traitors and treated as enemies of the state."

After his parents' arrests in 1950, Meeropol's relatives were so scared of being associated with "Communist spies" that they refused to take him and his brother into their homes. After his parents' executions, police seized Meeropol from the home of his future adoptive parents and placed him in an orphanage.

"Bad as this was, it could have been much worse," he said. "As I grew older, I came to realize the debt I owed to so many generous individuals whom I never met, but who rallied to my support. As a result of their collective efforts and generosity, I grew up in a loving household and flourished in the supportive environment provided by child-oriented progressive institutions."

Meeropol said the fund for children helps kids who are enduring the same kind of nightmare that he experienced as a child. "My parents wrote that they died secure in the knowledge that others would carry on after them. That's what I've done, and that is what the Rosenberg Fund for Children seeks to do."

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Watermarks | Film screening
Sunday, November 14 - 7PM
Learn the story of the Hakoah Vienna Jewish women's swim team of the 1930s, their forced separation, and their reunion decades later. Discussion led by film critic Shlomo Schwartzberg follows film screening.

The Ancient Cemetery of Sambir, Ukraine | Mark Freiman
Thursday, November 18 - 7:30PM
Mark Freiman, National President of Canadian Jewish Congress will present a fascinating seminar in support of the restoration of Jewish Holocaust memorial sites in Ukraine. Discussion to include the political perspectives and the practical issues involved in restoring Sambir's Jewish cemetery.

A Scholar's View from China Today | Professor Xu Xin
Sunday, November 21 - 7:30PM
Professor Xu Xin is author and educator, Director of the Glazer Institute of Judaic Studies, Nanjing University and founding President of the Association of Jewish Studies in China. Join us for a fascinating lecture which surveys his journey into Jewish Studies and explains his love of Jewish history, culture, religion, literature and Israel.

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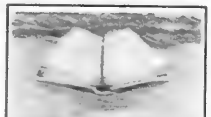
Jewish Life

If I forget thee, Yerushalayim

By RABBI URI KAUFMAN

I recently spent Shabbat in Yerushalayim, celebrating with my children the birth of my first grandchild. Holding your first granddaughter for the first time is intensly moving. Grandchildren reinforce our sense of mortality and eternity, as we see ourselves aging, reaching a new milestone of life. We are thankful to HaShem for being blessed with a new generation connecting us to the future.



Rabbinic Reflections

Holding a grandchild born in Jerusalem creates the additional awareness that our lives are eternally bound with the destiny of our people and its history.

My mother and father were children of young parents who left Europe for North America years before World War II to allow my grandfathers to escape conscription into the Polish and Russian armies.

My mother-in-law escaped the destruction in Europe as a young child hidden with a gentile family in her native Romania, later coming to Canada with her parents who miraculously also survived the war. My father-in-law emigrated with his family from Iran, first to Eretz Yisrael and then to New York, escaping the devastation and upheaval that would come to his world decades later.

My son-in-law's grandparents are all survivors of the death camps who came here with unshakable faith in HaShem, unwavering commitment to their traditions and superhuman determination to rebuild their lives and families.

All these Diaspora stories came together two weeks ago in a delicious little girl, a new chapter – this time written in Yerushalayim. When the diplomats and politicians negotiate the Jews' right to live in Yerushalayim, I think my granddaughter should join that conversation and remind them that she was born in the eternal homeland of our people because, for over 2,000 years, our people never forgot their true home.

The Polish tailor, the Hungarian shopkeeper, the Iranian artisan, the Brooklyn lawyer all kept in their hearts and hopes for the future the psalmist's cry, "If I forget thee, Yerushalayim, let my right hand forget its cunning."

The great irony of history and current world politics is that this fact of Jewish history is our most powerful claim to the holy city. English historian Arnold Toynbee, in a public debate over 50 years ago with then-Israeli ambassador to Canada Rabbi Yaakov Herzog, claimed that Jews were a fossilized nation, who, by the rules of history, should have disappeared centuries ago and therefore have no claim to the Land of Israel. Rabbi Herzog responded that our existence despite history is due to the protection of God, and our unceasing desire to return to Eretz Yisrael has kept us alive, with legitimate historical rights to our ancient homeland.

It is this historical reality that U.S. President Barack Obama chooses to ignore in discussing the Jews' rights to their own land, arguing that our right to a homeland is only a result of the Holocaust. His intent is to lessen our claim to Yerushalayim or any part of our land that doesn't fit his vision of "Pax Obama."

I don't know if my granddaughter is ready to join the discussions, but I believe that into those rooms will sneak many of the souls, of the tailors, shopkeepers and artisans who kept the yearning for Jerusalem alive. They will be smiling, knowing that what they did is now the true basis for our right to have little Jewish girls again born in our home.

Rabbi Uri Kaufman is the rav of the Agudas Yisroel Anshei Kielce and associate principal of Eitz Chaim Schools Patricia campus.

May God give Rob Ford strength

Money Matters

By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

Voters in the city of Toronto, in electing Rob Ford as mayor, have voted for change. Our mayor-elect has been most forthright about his plan of action, with a focus on the need to cut city spending. Yet despite his wide margin of victory and clear mandate from the voters, it's far from clear how much of his agenda he will mange to have implemented.

Unlike our federal and provincial parliamentary systems where leaders are able, for better or worse, to enforce party discipline, our elected representatives to Toronto City Hall consist of 44 independent councillors who have no one to answer to save for the voters themselves – what a novel concept! The gap between the election campaign and the reality of office will, by necessity, be wide indeed. Major initiatives will go through much negotiation, with the likely result being greatly watered down legislation.

A similar fate potentially awaited millions of Americans who, as of this writing, were just one day away from likely changing the makeup of the U.S. Congress, setting the stage for political gridlock. The stakes were high, and economists were concerned that with the world economy still teetering on the brink, a high degree of partisanship and subsequent inaction could lead to a double-dip recession.

I leave it to the political scientists to debate the merits of our democratic process while I attempt to focus on the ethical underpinning of the choices we make. The Torah has very little to say about the type of economic (or political, for that matter) system that should be in place. Rather, whatever system is chosen must be implemented in a way that's fair, transparent and meets high ethical criteria. These are, admittedly, very broad and vague goals, and well-meaning people will argue about how best to attain them. Many will argue as to what constitutes the best communal policy that we must aim to promote.

The level of taxation and the proper allocation to health care, defence, education, welfare, foreign aid and a host of other worthy causes is something that has no definitive guidelines in our tradition. Those authorities who have addressed these issues try to balance the many competing needs of the individual and community.

Thus the most important factor is electing people with integrity who can be trusted to act with the best interests of the electorate at heart. In the end, specific policy initiatives are more, often than not, a reflection of the people who initiate them.

I have previously noted the provision of Jewish law that says a voter must vote for the sake of heaven. Whatever its exact meaning, this law would preclude voting for initiatives that one feels are against the public good, despite the fact that one might personally benefit. While citizens vote infrequently, our elected officials are constantly called on to vote, and the level of integrity and selflessness required of them is much higher.

It is not for naught that synagogues across the world publicly proclaim each week on Shabbat that God should bless those who toil in the public sector *b'emunah*, with faith and integrity. Sadly, many public servants aren't actually included in these blessings. And tellingly, we don't bless those who "succeed" in communal life. Rather, it is those who faithfully toil in such "holy" work who are worthy of blessings.

Our tradition recognizes that "success" is often out of our hands. With so many factors – economic surprises, the realities of politics, a new perspective gained when actually in power – at work in the political sphere we should try and ensure that those who attain office are those who will faithfully deal with the myriad of unexpected issues that come their way.

Comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

Jewish Life

Writer says Hinduism, Judaism have much in common

We Jews tend to understand our own identity in two contradictory ways – either we highlight our similarities with other groups or we highlight our differences.

If our identity is based on difference, then we structure our religion to be as different as possible from gentile religions or, in the political sphere, we structure our nation to be as different as possible from non-Jewish states. It's easy to find support for this approach in classical Jewish literature. The Bible instructs our forefathers who left Egypt (Leviticus 18:3), "Do not copy the practices of the land of Egypt where you dwelt, or the practices of the land of Canaan to which I am taking you; nor should you follow their laws." Rabbinic legend teaches us that Abraham was called *ivri* (meaning Hebrew, a name ostensibly derived from the Hebrew word *ever* (side), because "all the world was on one side and he [Abraham, alone] was on the other side."

By Martin Lockshin

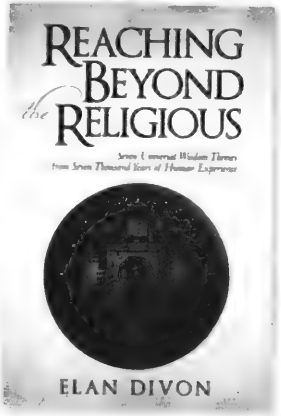
Many modern Jewish nationalists proudly describe the Jews, using the words of Balaam (Numbers 23:9), as "a people that dwells alone." It is likely that Moses Maimonides and other Bible scholars who followed in his footsteps were right when they suggested that some of the obscure laws of the Torah were designed to lead the Jews away from pagan practices (some often long-lost).

On the other hand, if our identity is based on similarity, then we Jews should try to be as similar as possible to the rest of the world. We can see this tendency in the old Yiddish adage, "*Vi se kristlt zikh, azoy yidlt zikh*" (literarily, "The way it is with Christians is the way it is with Jews," i.e., Jews who live in Christian countries tend to do things the way Christians do them) or in the bon mot of unknown origin "Jews are just like everyone else, only more so."

The different religious customs of Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews are often a function of differing local gentile customs. For example, Jews in Christian countries generally sat in pews in their synagogues, but in Sephardi countries, they often sat on the floor. Some Jewish nationalists have understood Zionism as the "normalization of the Jewish people," a movement that should make us more like everyone else.

The truth, of course, lies somewhere in between. In some periods of history, Jews tended to adopt the behaviours and values of their gentile neighbours. In other periods, Jewish values centred around rejecting the gentile world and following the biblical charge to refrain from following the gentiles' laws and customs. In most periods of history, both factors were at work.

Elan Divon's new book, *Reaching Beyond Religious: Seven Universal Wisdom Themes From Seven Thousand Years of Human Experience*, falls squarely into the similarity camp. This is not surprising. Divon is the executive director of Peace Camp Canada, a non-profit organization that promotes dialogue and cross-cultural understanding between Israeli and Palestinian teens. He was born in Jerusalem and currently lives in Toronto. He has also lived in India, Sri Lanka and Ethiopia and has studied at Harvard University, Brandeis University, McGill University and the University of London. His interest in cross-cultural comparisons seems to be a natural outgrowth of his cosmopolitan background.



Written for the layperson in an informal style (which could have used a little more editing), the book contains several close readings of biblical stories. In each case, Divon discovers a universal religious moral, often with a self-help message. Divon's approach – that Jewish religious texts promote values that are also found in other religions – is not unusual. Many people in North America, both Jews and Christians, enjoy speaking of the "Judeo-Christian heritage" – suggesting that, on the issues that count, Jews and Christians think alike. Some even speak of the "Abrahamic Faiths," (i.e., Judaism, Christianity and Islam), again implying that the commonalities between the three religions are more important than their differences.

But Divon's thesis in this book is more radical. His central argument is that Judaism and Hinduism, two religions that are rarely considered similar, actually have a lot in common. For example, Divon walks his readers slowly and intelligently through a close reading of the stories of Joseph in the Book of Genesis. He points out a number of ways in which the tables turn surprisingly against characters who overstep. For example, Joseph ends up (according to Divon, inadvertently) enslaving the Egyptians (Genesis 47:18-23), and a few years later, the Egyptians enslave the Israelite people (Exodus 1).

Divon argues that the inexorable way that the plot unfolds is very similar to the Hindu idea of karma. He suggests that the biblical text is better understood if we realize that the effects of karma are often unpredictable, in part because of our inheritance of "karmic debt" from our ancestors.

In another chapter, Divon grapples with the age-old problem that the Bible sees some people as chosen and others as not. He suggests that "the very notion of chosenness and unchosenness exemplified in the Torah, and the duties that are contingent on each, is very akin to the Hindu concept of *dharma*." He concludes that a crucial lesson of the Torah and of *dharma* is "acceptance… since we cannot alter and change who and what we are."

Right at the beginning of the book, Divon admits that there are many differences between the two religions (to name just one, Judaism is monotheistic and Hinduism is not). But he chooses to highlight the similarities.

I have no doubt that some Jewish readers who are attracted to emphasizing Jews' similarities to others will enjoy this book. It is comforting to think that even two religions as ostensibly disparate as Judaism and Hinduism share some universal truths. While Divon does not say so explicitly, I sense that the book is dedicated in part to the promotion of tolerance by highlighting how we are all the same.

Readers who prefer to think of Judaism as very different from other religions may not find the book as attractive.

A book that enumerated the many divergences between Judaism and Hinduism would presumably have been easier to write. And it would probably have been a more precise description of the facts. A frank but respectful acknowledgement of real differences between Judaism and other world religions does not necessarily lead to intolerance. In fact, true tolerance is only possible between those who disagree. Should we be tolerant and respectful only to those who have a message that is the same as ours?

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Rabbi Weizman spent year at Beth Emeth

Continued from page 19

In 1999, he spent a year in Toronto as a replacement rabbi at the Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue after he received a good response when he delivered a dvar Torah.

He enjoyed the experience at the shul. "We had a common language, and a common expectation and a common past. They could appreciate a newcomer. They appreciated my sense of humour. It's a Jewishly-intelligent congregation... They like European *sechoireh* [merchandise]."

Last year, the Winnipeg Jewish community honoured Rabbi Weizman with a tribute dinner and the establishment of the Rabbi Peretz Weizman Holocaust Education Trust fund, housed at the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba. More than $40,000 was raised to support the establishment and maintenance of a Holocaust education display showcase as a lasting legacy.

Today, Rabbi Weizman is a Torontonian. His wife is a resident at Baycrest, and his nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren live here.

He still studies every day or two at a local yeshiva where the young people "look at me like someone from a different age."

"I'm a true believer that God has blessed me with a long life. I believe my brothers and sisters and parents gave me their years. I lived their lives, and I must confess that the less future I have, the more the past is taking a hold of me. As the past is taking a hold of me, it robs me of my present. I have such a desire to be with them, to see them. I have this longing. I miss them more than I missed them 50 years ago. They say time cures: no."

As this reporter takes leave of Rabbi Weizman – I confess that I've known him a long time; he "bar-mitzvahed" me years ago – there's always one more story, one more parable for him to tell, one more mishnaic interpretation to impart.

Like the old shul burning, Rabbi Weizman continues to give off sparks, hoping that a new generation will preserve and pass along the wisdom and flavour of the nearly destroyed Old World.

Israel must 'get rid' of West Bank to ensure survival

Continued from page 12

come to terms with the Palestinians unless its security is assured and its cities don't come under further Palestinian bombardment, such as the town of Sderot.

In a rebuttal, Beinart said the campaign to delegitimize Israel can be stopped in its tracks if Israel ends its occupation.

"A colonial occupation can't be defended in the modern world," he said, pointing out that Israel's presence in the West Bank violates the Geneva Conventions, while settlements there inhibit the movement toward peace.

He added that the doubling of the Jewish population in the West Bank during the Oslo peace process was not a wise move.

Beinart characterized his opponent's presentation as "too comforting a narrative."

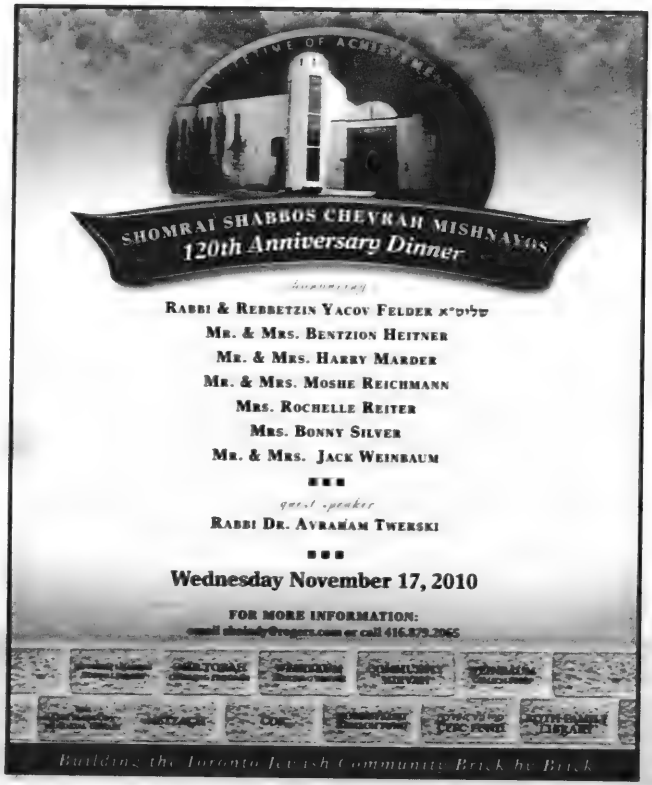
Rabbi Gordis said Israel has "to get rid" of the West Bank to ensure its survival as a Jewish state. By way of elaboration, he said Israel should keep settlement blocs, but give up "outlying areas" of the West Bank.

He said Israelis are eager to end their conflict with the Palestinians and would agree to a two-state solution.

"It would be better not to have Palestinians under our thumb," he said. "But we haven't figured out how to do that. You can't play Russian roulette with the lives of your family."

Israelis have every reason to desire peace. "We just need a partner who can meet us halfway," he said.

THREE CUTS FOR CANCER:
Tamar Sonenberg, a Grade 4 student at Eitz Chaim Schools, recently cut her hair and donated it to help make wigs for children with cancer. This is the third time the nine-year-old has cut and donated her hair to help cancer patients. When she was three, she donated the hair from her first haircut, and three years later, she did so again. Immediately after her recent haircut, Tamar announced that she plans to let her hair grow until her bat mitzvah, and then she will be able to donate her hair for the fourth time.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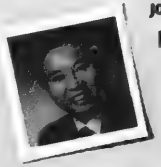

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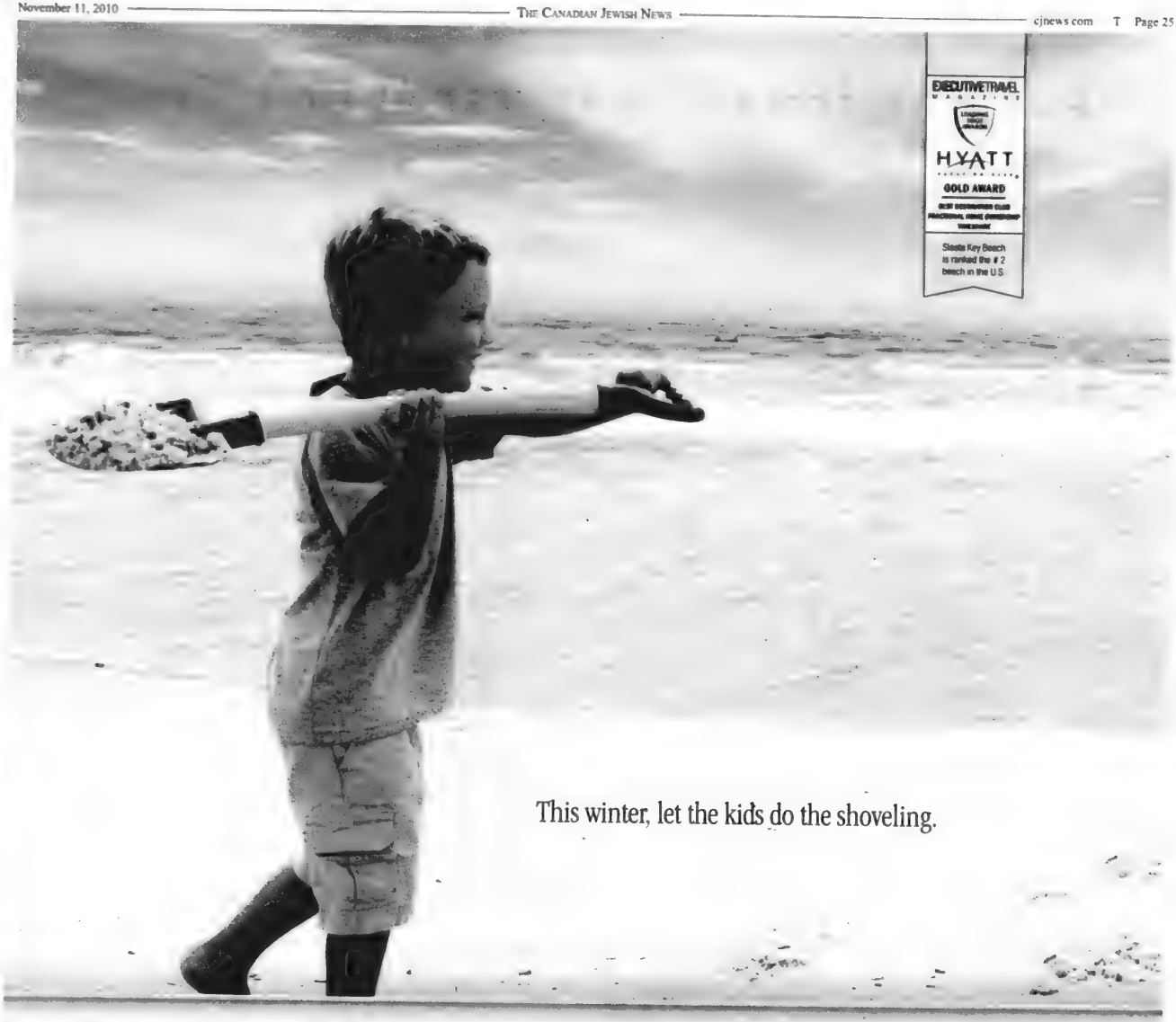

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Holocaust Education Week

Plan to canonize Pius XII called 'highly political'

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The long-running effort by the Vatican to confer sainthood on a controversial pope, Pius XII, accused of having remained largely silent during the Holocaust, is really about an internal power struggle within the Roman Catholic church, says Canadian historian Michael Marrus.

The current debate on his possible canonization is a Catholic rather than a Jewish issue, asserted Marrus, a member of a short-lived Catholic-Jewish commission whose mandate was to examine Vatican policy during World War II.

Michael Marrus

"It's not a matter in which Jewish decision-making is involved one whit," said Marrus, a University of Toronto professor emeritus whose book, *Holocaust in History*, studied the Vatican's role during this period. "What is going on is highly political."

Arguing that the debate is polemical, runs deep and has "little to do with Jews," Marrus likened it to a theological battle between two opposing forces in the Vatican – "preservationists" who want to maintain orthodoxy and "revisionists" who are champions of reform and change.

Pope Pius XII

Speaking at a Holocaust Educational Week forum at Holy Blossom Temple last week, he said the preservationists regard Pope Pius XII as "a kind of symbol" of their conservative beliefs. They also believe he acted boldly on behalf of Jews and saved hundreds of thousands of them.

Their opponents, the revisionists, fear Pope Pius XII's canonization will undermine the church's relationship with Jews, he noted.

In general, preservationists hail him as a paragon of Christian virtue who guided the Vatican through an immensely difficult time, while revisionists regard him as a morally ambiguous figure who could have done much more to help Jews threatened by the Nazis.

To Marrus, this divergence of views is proof that the church is a very pluralistic institution. "It's not a unified, monolithic body obedient to a single authority," he said.

Jews generally oppose the process to confer sainthood on Eugenio Pacelli, who was pope from 1939 to 1958.

The World Jewish Congress has characterized Vatican plans to canonize him as "inopportune and premature," while the American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors and Their Descendants has condemned it as "profoundly insensitive and thoughtless."

Some Jews, however, disagree with this line of thinking, Marrus said.

The British historian Sir Martin Gilbert, Winston Churchill's biographer, has said Pope Pius XII deserves thanks rather than blame. The late Golda Meir praised his attempts to rescue Jews when she was Israel's foreign minister.

Pope Paul VI launched the campaign to canonize Pope Pius XII in 1965. The current pope, Benedict XVI, shelved his canonization pending the expected opening of Vatican files in 2014, on his papacy. Last year, however, Benedict XVI declared Pope Pius XII "venerable," a step short of sainthood.

In his talk, Marrus said Pope Pius XII will not be declared a saint any time soon. No one can be certain where the debate over his sainthood is heading. "Your guess is as good as mine. No one knows for sure."

But among preservationists, who have lobbied on his behalf for years, there is "a sense of urgency," he said.

By contrast, revisionists have implored Pope Benedict XVI to slow down the consideration of Pope Pius XII's case for canonization, to let it rest for another century.

Marrus argued the Vatican would be unwise to canonize Pope Pius XII.

"The repercussions would be very significant if canonization took place," he said. "Let the issue pass."

Education called best way to refute Holocaust deniers

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Education is ultimately the best tool there is to combat Holocaust denial, says Deborah Lipstadt, the American historian who won a historic court case against British Holocaust denier David Irving 10 years ago.

"Teaching the facts is the way to confront deniers' rubbish," she said at a Holocaust Education Week forum last week at Beth Sholom Synagogue.

Deborah Lipstadt

"One of our best weapons is survivors' stories," she added. "This is crucial, but we won't have this resource around very much longer. That's why videotaping their stories is so important."

Lipstadt, a professor of modern Jewish history and Holocaust studies at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., and her publisher, Penguin Books, were sued for libel by Irving in 1996 after she accused him in her book, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*, of falsifying the facts.

During the trial, her defence team proved beyond a doubt that Lipstadt's accusations against Irving were substantially true and therefore not libelous.

"We proved that what deniers claimed didn't happen," said Lipstadt, who wrote *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier* in the wake of the trial.

After the judge ruled that Irving had systematically distorted the historical record, the *Times* of London observed, "History has had its day in court and scored a crushing victory."

Lipstadt, the bane of Holocaust deniers ever since, said three new trends have emerged in Holocaust denial in recent years.

It has gone viral on the Internet. Israel and Zionism have been equated with Nazi Germany and Nazism and the Arab and Muslim world has become "one of the most productive areas" for Holocaust deniers.

In a general survey of Holocaust denial, Lipstadt said deniers do not subscribe to identical beliefs.

But all of them, while not denying that Jews were persecuted by the Nazis, believe that Adolf Hitler did not intend to exterminate the Jews of Europe.

Deniers claim that Germany's intention to commit genocide is nothing but a big lie, disseminated by the victorious Allies and the Zionist movement.

Deniers further claim that the gas chambers did not exist and that the Holocaust enriched Jews and provided the justification for Israel's creation at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs.

At its heart, Holocaust denial is a form of anti-Semitism, an attempt to perpetuate age-old stereotypes about Jews' lust for money, power and political manipulation, she said.

Deniers also take Nazi euphemisms such as "resettlement," a word for murder, at face value, Lipstadt noted.

As well, they try to capitalize on the fact that Hitler did not sign a single document ordering the genocidal treatment of Jews.

Deniers skate on thin ice because the Holocaust has the dubious distinction of being the "best-documented genocide" in the annals of history, she said.

"There are reams of documentation," she said, citing the accounts of perpetrators, bystanders and victims.

In addition, deniers engage in immoral equivocation by comparing the Allied bombing of Dresden with the murder of six million Jews.

And in an effort to sow doubt about the veracity of the Holocaust in the minds of the young, they have tried to discredit *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Frank's diary, however, has been subjected to forensic examination and found to be authentic, Lipstadt pointed out.

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Preserving Lenin
Saturday, November 13 | 7 PM Pre-show Talk | 8 PM Performance
An illustrated talk drawing upon Shneer's original research on Soviet Jewish photographers, looking at the integral role of Jews in preserving Lenin's image as well as his body.

Lenin's Legacy & Russian Jews Today
Sunday, November 14 | 1 PM Pre-show Talk | 2 PM Performance
Insights into the contemporary Russian Jewish Diaspora in light of the Soviet era.

Support for koffler**kultura** is provided by Alex and Simona Shnaider, and Fred and Linda Waks.

One World, Double Take – a panel discussion moderated by David Shneer
Sunday, November 14, 4 PM | Pay-What-You-Can
Alumni Hall (Room 112), Victoria College Building, University of Toronto, 91 Charles St. W
A panel of artists looks at creators who cross boundaries: geographic, societal and artistic.

Presented together with the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies, University of Toronto.

David Shneer's residence at the Koffler Centre of the Arts is made possible by the Miriam and Allan Memorial Fund for Jewish Culture.

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TBF

34th Annual Toronto Jewish Book Fair
October 23 – 31, 2010
Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Road

This year's Fair was a huge success, featuring an incredible selection of books of Jewish interest and over 25 authors, including David Grossman and Tarek Fatah. Koffler Centre of the Arts is truly grateful to the Steering Committee and dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly each year to make Toronto Jewish Book Fair a success.

Steering Committee: Machi Steinberg (Chair), Dorothy Brown, Phyllis Chisvin, Eileen Cole, Ro Cook, Naomi Freeman, Barbara Held, Ellen Hersh, Marilyn Holtzman, Eileen Kobrin, Barbara Lampcov, Ryna Langer, Pat McCormack, Margie Nightingale, Margie Posluns, Carol Rosenthall, Marlene Ruderman, Judy Salamon, Trudy Sassoon, Charlotte Sasto, Judy Saul, Rachel Schlesinger, Helen Sheffman, Molly Swartz, Estelle Viner, Howard Weinroth, Helen Redner (Director).

Volunteers: Annie Adda, Marlyne Abramson, Ruth Berger, Hannah Brown, Jack Chisvin, Babs Friedman, Judy Ghert, Sarah Glatt, Rose Haspel, Daisy Jacobs, Frances Klinger, June Levine, Liora Levy, Miriam Meiri, Zelda Melamed, Esther Moss, Elaine Norris, Charlotte Nowack, Sarah Perlis, Shirley Rochman, Robert Ruderman, Anita Shedletsky, Edward Sheffman, Lyle Stanway, Lynn Stone.

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Stories will keep Holocaust message alive, panel says

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Elly Gotz, a Holocaust survivor, is not concerned that the Holocaust will be forgotten.

"I'm sure it will be remembered through literature, theatre and the arts," he said at a panel discussion sponsored by Shaar Shalom Synagogue as part of Holocaust Education Week.

Also on the panel, titled "Keeping the Message Alive When There Are No Eyewitnesses," was Sara Horowitz, a professor at York University, and Jan Van Pelt, a professor at Waterloo University. Moderator was Howard Adelman.

Gotz said that as a young boy, he learned history from novels such as *War and Peace*, and from Shakespeare. "We remember history through these stories."

Students learn more than anything they can learn in class when they have contact with survivors, he said, "but it is a temporary tool because we don't have survivors forever."

He said that at the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, where he has been a longtime speaker, they have created survivor video testimonies "that are touching and moving, and convey a lot of information. Indeed, there are mistakes, but they are important because they are all we have."

Horowitz said that when we talk about keeping the message alive, "we want it to be living and vibrant, not distant and historical. How do we keep events relevant to a new generation when the eyewitnesses are no longer alive?"

When students meet survivors, she said, it gives life to the story. But who will bear witness when there are no witnesses around?"

Video testimonies, "which are absorbing, disturbing and electrifying, give students presence of a person."

The irony of these testimonies, she said, is that they are at once private and public. "They are [shown in public], but because the interviews are conducted in a private space, people give vent to memories that they wouldn't share with a large audience. These testimonies will be enormously important."

She agreed with Gotz that literature will also be very important. "Literature humanizes the story, but it also makes the reader think about complicated issues. In some ways, it is a meditation on the implication of history."

Stories that survive, she said, whether they are poems or novels, are the stories of people's lives. "They are not the same as imaginative literature, and they are not the same as history. They have fallen into a no-man's land.

"They are not factual because memory is fallible, but they are not [imagination.] They have elements of literature, and elements of history. Our challenge is to give these life stories their full due."

WE WHO SURVIVED: As part of Holocaust Education Week, middle school students at Associated Hebrew Schools heard a gripping tale of survival by author Régine Sosiewicz-Lilensten, centre, who wrote the book *Les Etoiles Cachées* (*The Hidden Stars*), on Nov. 1. The novel, which details her story of being hidden in the French countryside during the war, is used in France to educate high school students about the Holocaust. Pictured with Sosiewicz-Lilensten are, from left, Eilat Assif, Zoe Nadler, Miriam Maes and Lindsay Bloom.

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Class Acts

IN THE BEGINNING: Robbins Hebrew Academy Grade 2 student Zachary Wayne locates the first word in the book of Bereshit – and the entire Torah – under the watchful eye of Beth Tikvah Synagogue's Rabbi Jarrod Grover. Grade 2 students are starting Bible studies for the first time and visited Beth Tikvah's chapel as part of their introduction to the subject.

BOOK AWARDS: Three Grade 5 students at Leo Baeck Day School's Thornhill campus – from left, Emily Blum, Annalee Dimpfel and Alana Reich – had their short stories published in *The Dragons Tale*, an anthology of writing by elementary school students aged seven to 11, published by Young Writers of Canada. Emily's story won second prize for all of Ontario.

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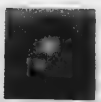

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Love and gratitude to Arlette & Peter Schulman. Together for 50 years! Steve, Janice, Lisa, Chaim, Jacob, Elijah, Yissy, Aaron, Daniel, Noach, Tehilla and Yoni.

Mazel tov Ettie & Nathan Sugar on your 55th anniversary! May you have many years of good health. Love, your children and grandchildren.

Mark & Brenda Halberstadt are thrilled to announce the engagement of their son, Jarryd, to Shannon Kadlovski, daughter of Rhonda Spigelman.

Mazel tov to Yitzy Stavsky on his 10th birthday.

Congratulations Brian & Samantha on your recent engagement. We look forward to your wedding date of July 10, 2011. Love, Lloyd & Beverly Segal.

Mazel tov to Jordan Barsky, 13, and Bubbie Edith Barsky, 83, who celebrated their b'nei mitzvah Oct 4. Love, Mel, Cori, Sammy, Talia, Ben, Rachel.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

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What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

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Deadline for Nov. 25 is Nov. 15. Deadline for Dec. 2 is Nov. 22. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Nov. 11

JEWISH THINKERS

Series on the thought, world-view and influence of medieval Jewish thinkers: **Ibn Ezra**. 8 p.m. Yeshivat Or Chaim, 159 Almore Ave. torahinmotion.org, 416-633-5770.

Saturday, Nov. 13

TORAH CLASS

Beth Tikvah Torah class, Saturdays to December. **Rabbi Jarrod Grover** on parshah Vayetzei. 9:45 a.m.

JEWS AND CONVERSION

"Who Will Be a Jew? Conversion and the Jewish Future." Shaarei Shomayim. 8-10:30 p.m. torahinmotion.org, 416-633-5770.

Sunday, Nov. 14

'STRAIGHT TALK'

Educational and inspirational course for women. Move through a full curriculum of Judaism. Sundays, 8 p.m. at Westmount Shul and Learning Centre. Six weeks. Info: shareen@westmountshul.com.

MOROCCAN CUISINE

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RENEWING OUR SPIRIT

Annual Conference – Renewing Our Spirit. Shaarei Shomayim. 9:15 a.m.-3 p.m. torahinmotion.org, 416-633-5770.

USED BOOK SALE

9 a.m.-1 p.m. at BAYT. Yiddish, Hebrew, halachic, religious texts, tapes, CDs, children's books. Proceeds to purchase new books, CDs for BAYT'S library. Free admission.

Monday, Nov. 15

'AN EDUCATION'

At Beth Tzedec's Book and Film Club meeting, **Heather Kassel** analyzes the film *An Education*. 12:30 p.m. To be viewed before the review. $15 at the door. 416-781-3511.

'U.S. FOREIGN POLICY'

"Providence, Power and Peril: U.S. Foreign Policy in the 21st Century," with **Arne Kislenko**, professor of history at Ryerson U. Temple Emanu-El. 2-4 p.m. $10. 416-449-3880.

Tuesday, Nov. 16

BOOK REVIEW

Review of *The Mistress of Nothing* by **Kate Pullinger**. 8 p.m. Adath Israel. Members $10, guests $15. **Beverley**, 416-499-6920.

LECTURE AT HAR ZION

Temple Har Zion presents **Arne Kislenko** on "An American World: The Myths and Realities of U.S. Foreign Policy." Bring your lunch anytime after 12 p.m. Presentation at 1 p.m. Members $3, guests $5. 905-889-2252.

LUNCH & LEARN

Corey Keeble, Royal Ontario Museum curator, on "An Architectural History of Toronto – 1800 to 1970." RSVP: 416-221-3433.

POMEGRANATE GUILD

"One Artist's Journey." **Pamela Chasen**, Montreal fabric artist, presents fibre and fabric designs relating her belief system and geneaology. Shaarei Shomayim. 8 p.m. $5.

Wednesday, Nov. 17

'BEADS AND BOOZE'

Learn to bead bracelets with **Esther** of Beading Buds, while sampling liqueurs and drinking speciality teas and coffees. 7:30 p.m. Borochov Cultural Centre. $25. Tickets: 416-636-5425.

Continued on page 31

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What's New

Continued from page 30

SPIRITS WITH SINAI

Next Generation Group presents Spirits with Sinai. Spend an evening at the Duke of Kent with **Rabbi Eleanor Steinman**. Meet young professionals for a discussion on strengthening our spirits. 7-9 p.m. 2315 Yonge St. Register: education@templesinai.net.

'POWER STRUGGLES'

"Power Struggles: Who Is in Charge Here Anyway?" Adults only. 7 p.m. Danilack Middle School, 252 Finch Ave. W. $10 advance, $15 at door. Small Chanukah gift boutique before and after presentation. 416-993-9900 or 416-450-7531.

Other News

FOLK DANCING

Kehillat Shaarei Torah Sisterhood presents an evening of women's international folk dancing. Nov. 18, 7:30 p.m. Proceeds to Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind. $10 at the door. 416-229-2600 ext. 3.

AVIVA CHERNICK

Beth Sholom Synagogue music series presents **Aviva Chernick** in concert. Nov. 18, 8 p.m. $18, dessert reception follows. 416-783-6103.

RABBI SPERBER SPEAKS

Rabbi Daniel Sperber, Talmud professor at Bar Ilan University, speaks at TPM Central. Morning of Nov. 20. www.torontopartnership-minyan.com

DIABETES MEETING

Jewish Diabetes chapter meeting. "Superfoods for Diabetes Management," with **Fran Berkoff**. Shaarei Shomayim. Nov. 18, 8 p.m. $1. 416-363-0177, ext. 7403.

WELLNESS PROGRAM

Frumba, women's cardio Dance-Fit program at Shaarei Shomayim. 10 classes. Starts Nov. 14, 10 a.m. Shaarei members $80, guests $90. $10 per class.

'ADVANCE CARE PLANNING'

Association of Jewish Seniors meeting. Nov. 18, 10 a.m. Shaarei Shomayim. **Judith Wahl** discusses "Advance Care Planning." Free, guests $2. **Tammy**: 416-635-2860 ext. 458.

MONEY MANAGEMENT

"Daily Money Management for Family Caregivers." Nov. 18, 6-8 p.m. Loftus Hall, Baycrest. RSVP: 416-635-2900, ext. 498.

'ANCIENT WISDOM'

"Ancient Wisdom for Modern Living," with **Esther Friedman**. Nov. 15 and 22. 7:30 p.m. $10 per lecture. Kehillat Shaarei Torah. 416-229-2600 ext. 3.

GIFT SHOW

Shaar Shalom Religious School's second annual Chanukah Boutique Holiday Gift Show. Nov. 21, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Shaar Shalom Synagogue. Free with Second Harvest donation. **Esther**, 905-889-4975.

NEW YORK TRIP

Rabbi Danny Bahar with Project Inspire is running a New York trip with shopping, kosher restaurants for high school girls. Dec. 2-6. $150 US. 905-882-6755.

NCSY CONCERT

30th annual NCSY concert and gala dinner. **Eli Gerstner** and Yeshiva Boys Choir perform. Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. Toronto Centre for the Arts. ncsyconcert.com, 905-761-6279, ext. 230, for tickets.

100TH ANNIVERSARY

Talmud Torah School in Edmonton celebrates its 100th anniversary in May 2012. Visit http://tt100.ca for updates about celebrations, from May 18-20, 2012. 780-481-3377.

HEALING PROGRAM

Jewish Healing Service. Nov. 28, 3-4 p.m. Temple Har Zion. 416-638-7800, ext. 6287. Free.

THE JEWISH WORLD

Israel and the Jewish World on CTS Channel 9. Nov. 14, 21, 28 and Dec. 5. 9-11 p.m.

DINNER & DRAW

Temple Sinai's 45th event for youth, raising money for educational trips to Israel and Jewish camp experiences. Nov. 18. $5,000 grand prize, auctions, martini bar and more. Dinner and draw ticket: $180. Additional dinner ticket $100. Cocktails 6:30 p.m. 416-487-3281.

CHALLAH BAKING

Learn to bake challah. Nov. 18. $15. Register: Westmount Shul. 10 Disera Dr., Unit 250. shareen@westmountshul.com.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC: Nov. 18, 1:30 p.m. "Great Jewish Canadian Personalities: J. B. Salzberg," with **Adam Fuesrstenberg**.

Free computer workshop. Nov. 14, 2:15 p.m. Bring questions. Register: 416-924-6211 ext. 155.

Connecting the generations. Meet a student over catered lunch. Enjoy Jewish heritage tour at the ROM. 416-924-621, ext. 155.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Nov. 17, departs 10 a.m. Lunch and Laughter: latkes, etc. Nov. 30, 12 p.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Do you needlepoint, crochet, knit, etc.? Social circle. Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m.

For info about seniors woodworking, call 416-630-6487.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Cultural History: The 1500s, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Superman and Chess – The Divine Obsession," with **Sid Soban**. Nov. 16, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

"Uniquely You – Part 2." Nov. 18, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Free.

Yiddish Is Alive and Well is a celebration of Yiddish language, culture and music. Vendors. Nov. 17, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free admission.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

20 years ago, *Half The Kingdom* challenged us to rethink the role of women in Judaism. Now we ask, "What's next?" Nov. 30, 7:15 p.m. Bloor Cinema. Optional screening of movie at 6 p.m.

Nov. 21, 2-4:30 p.m. Mind, Body and Soul seminar series. "Raising and Sustaining Healthy Families." Free. **Natalie**, ext. 4036.

Try line dancing (all styles) Nov. 12, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Members $2.50, guests $4.50 at the door.

Movie Mondays with **Larry Anklewicz**. Nov. 15, *Heartbreak Kid*. 1:30 p.m. $5.

Nov. 16, viewing of *Defiance*. 7:30 p.m. $8.

Nov. 16: Treasures in Jewish Literature. *Memory* by **Philippe Grimbert**, reviewed by **Cynthia Good**. Members $16, guests $18 at the door. 1:30-3 p.m.

Nov. 17, 1-2:30 p.m. Room 107. Educational entertainment session with **Jordan Klapman**, sharing humorous information about composer's lives and featuring Broadway songs. Free. Ext. 4235

Jokers Club. Nov. 17, 7:30-9 p.m. Members $1, guests $2 at the door.

Jewish singles group Plenty o' Gefiltefish. Visit the Prosserman website or meetup.com/plenty-o-gefiltefish.

Family Programs: Shabbat party, preschool dance, and Sports with Jay are just a few of the programs for children. New classes coming. **Monique**, ext. 4012.

"The December Dilemma: Dealing with Christmas and Chanukah." How do you handle social events and decisions about which holidays to celebrate? Discuss in a like-minded group. Dec. 5, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Miles Nadal.

"Who Is a Jew?" with **Rabbi Michael Klein-Katz**. Dec. 6, 8-9:30 p.m. Prosserman JCC, room 124.

"The Female Ruse: Stories of Women's Deception in Genesis." With **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** and **Rachel Adelman**. Dec. 13, 7:30-9:30 p.m. $10 at the door. Prosserman JCC, room 105.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Remembrance Day: Nov. 11. Ceremony 10:45 a.m. Moment of silence 11 a.m. Jewish war veterans lead commemoration of Canada's fallen soldiers. Meet at Spadina Avenue MNJCC entrance. Ext. 154.

Lecture – "World Music for the Armchair Traveller." Nov. 11, 7-8:30 p.m. Drop in $18. Ext. 0.

Harold Green Jewish Theatre presents *Lenin's Embalmers*. To Nov. 21, 2 and 8 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $49-$76. www.stlc.com or 416-366-7723 for tickets.

Toronto Jewish Film Society. 2011 subscription season on sale now. Eight film events from January to December at Al Green Theatre. Speakers introduce and discuss each film. **Joelle**: ext. 139, joellem@mnjcc.org to register.

Renee Barda: Life Begins Again! With **Dorothy Krizmanic, Gideon Wilk** and **John Lettieri**. Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $22, $18 group rate (10 or more). Ext. 0, www.algreentheatre.ca.

Gesher Shabbat. Nov. 12, 7 p.m. Family dinner with dancing, trivia and games, plus talk by **Shaul Zobary** from Camp Gesher about the importance of Jewish overnight camp. RSVP: 416-633-2511.

Nov. 14, 11 a.m. Explore the history and synagogue architecture of Syria's Dura Europos and Amsterdam's Esnoga. $9. Ext. 154.

"New World, New Rules: The Rabbis of Early America," with **Rabbi Torczyner**. Mondays, Nov. 15-29. 6-7 p.m. Ext. 154.

Eye Weekly film critic **Adam Nayman** examines the style and substance of recent art-house exports. Mondays starting Nov. 15. 7-9 p.m. $12 per lecture. Ext. 606.

"Feeding Your Finicky Eater," with chef **Elise Burton**. Nov. 17, 7-9 p.m. Register: ext. 0.

Dec. 5, 12-2 p.m. Family Chanukah celebration. Latkes, music, games. Free. Ext. 277.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 35

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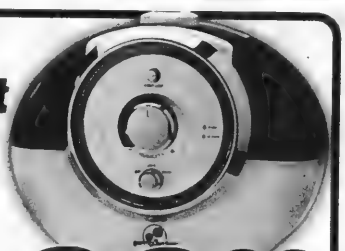

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Bridal Registry

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Kaushansky, Rivka	Oct. 27/10	Private
Matskin, Lev	Oct. 22/10	100 Antibes Dr
Garfinkel, William A	Oct. 22/10	Private
Liner, Genia	Oct. 23/10	Private
Barna, Roza	Oct. 23/10	Private
Lindsay, Solly	Oct. 2210	Private
Falk, Gabriel	Oct. 23/10	65 Spring Garden Ave
Beck, David	Oct. 25/10	155 Marlee Ave
Pivovarov, Fruma	Oct. 26/10	Private
Naft, Sadie	Oct. 2510	3270 Bathurst St
Yelenbaugen, Beylya	Oct. 2610	Private
Shievitz, Jack	Oct. 26/10	56 Bay Hill Dr
Schwartz, Irene	Oct. 26/10	Private
Ubogi, Mauricio	Oct. 27/10	Private
Maister, Esther	Oct. 28/10	65 Skymark Dr
Levin, Eileen	Oct. 28/10	88 Daniel Reaman Cr
Reichner, Oscar	Oct. 27/10	10 Elderberry Crt
Dutch, Benjamin	Oct. 28/10	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Louis Wingold	Oct 16/10	61 Yorkville Ave
Helen Rubenstein	Oct 17/10	65 Spring Garden Ave
Helen Kamper	Oct 18/10	3560 Bathurst St
Lynn Field	Oct 18/10	6 Doral Gate
Lillian Nish	Oct 18/10	3560 Bathurst St
Nell Warren	Oct 19/10	103 Old Forest Hill Rd
Lt. Col. Irwin B. Weisba	Oct 19/10	1555 Finch Avenue E
Lucy Goldstein	Oct 19/10	138 Baskin Drive
Vicki Campbell	Oct 21/10	95 Donwoods Drive
Della Swadron	Oct 22/10	65 Spring Garden Ave
Larry Levenstein	Oct 22/10	76 Prue Avenue
Wilfred Weisbrod	Oct 21/10	15 McMurrich St
Shirley Levinsky	Oct 23/10	3560 Bathurst St
David Rozen	Oct 23/10	41 Thomson Legge Cr

The family of the late
HARTLEY JACOBS ז"ל
Would like to express our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all our friends and family for the many acts of kindness and support, and to the many donations given in Hartley's memory. Your thoughtfulness has been a great source of comfort during our loss.

Ruth Jacobs, Michael, Pamela, Warren and families

Kahn, Nathan ז"ל - loving husband of the late Clara Kahn, brother of the late Carolla Heursman , passed peacefully on shabbath October 30th, 2010 at Sunnybrook hospital at age 97. Nathan will be sadly missed by his loving daughter Rozanne Kahnlsen, his grandchildren David, Jeremy, Jamie and his great-grandchildren Mackenzie and Madeline, and will also be greatly missed By Darley Louis, his full time caregiver of 16 years. Would like to thank all the doctors and staff at Sunnybrook on the 4th floor for their kindness and compassionate care. Donations to Congregation Habonim Synagogue - Children Hebrew Schooling Fund. 416-638-0693 would be greatly appreciated.

NOTICE OF PASSING בס"ד

PLACHTA, NATHAN - On Tuesday, November 2, 2010 at Baycrest Hospital. Nathan Plachta, beloved husband of Helen Plachta. Loving father and father-in-law of Frances Lewis, Mel Plachta, and Paula and Dave Linklater. Devoted grandfather of Jimmie, Kenny, Amanda, and Tasha. Great-grandfather of Chayan, Elijah, Jacob, and Adam. At Dawes Rd. Cemetery on Thursday, November 4, 2010 at 11:30 a.m. Interment: Zion Benevolent Section. Memorial donations may be made to the Association for Soldiers of Israel 416-783-3053 or to the United Jewish Appeal 416-631-5685.

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On Campus
Holocaust Education Week

Hillel launches exhibit

By JORDAN PRESS
Special to The CJN

KINGSTON — Every November for the past four years, students with Hillel at Queen's University have turned one of the busiest campus buildings into a hub of Holocaust education.

Again this year, Hillel set up a walk-through Holocaust exhibit in the John Deutsch University Centre, a central hub of campus life for students, faculty, staff and members of the wider Kingston community.

By all accounts, the exhibit has been a success every year.

This year, the students charged with organizing Holocaust Education Week, which runs to Nov. 12, decided to redo the exhibit. Unlike previous exhibits, this year's version doesn't require viewers to have any background knowledge about the Holocaust.

Hillel partnered with another student group for a section of the exhibit that focused on current genocides, such as the one in the Darfur region of Sudan.

"It is historical, and it is a commemoration of what happened, but it is [also] a call to action today," Hillel organizer and third-year student Josh Litwin told *The CJN* prior to the start of Holocaust Education Week.

"It's a big step forward and [the exhibit] will stand for the next five years."

After looking at exhibits from previous years, Hillel organizers decided to create one that guides visitors through the events and factors leading up to the Holocaust. The exhibit then explains the creation of Jewish ghettos, the rise of the death camps and finally the liberation and post-Nazi Europe.

The exhibit also features videos of Holocaust survivors telling their stories.

Litwin said he and co-organizers Naomi Rosenfeld and Brenna Singer hope the exhibit's historical narrative will serve Jewish and non-Jewish students alike.

"We started at the base, and we tried to make it as ground-up an explanation as we can," said Litwin, 19. "It's an educational piece designed to educate people with no background knowledge [of the Holocaust]."

The exhibit not only focuses on Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Litwin said other groups that were persecuted by the Nazis, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, are also highlighted. Organizers also created a section on Righteous Gentiles, Litwin said, referring to non-Jews who helped Jews or stood up against the Nazis.

Another part of the exhibit deals with the problem of Holocaust denial, Litwin added.

While Litwin, Singer and Rosenfeld are organizing the event, every Hillel member is taking a turn staffing the exhibit to talk with visitors.

Litwin said Hillel's goal for the week is to attract a diverse group of visitors, and that everyone leaves having connected to and learned about the Holocaust.

Along with the exhibit, Queen's Hillel hosted a movie night and brought in two speakers. Scott Miller, director of curatorial affairs at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., gave a talk about his research into the fate of the St. Louis, a ship that sailed from Germany to Cuba in 1939 with Jews fleeing the Third Reich. Auschwitz survivor Nate Leipciger also spoke at the university.

Litwin said the speakers nights are usually well attended. Many attendees come away with a better personal connection to the Holocaust, he said.

RYERSON REMEMBERS: On Nov. 2, as part of Holocaust Education Week, students from Hillel at Ryerson – including first-year Ryerson University student Juliana Kaiser – read names of victims who perished during the Holocaust.

On Campus

Tensions rise ahead of Galloway's McMaster visit

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Controversial former British MP George Galloway will be speaking later this month at McMaster University, where his visit is sparking disagreement among campus groups.

Galloway, who was expelled from the Labour party in 2003 because he criticized the invasion of Iraq, is coming to the university Nov. 21 as part of his 10-city "Free Afghanistan, Free Palestine, Free Speech" tour of Canada, Nov. 16 to 27.

The McMaster visit is being organized by the campus groups Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR), Students Resisting War and Occupation, Independent Jewish Voices and Students for Social Justice, as well as the Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War.

None of the student groups responded to *The CJN*'s requests for comment.

But SPHR co-president Omar Saif told the *Hamilton Spectator* that the "idea is not to just bring a controversial speaker," but to foster dialogue. He said Galloway would be discussing Canada's role in the war in Afghanistan.

Jackie Brown, president of the McMaster chapter of Israel on Campus, says she has no issue with Galloway coming to speak at the university. She is concerned, however, that students don't know the full story about him.

"Obviously he has a right to his own opinion and student groups are welcome to bring him [to McMaster]," Brown said. "We're not trying to limit anyone's free speech. I just think it's really important that students are aware that he openly fundraises for Hamas, a known terrorist organization. I really don't think students are being made aware of that fact."

Galloway was banned from entering Canada last year by the office of federal Immigration Minister Jason Kenney because of his support for Hamas, but a federal court judge accepted Galloway's contention that federal authorities were motivated by political considerations in barring him. He spoke in Toronto last month.

Brown disagreed with Brendan Stone, co-chair of the Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War, who told the *Spectator* that "Galloway does speak for Canadians."

"I don't believe that Canadians support terrorism," Brown said. "It's against Canadian law to fundraise for a terrorist organization, so I do not believe he speaks for Canadians."

Brown said McMaster Jewish groups don't plan to protest the talk, so as not to give it any more publicity.

It's scheduled to be held in a 600-seat lecture hall, the school's largest.

Galloway will also be speaking Nov. 18 at St. Mary's University in Halifax and Nov. 25 at the University of Alberta.

JBN launches in Winnipeg

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — About 30 Jewish students enrolled both in the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba came out to the Fairmont Hotel for the inaugural event of the Winnipeg Chapter of the Jewish Business Network, [JBN] on October 20.

To read story, please go to cjnews.com

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Coast to Coast

Left-wing writers offer nuanced views of Israel

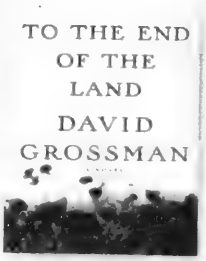
Grossman and Jacobson offer articulate, humane voices about Israel, in all its complexity

Two famous Jewish authors, one Israeli, one British, were recently featured in the Canadian media.

According to Reports
By PAUL MICHAELS

In the Oct. 3, *Toronto Star*, Leslie Scrivener profiled Israeli novelist David Grossman, whose latest work, *To the End of the Land*, has been receiving rave reviews internationally. Grossman was interviewed while in Toronto for last month's Jewish Book Fair.

Scrivener's report, though relatively brief, managed to capture Grossman in his complexity, including his anguish and yet his hope. Grossman's experience is unfortunately typical of the lives of many Israeli families that have endured painful loss.



While Grossman was writing his novel on the anxiety of a mother whose son is serving in the Israeli army, he learned that his own son, Uri, was tragically killed in the final hours of the 2006 Lebanon War. As devastating as that loss was, Grossman was able to find solace in his family and in completing his book.

In the report, Scrivener wrote: "Grossman insists that he not be treated differently, more delicately, since Uri's death. 'When people argue with me, I demand that they argue with my opinions, not my bereavement.'"

Scrivener also referred to Grossman's peace activism, for which he is well known and admired. Yet she ended her profile by citing Grossman's realism about Israel's precarious security situation.

"Grossman has served in the army, in intelligence, but he does not see that as being at odds with his advocacy for peace. 'I am a very realistic person. I read the Arab papers. I see the hatred toward Israel. I hear [President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad of Iran promising to eradicate Israel…

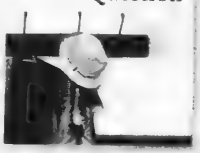
"We need a very strong army to defend ourselves. Yet we need to use this army mainly as a vehicle to achieve peace. To improve our life, to lead a life that is not militarized and is not an end in itself.'"

On the same day, in the *National Post*, Mireille Silcoff wrote about her interview with British novelist Howard Jacobson, the first Jewish male to win the prestigious Man Booker Prize for fiction. Jacobson won for *The Finkler Question*, which focuses on one of the author's chief concerns: the rising tide of radical Jewish anti-Zionism in the United Kingdom.

Silcoff asked him what brought him to conceive the "comic" novel's central character, Sam Finkler. Jacobson replied: "I'm writing about true feeling and false feeling. I see a false feeling in the Jews I see around here who make a demonstration of their Jewish shame about the Middle East. I can't pretend I have any patience for it in *The Finkler Question*. I was writing this novel in 2008, as Operation Cast Lead was happening, and the whole horrible Gaza thing was happening, and some ugly ideas were coming up in the press. I was doing a lot of journalism at the *Independent* about it, and I was being castigated by some Jews."

In fact, one of Jacobson's columns at the time for the *Independent* (part of what he calls the "virulent" anti-Israel press in Britain) was a brilliant critique of the feverishly hateful attacks on the Jewish state that are rampant in the United Kingdom under the guise of valid criticism.

As a liberal, he attacked Caryl Churchill's play *Seven Jewish Children*, calling it a "hate-fuelled little chamber-piece" for portraying Israelis as callous, bloodthirsty murderers of Gaza's children. The play was earnestly promoted in Britain and abroad by radical Jewish anti-Zionists.



Jacobson ripped into those who dare draw any comparisons between what Jews suffered in the Holocaust and what Palestinians endure. He specifically singled out those who hideously liken Gaza to the Warsaw Ghetto. And we've just seen a rare expression of this comparison here in the case of *Adbusters* magazine, exposed last week in the pages of the *National Post*.

Grossman and Jacobson offer articulate, humane voices about Israel, in all its complexity. In a world where writers are largely applauded for attacking Israel – regardless of context or truth – we are richer for the contributions of these two authors.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

Ottawa Protocol to make recommendations

Continued from page 1

This time, delegates were scheduled to take part in a mix of activities, including addresses by guest speakers, plenary sessions, expert discussion panels and work groups.

A final document, the Ottawa Protocol, was scheduled to be released at the completion of this year's conference. The document was not available by *The CJN*'s deadline.

"The recommendations made by participants during the conference will be made available broadly and be used as the basis for further action to help put an end to the world's oldest and most enduring form of discrimination," according to conference literature handed out before the event last week.

Nobel laureate, renowned writer, scholar, thinker, lecturer Elie Wiesel was the keynote speaker Sunday night.

Wiesel delivered an impassioned address in which he told his rapt audience that "since 1945, I have not been as afraid as I am now."

In tones that alternated between sorrowful and resigned, single-minded and insistent, he expounded upon the dangers inherent in the persistence of anti-Semitism, which he described as a disease. Like cancer, Wiesel said, it spreads from cell to cell, from person to person, from group to group and from culture to culture.

He singled out the government in Iran as the key disseminator of anti-Semitism today, and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as the "No. 1 Holocaust denier in the world."

That Ahmadinejad seeks a nuclear weapon possibly to use against the State of Israel fills Wiesel with dread.

"Why is he [Ahmadinejad] received with honours wherever he visits? How come this man is not excluded from society?" Wiesel asked the audience.

Then, speaking directly to the scores of parliamentarians in the room, he urged them to act in their capacities as legislators.

Wiesel pleaded with them to ensure that Ahmadinejad "be arrested and charged with incitement for crimes against humanity… adopt laws in their respective parliaments declaring anti-Semitism a hate crime punishable by imprisonment, as well as laws declaring suicide bombing to be a crime against humanity.

"We need you to tell us by your actions and your behaviour that my fear is unfounded and that our message [that of the survivor witnesses] has not gone unheeded."

The Ottawa Conference on Combating Antisemitism, began on Sunday with an opening reception sponsored by Minster of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Canada Jason Kenney at the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum. Liberal party leader Michael Ignatieff was also scheduled to make remarks on Monday afternoon.

With files from Mordechai Ben Dat and JTA

Harper addresses meet

Continued from page 1

It must also be an understanding and an undertaking – an understanding that the same threats exist today and an undertaking of a solemn responsibility to fight those threats."

Seemingly directing his remarks at Holocaust deniers, and in particular at Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who was obliquely referred to as among those who threaten to "wipe Israel off the map," the prime minister said: "While evil of this magnitude may be unfathomable, it is nonetheless a fact. It is a fact of history… Let us not forget that even now, there are those who would choose evil, and would launch another Holocaust if left unchecked."

Harper congratulated the work of ICCA as well as that of the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism, whose chair and vice-chair, respectively, are Conservative MP Scott Reid and Liberal MP Mario Silva.

He unambiguously asserted that "we must be relentless in exposing the new anti-Semitism [that targets the Jewish people by targeting the Jewish homeland]… not just because it is the right thing to do, but because history shows us and the ideology of the anti-Israel mob tells us all too well, if we listen to it, that those who threaten the existence of the Jewish people are, in the longer term, a threat to us all."

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Montreal Y's Shabbat opening under fire

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The YM-YWHA's decision to fully open on Saturdays will alienate more than half of the Montreal Jewish community and may open the door to more non-Jews joining the Y, says one of the rabbis involved last year in trying to reach a compromise to limit the facility's Shabbat operations.

On Nov. 1, the Y's board of directors and board of trustees voted to fully open its main branch, the Ben Weider Jewish Community Centre in Snowdon, on Saturdays. The decision followed on the results of a non-binding poll taken among members, which found 55.5 per cent in favour of the move.

The Y had already been open from 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays since October 2009, but its Cardio Centre, kosher restaurant and front desk remained closed. The new policy will see the Cardio Centre, with its electrically activated exercise machines, open as well. It had been kept closed as part of the compromise that was reached with a group of local rabbis.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz, of Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem, said this decision will "disturb" observant Jews across the spectrum, from modern Orthodox to chassidim, and the great majority of Sephardim, who are deeply traditional.

The Y says it has a duty to serve all of Montreal's diverse Jews, and is especially concerned with reaching the unaffiliated.

"Advocates of opening the Y on Shabbat argue it will attract more Jews," Rabbi Steinmetz said. "By opening on Shabbat, the Y, as a health club, becomes much more attractive to non-Jews. Unquestionably, the Y will see a rise in the percentage of non-Jewish members… and the Jewish community will have lost its opportunity to build a true Jewish community centre."

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The Y management points out that the overwhelming majority of JCCs in North America are open on Shabbat, either fully or to some extent.

But the American-born Rabbi Steinmetz contends that Montreal, with its strong adherence to tradition, is "dramatically different" from other Jewish communities in Canada and the United States.

Majority of those polled favoured opening Ben Weider JCC.

"We need a Y that represents the mainstream of the Montreal Jewish community," he said.

"Not everyone is observant, but it is easily understood if you call something 'Jewish' that you cannot simply ignore one of the Ten Commandments," he said.

The heads of the (Orthodox) Rabbinical Council of Montreal, the interdenominational Montreal Board of Rabbis and the Jewish Community Council (Vaad Ha'ir) issued a joint public statement urging Y members to vote for closing on Shabbat.

From Oct. 20 to 26, the Y held a poll that allowed adult members to vote for full closure of the Y on Saturday – a return to the schedule that existed before Oct. 31, 2009 – or full operation. The only exception is that the front desk and the restaurant will not be open to avoid the exchange of money, which is proscribed on Shabbat.

The results, which were made public the day after the boards' decision, were 55.5 per cent, or 945 votes, for opening, and 44 per cent, or 750 votes, for closing. With 4,200 eligible voters, the turnout was slightly more than 40 per cent.

The new policy will be implemented "as soon as reasonably possible," said Y executive director Michael Crelinsten. Time is needed for "logistical" reasons, but full operation will be in effect "well before the end of the year."

In August 2009, the Y management, to the surprise of many, announced that the Y would be opening its fitness facilities on Saturdays, originally starting at 1 p.m.

After an outcry from not only the rabbinate, but a significant number of both observant and non-observant Jews, the Y agreed to negotiate with a small group of rabbis from major mainstream congregations, Rabbi Steinmetz among them.

The main compromise that came from those talks was that the Y would keep its popular Cardio Centre, with its electrically activated training machines, closed on Saturdays, and the concession to the Y was that it would open from early morning.

Crelinsten conceded that the deal pleased nobody and angered many. Over the past year, an average of 200 to 250 people have been coming to the Y on Saturdays, far lower than the number on Sunday. The Y's management felt the status quo could not continue and decided to put a "clear and simple" question to the membership.

The hope is that the reopening of the Cardio Centre will bring more people in on Saturdays. The Y is also considering holding fitness classes that day.

While the poll didn't yield a resounding majority, Crelinsten believes that "a 10-point spread is significant on an issue where people have such deeply held feelings."

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Coast to Coast

'Prank' threatens shul's future

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A synagogue in Laval is fighting for its life after an act of vandalism left it on the brink of bankruptcy.

The Young Israel Synagogue of Chomedey is facing a possible bill of $100,000 or more for the cleanup of heating oil on its property.

On the night of Oct. 6, someone put the synagogue's garden hose into the external pipe leading to the oil tank and forced 2,300 litres of fuel out onto the back of the building.

The congregation's insurer says it will pay a maximum of $25,000 toward the costs, said shul president Frank Cwilich. "At this point, the cost is at least $65,000 above that, and could go to $100,000 or two or three times that if they find the oil has leaked underneath the building.

"This is a devastating blow. Our future is in jeopardy," he said.

Cwilich is terming the incident a "prank" at this point because there is no evidence of an anti-Semitic motive.

The synagogue at 1025 Elizabeth Blvd., just north of the main thoroughfare, Notre-Dame Boulevard, is next to a strip mall, where youths often congregate, he said.

Excavation of the property began in late October, and it may be some time before the extent of the contamination is known.

"We are appealing for help from anyone, be it financial, legal or moral," he said. "We really do not know how we are going to handle the bills, and are trying everything we can."

The congregation has no major benefactors or endowments.

The synagogue, which has been at its present site for 50 years, has been struggling for years. It has about 150 members families, a far cry from its peak in the 1960s and early '70s, when it had nearly 900 members and was the centre of the suburb's Jewish life.

The Young Israel of Chomedey has suffered tens of thousands of dollars of damage.

Chomedey's once-thriving Jewish community was in steep decline by the early '80s, with people moving to homes on the Island of Montreal or leaving the province.

Cwilich is hoping some of the past members or their descendants will come to the synagogue's rescue.

The congregation has also contacted the three levels of government to see if it is eligible for any compensation, and will also turn to Federation CJA.

A community-wide meeting is planned for Nov. 11 to discuss the situation.

There has been other trouble since the vandalism. On the night of Oct. 31, a visibly Orthodox member of the congregation was ridiculed and assaulted by youths hanging around the mall when he was on his way to the synagogue, Cwilich said. "They called him terrible names and threw a chair at his head, hurting him slightly."

The jibes, however, were not of an anti-Semitic nature and the middle-aged man's limp may have been the source of the derision.

Cwilich said the congregation is satisfied that the police are investigating these incidents and have promised to step up their patrols. In the meantime, the Young Israel has put a lock on its oil pipe and installed security cameras.

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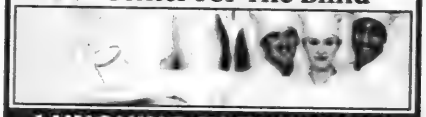

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ס׳קומען בריוו פֿון לייענער וואָס בעטן אַז מיר זאָלן שרייבן מער וועגן יידישע שפּריכוואָרטער – יידישע ברכות און קללות. אַזוֹי בקשה איז פֿאַר מיר אַ פֿאַרנעגיגן און מיר וועלן דאָס טאָן אין יידיש, און אויך אין יידיש אויסגעלייגט מיט ענגלישער פֿאָנעטיק און מיט אַן ענגלישער איבערזעצונג. די שפּריכוואָרטער וואָס מיר דרוקן אָפּ הײַנט קומען אַרויס פֿון *לאָמיר הערן גוטע בשורות-יידישע ברכות און קללות*, אַ זאַמלונג צונויפֿגעשטעלט פֿון יסף גור, און אַרויסגעגעבן פֿון דעם העברעישען אוניווערסיטעט אין ירושלים.

- *A brokhe un hatslokhe oyf dayn kepele –Blessing and success on your little head. (to a child*
- *Trog gezunt un tserays gezunt –Wear it in good health and wear it out in good health*
- *Got zol dir bentshn mit dray mentshn: eyner zol dir haltn, der tsveyter zol dir shpaltn under driter zol dir bahaltn. God should bless you with three persons. One should hold you. The second should kill you and the third bury you.*
- *S'zol dir vaksn a geshvir oyfn pupik –May a boil grown on your belly button.*
- *Filn zolstu remates in di pyates: You should, with every step, feel the pain of rheumatism in both your heels.*
- *Shteyner zol zi hobbn – nit kayn kinder. She should give birth to stones – not children.*
- *Gekhapt zol vern di babe vost hot dir opgenumen – The Devil take the midwife who brought you into the world.*
- *Zolst zayn vi a lomp: hengen bay tog, brenen bay nakht un oysgeyn zolstu in der fri –May you be like a lamp: hang by day, burn by night, and be snuffed out in the morning.*

די איר דעם פֿון אונזערע אויסצוגן איז יידיש אַ שפּראַך רײַך אין ברכהות און קללות: רייכער אין צאָל אָדער פֿאַרשידנאַרטיקער וי אַ סך אַנדערע שפּראַכן.

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Coast to Coast
Holocaust Education Week

Survivor launches memoirs in Halifax

By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALFAX — For 40 years, Philip Riteman remained silent.

Then, the Halifax man was convinced to tell his story as a Holocaust survivor.

For 60 years, Philip Riteman refused to write his memoirs.

Then, he made the decision that his story should be told and remembered, even when he and the other Holocaust survivors are gone.

On Oct. 26, Riteman launched his book, *Millions of Souls*, as told to author Mireille Baulu-MacWillie, and published by Flanker Press of Newfoundland.

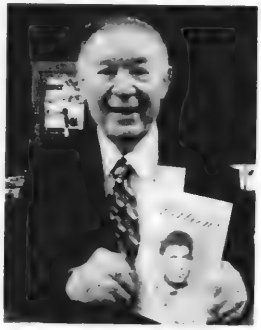
In front of a class of 30 Dalhousie University students and about 40 members of the Jewish and non-Jewish communities, Riteman verbally abridged his story, one he has told hundreds of times to junior high, high school and university students and community audiences across Canada and into New England. He has received two honorary degrees from Atlantic Canadian universities for his dedication to history.

He has always preached the same message: "It is better to love than to hate. Be aware of evil. Think for yourself. Don't be brainwashed."

He stresses that he has accepted the obligation to speak about the horrors of Nazi Germany "so it won't happen again. I'm booked [to speak] for the next year. I'd like to give up, but I can't."

Riteman is 85 years old. He was incarcerated in concentration camps from 1941 to 1945, from the time he was 16 years old and in good health, until he was almost 21 and liberated, weighing a scrawny 75 pounds.

In *Millions of Souls*, Riteman describes the meagre portions of "food" the camp inmates received, the thousands of killings he witnessed, the work he did in the camps, including carting the dead to mass graves, the feeling when he knew he had seen his parents, brothers, sisters, cousins and other relatives for the last time and the constant cold and hunger.



Philip Riteman
[Joel Jacobson photo]

He praises the American soldiers who liberated him, and about 1,000 survivors, who were on a death march through the Tyrol Mountains. He writes about discovering he had aunts living in Canada and the United States and being reunited with them in Newfoundland, the only country willing to take him in in 1946.

He concludes with stories of gratitude for Newfoundlanders who supported him as a pedlar who knew little English, who took him into their homes for food and lodging in the small fishing villages on the island.

Baulu-MacWillie, a university professor for 20 years at College Ste. Anne in Nova Scotia, knew of the Holocaust from reading the *Diary of Anne Frank* at age 13 and many other books on the history of the period.

"I met Philip three years ago at a Holocaust Education Week session in Halifax on teaching the Holocaust in the classroom," she recalls. "I looked on the Net to see if his story had been told and it hadn't, so I asked him if I could. He refused, but invited me to visit him at his home. We talked some more and finally he said 'Let's do it!' It took hours of interviews with this marvellous man, who at times had emotional difficulty telling the story, and I know there are still things he didn't reveal."

Most of the students attending had never heard Riteman speak, nor did they know a lot about the Holocaust.

"This gave us so much more insight into what happened," said Rachel Murphy, a first-year commerce student who is taking an eastern European film course as an elective.

"We saw one movie about a 17-year-old in the camps, like Mr. Riteman. That made it a bit easier to relate to what Mr. Riteman was saying. Because he went through it, he shouldn't be responsible to tell everyone, but he's a great person who wants to do this. He relives it every time. It's awesome he survived it."

Nora Bercovici, a third-year English student from Toronto, said she's heard so much and read so much about the Holocaust, "but to hear it from someone who was there, to look into his eyes which are so intense, I just want to thank him for being so strong to talk about it."

The Riteman book launch was the start of a busy Holocaust Education Week in Halifax. There were film showings, an education program for teachers on how to teach the Holocaust in their classrooms, and an art exhibit of ceramic works by an artist and professor from the Studio of Sculpture in Ceramics at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, Poland.

The week concluded with Dignity Day, a remembrance of Kristallnacht, on Nov. 7.

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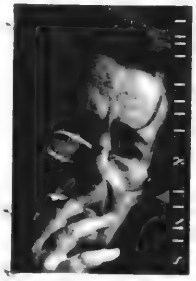

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Coast to Coast
Holocaust Education Week

Exhibit depicts Albanian Muslims who saved Jews

By LAUREN KRAMER
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — Few Jewish communities in Europe increased in number during the Holocaust years, but Albania's was one of those that did.

That's because many citizens in the predominantly Muslim country hid Jews from the Nazis during the war, welcoming into their homes both Albanian Jews and Jewish refugees from other countries.

Seven years ago, American photographer Norman H. Gershman travelled to Albania and Serbia to photograph those rescuers and their descendants, and to document their stories. The result, an exhibit titled Albanian Muslim Rescuers During the Holocaust, opens in Vancouver's Holocaust Education Centre this week, telling a story of friendship, compassion and moral honour.

Even before the war began, Albania's King Zog issued 400 Albanian passports to Jews, particularly those fleeing Nazi Germany and Austria. Many more Jews passed through Albania en route to other countries, and those who could not obtain foreign visas were allowed to stay. The exhibit notes that an underground network was spontaneously created to shelter those seeking refuge from the Nazis.

It's reported that Mehdi Frasheri, the Albanian prime minister at the time, declared: "All Jewish children will sleep with your children, all will eat the same food, all will live as one family."

At the core of personal and family life for most Albanians is the concept of *besa*, which means "to keep the promise." The promise is a code of honour linked to an Albanian folk principle of taking responsibility for others in their time of need. Because of that code, between 1,800 and 2,000 Jews were saved in Albania during the Holocaust.

The stories of the Albanian rescuers are relatively unknown because of the country's political isolation under communism. It wasn't until the late 1980s that their stories came to light, and in 1987, some of them were recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

The moving story of these rescuers is told in the exhibit through Gershman's lens, which poetically captures their portraits, and through their words, which reflect their deep humility and respect for their fellow man.

In one picture, Fatime Veseli, an Albanian Muslim woman, stands beside a portrait of her late husband, a photographer who learned his trade from a Jewish man named Mandil. Later, the Mandil family and their four cousins were hidden in the Veseli family home in the mountain village of Kruje, until liberation.

"Our moral code as Albanians requires that we be hospitable to guests in our home and in our country," she explains. "If an Albanian had reported the presence of Jews to the Germans, he would have disgraced his village and family. At minimum, his home would have been destroyed and his family banished," she says. "The Qur'an teaches us that all people – Jews, Christians and Muslims – are under one God."

Another image depicts the family of the late Hasan Kalaja, another Muslim Albanian who sheltered a Jewish couple between 1943 and 1944. "The entire neighbourhood, even the local prefect, knew we were sheltering Jews," Sadik Kalaja relates. "We listed them with false names as our aunt and uncle, and lived day to day as one family."

"My father said that the Germans would have to kill his family before he would have them kill his Jewish guests," Menishe Kadiu says.

[Photo courtesy Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion]

None of the Albanians quoted accepted any kind of remuneration for their acts of rescue, nor felt any was necessary.

"How could I not save Jews?" Hasan Reme Xerxa wondered. "I felt their suffering. I never lost faith as a Muslim or in the tradition of besa."

Most of the Albanian Muslims depicted in the photographs are humble individuals with few material assets and no financial means to visit the Jews they once rescued, who now live in Israel or North America.

"Electricity and water was scarce," Gershman recalled of his trip to Albania. "Yet, the people always welcomed me with food and warmth. None spoke English and none sought any compensation. They wished only to honour their family tradition and to be remembered."

At the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre, most of the audience for this exhibit will be senior elementary and secondary school children, says Frieda Miller, executive director. "Our focus with the kids is moral decision-making, and this is a wonderful bridging opportunity between Jews and Muslims for us. It's nice to be able to point to people who did the right thing."

The exhibit at the VHEC is ongoing through May 27, 2011. www.vhec.org

Health & Lifestyles

Rabbi says he donated kidney to inspire his kids

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Ephraim Simon says it was because of his nine children that he donated his kidney to a stranger one year ago.

"By donating my kidney, I knew I could inspire my children and be an example of everything I teach them," he said recently at an evening sponsored by Chabad Lubavitch of Markham and Renewal Toronto, a non-profit organization working in the Jewish community to help people suffering from irreversible kidney failure.

Rabbi Ephraim Simon

Rabbi Simon, co-director of Friends of Lubavitch of Bergen County, in Teaneck N.J., said he was originally motivated to donate a kidney after he received an e-mail in August 2008 about a 12-year-old girl who needed one.

"It could have been my daughter. The least I could do was offer to be tested," he said.

Before responding, he said, he and his wife spent a couple of days doing research "and found that the surgery was minimal, and the risks were minimal. I learned that I could live a long and healthy life with one kidney. We all take risks every day, but the rewards of living our lives outweighs the risks."

When he called back, however, and offered to test, someone else had already stepped forward. "I felt disappointed. I had had the opportunity of saving a life."

Rabbi Simon said he was subsequently called a couple of times to test, but he did not turn out to be a match. "I felt like I couldn't give my kidney away."

Finally on Erev Pesach, he said, the phone rang and he was told that he was a match for a 51-year-old man who had 10 children. "I felt incredible joy. Although my wife and I kept the news to ourselves, the seder took on tremendous meaning for us."

Following the surgery, he said, his reward was seeing that the dark cloud had lifted over the other man's family. "I feel blessed that I could do that."

As a rabbi, he said, "my only sermon is how I live my life. People are inspired, not by what I say, but how I live. That was the underlying motivation behind what I did."

He said that we wants the parents of the 12-year-old girl to know that she was responsible for ultimately saving the man's life.

Also on the program was Kathy Laszlo, founder of DANI, Developing and Nurturing Independence, an organization that helps young adults with special needs. In June, Laszlo donated her kidney to Terri Quint, who attended the evening to thank her publicly. For further information on Renewal, call 416-628-7633, e-mail toronto@renewal.org, or visit www.renewal.org.

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Mr. Oscar Reichner ז"ל
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Heartfelt condolences are extended to his beloved wife, Magda Reichner, his daughters, Chani (and Yisroel) Braunstein of New York, Renée (and Robert Eli) Rubinstein of Toronto, who is a member of the Stern College for Women Board of Overseers, and with her husband is a YU Benefactor, and to his seven grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren.

May the entire family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

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Spice of Life

Where's the kosher broccoli?

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

You can still get a kosher stir-fry in Toronto – just as long as you don't want broccoli. Other veggies you might not see on the menu are asparagus, romaine lettuce, brussel sprouts and even herbs like curly parsley, coriander or dill. And then there are the rumours: what seemingly innocent bite will join the list next?

The problem, according to Rabbi Tsvi Heber of the Kashruth Council of Canada (COR), lies with infestations of tiny insects.

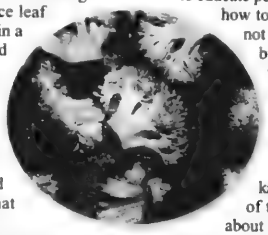
"*Tolaim* are the insects that are forbidden by the Torah for consumption," Rabbi Heber says. They include aphids and thrips, along with tiny worms and other almost-unseen perils. These creatures hide – inside florets, under leaves, even inside fruits or fish.

These insects have been forbidden as long as Jews have been eating kosher. But a few factors have brought the issue to light – sometimes literally. While only insects that can be seen with the naked eye are generally prohibited, fluorescent light boxes now allow for extremely close, accurate inspection to determine the degree of infestation. As well, kosher consumers are more aware of insect problems than they were in past.

There may also be more insect infestation now than in the past century. "We see them using less pesticides," says Rabbi Moshe Bensalmon of Badatz Toronto, a kashrut agency that began operating nearly two years ago. Imports and organic produce also demand greater vigilance.

But the role of kashrut organizations is not only to check and forbid, but also to permit foods wherever possible.

Rabbi Bensalmon recalls an all-organic wedding that was very successful despite the effort involved in ensuring insect-free produce. Every romaine lettuce leaf had to be prewashed, "agitated with soap in a sink," then rinsed and individually checked on the light box.



The COR is also leading the way in permitting foods wherever possible. Early in 2009, when it was discovered that raisins contain tiny fruit fly eggs, which can hatch into larvae, many agencies rushed to forbid them. After extensive entomological and talmudic research, the COR declared that raisins could still be eaten.

However, when it comes to ingredients like asparagus or broccoli, "it's not that we can't check," Rabbi Heber says. It's simply not practical. "Broccoli… needs to be thoroughly checked. Infestation levels are high; many bugs can be adhesive and don't rinse off easily under a stream of water."

In other communities, there may be more demand. One New York restaurant does offer fresh broccoli, employing two full-time mashgichim (kosher supervisors): one for the establishment, the other to check broccoli.

For Rabbi Heber, consistency doesn't have to mean increased stringency. "That's a misconception."

He adds that "all of our policies are in writing… from top to bottom."

He believes standardization will pay off in efficiency and transparency. "The community is seeing the COR take control of its establishments, making sure every establishment is in line with our policies."

Isaac Drookman of Zuchter Berk Caterers agrees. "Since they came out with a fruit and vegetable policy a few years ago, there have been no new restrictions." He praises the COR's responsiveness. "The rabbis are flexible… that's more important than if I have broccoli or not."

In fact, Rabbi Heber says, "our policies, if anything, have become more inclusive." For example, COR establishments can now be certified even if they are not serving exclusively chalav Yisrael, kosher-certified dairy products.

The COR has begun going out to synagogues and homes to educate people about kashrut issues and demonstrate how to check and wash produce. "Our motive is not to forbid all the different types of produce, but rather to give them the skills to be able to enjoy the product."

But restaurant consultant Marvin Greenberg believes the COR could do more to communicate its standards to restaurateurs and caterers.

"This is not about circumventing kashrut," says Greenberg, a founding member of the Ontario Restaurant Association. "It's about the lack of communication and the inconsistency of regulations." He'd like to see more training for mashgichim as well as a more positive attitude toward food businesses taking on kosher supervision.

The COR should "encourage people to become kosher and make it easier, not a point of stress."

One Toronto restaurateur feels frustrated juggling the COR's requirements with his customers'. "You're bound in what you can sell," he says. "Lettuce, for example: they require a mashgiach to check it.

"People ask, 'How come you don't have enough?' Because the guy has to spend six hours checking lettuce.

"That's not the way to create a positive attitude for remaining kosher," says Greenberg, who feels that the COR's standards may not reflect the true diversity among Toronto's kosher consumers. "Ninety per cent of people couldn't care less if I have [checked] broccoli or not."

Filling in for the missing menu items just takes creativity, Drookman says. "Broccoli is not the only item in Chinese food; it's one of 200."

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Times have changed, not kashrut laws

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

A deepening sense within the Jewish community that kashrut is tougher now than it was a century ago may in part be fuelled by mistrust of kashrut organizations, and not a result of kashrut laws themselves.

"When they tell you that you can't use a certain type of vegetable, you can't use [that] type of vegetable," says one caterer, who asked to not be named. "But they don't have the right to dictate how my business is run."

Among a handful of caterers around the city who are now under the supervision of Badatz Toronto, she says Badatz offers comparable kashrut services, with less intrusiveness into the company's business practices. COR, for example, generally demands that a partner in the organization be shomer Shabbat. "We have Yiddishkeit in our hearts, and we know how kosher we are – we're very, very careful."

BT Badatz Toronto

According to Badatz's Moti Bensalmon, it's certainly more common that at least one partner in the business is shomer Shabbat. However, Badatz's standard now is the same as that of the Orthodox Union (O-U), requiring that all caterers, regardless of ownership, must have a mashgiach temidi – constant oversight by a recognized Badatz supervisor.

The caterer above chose Badatz partly out of concern over COR's inconsistencies, and others have also questioned issues like the seeming variability of rates for mashgichim and even kashrut standards. She feels that practices like kosher and non-kosher kitchens working in parallel at the same time in certain venues would not be tolerated under Badatz, yet are tolerated at certain COR-approved venues.

While her venue offers both kosher and non-kosher kitchens, the mashgiach holds the key to the kosher kitchen at all times and will not open the door, even for advance preparation work, while the non-kosher kitchen is operating.

As a businessperson, she ultimately believes she should be able to freely choose a kashrut organization, as is already common in other cities.

"Slowly, very slowly, a lot of the banquet halls and synagogues will go over to Badatz. They're tired of the tyranny."

"People think food is either kosher or not kosher," says Rabbi Benjamin Hecht, founding director of Nishma, a Toronto organization that critically investigates contemporary Jewish issues. He believes this reflects a serious lack of understanding of kashrut and of Jewish law.

It's actually possible for one rabbi to study a situation and determine that a food product is kosher, while another rabbi examines the same facts and concludes that it is not kosher. And, as in the famous argument from *Fiddler on the Roof*, they're both right.

Hence, the common misunderstanding that kosher standards which were "good enough" for our grandparents in Europe have been superseded by today's more stringent laws.

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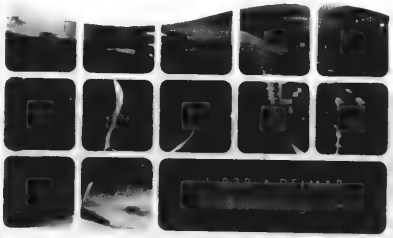
SERVICING THE WORLD COMES NATURALLY

Conference puts a positive spin on aging

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

While we wait for a pill to forestall aging, there are things we can do to help maintain brain function, says William Reichman, president and CEO of Baycrest.

Speaking on Oct. 28 at the third conference sponsored by CARP, Canada's largest not-for-profit, non-partisan advocacy association for aging Canadians, Reichman said the techniques are similar to things we do to keep our hearts healthy.

Reichman said that the majority of risk factors of heart disease are the risks for brain failure too, "but the good news is that if we make important lifestyle changes, we can have control."

He said that 10 years ago, he decided that there was no reason he couldn't be in good physical shape, "and I believe that I can do the same thing with my brain."

Physical exercise and keeping weight down is essential for a healthy brain, he said. "Mid-life obesity is a risk factor for Alzheimer's disease."

Lifestyle is also important, Reichman said. "A senior who volunteers shows an increase in cognitive ability. At Baycrest, there are 3,000 active, mostly senior volunteers who take care of 2,500 [other] seniors a day."

He said evidence suggests that seniors who are more socially engaged have stronger memories. "These are not magic pills. We are all excited about the promises of science, but we must put our time to good use now."

Leonid Gavrilov, who along with his wife, Natalia, was awarded a research grant from the U.S. National Institute on Aging to study exceptional human longevity, said it's a myth that aging starts with old age. "Aging starts as early as age 10, when the death rate is the lowest."

It's also a myth, he said, that humans are complex, and it is difficult to understand aging. "We are not much different than worms and flies. When we compare fruit flies to humans, the law of mortality is the same. There is a quantitative difference, not a qualitative difference."

Moses Znaimer

Natalia Gavrilov said that small things that happen early in life may have a profound effect later on in life. "We believe that these conditions shape aging 80 years later."

In their research, she said, they discovered that people who are born in November have twice the chance of living to 100 years old, and people born to young mothers have twice the chance. "For centenarians, it all began at birth."

Elkhonon Goldberg, an author and scientist in the field of neuropsychology and cognitive neuroscience, said that when we talk about cognitive changes in our brains, we usually talk about losses, but there are also positive gains.

"That is the puzzle of aging. The paradox is that many professionals are still experts in their field [at an advanced age], and their practices are quite successful. The brain and the mind are not all or none. Some aspects decline, while others are preserved."

There is good news and bad news about neuroplasticity, the ability of the brain to restore itself. "The good news is that there are benefits for parts of the brain that we engage, but the parts we don't suffer consequences."

Rabbi Yehuda Berg, an authority on Kabbalah, who was named by *Newsweek* in 2007 as one of the top five rabbis in the United States, said that our own personal power can help with regeneration.

"If our focus remains on the future, we can combat the aging process. [Don't] look back on what you should have done."

CARP's executive director, Moses Znaimer – the founder of ZoomerMedia Limited, which owns VisionTV and New Classical 96.3 FM – said that he wanted people to come away from the conference "refreshed, recharged and revitalized, and use what you learn to embrace the spirit of the 'zoomer,' which insists that aging doesn't have to mean retreating from life."

Golden age of Catskills is back

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

More than 100 residents of a local retirement home and their guests recently danced, laughed and dined on kosher cuisine while they relived the golden age of the Catskills.

Residents of the Kensington Place Retirement Residence in Toronto and their guests stepped back in time, from the 1930s to the 1960s, at a fundraiser for the Jewish National Fund (JNF) called Memories of the Catskills, held on Oct. 28.

The nostalgia for the golden years of New York State's famous Catskills resorts, where many performers got their start, was evident at the evening's opening cocktail reception and throughout the evening.

Residents and their guests were welcomed by Kensington Place staff members, including a Marilyn Monroe lookalike, white dress and all; Elvis Presley and Danyelle Gatsos, Kensington Place's social director, who organized the event.

The Welcome to the Catskills Bar displayed photographs of some of the stars of the Catskills, including Jackie and Rachel Robinson, with Karla Grossinger of the famed Catskills hotel.

At the event, JNF Toronto president Nathan Disenhouse spoke of the accomplishments of JNF, from the purchase of land that became the State of Israel to its continued work for Israel for more than 100 years. He thanked those present for their support.

The event was Kensington Place's inaugural fundraiser.

Michael Ayers, general manager of Kensington Place, told *The CJN* that the staff members at Kensington Place "are committed to making our community a better place to live.

"Through partnership with worthy organizations such as Jewish National Fund, we can live our philosophy – that we can make a bigger difference together than we can individually"

Kensington Place resident Leon Kane opened the fun-filled program with a tap dance, to the delight of the audience. Comedians Stewart Silver and Lawrence Morgenstern also performed.

Leon Kane, a resident of Kensington Place Retirement Residence, dances at the Memories of the Catskills evening.
[Karen Miller photo]

Kane said he visited the Catskills many times, "enjoying the great amount of food, entertainment, music and dancing. I feel that we have been able to recreate the ambience of the resort."

MC Page Magen, along with Magen Boys Entertainment, kept the event lively. Residents, guests and staff danced to the music of the past, while old movies were projected on screens.

"Living Life has always valued the importance of the community at large and… looks forward to establishing future partnerships," said Jason Pantalone, a partner in Living Life Retirement Residences, the company that owns Kensington Place.

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'We haven't forgotten them'

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Last month, Alan Caplan – a British war veteran living in Leeds, England – wrote to *The CJN* seeking family members of seven Jewish airmen who are buried in nearby Harrogate.

I contacted Caplan the following week, thinking there could be a good followup story and – truth be told – because I have a personal interest.

Twenty-three years ago, I was in Harrogate, a picturesque garden town in Yorkshire, and visited the cemetery that Caplan refers to in his letter. Also, 42 years before that trip, my late father was among a group of young Royal Canadian Air Force members who presented a plaque to the Harrogate Hebrew Congregation expressing thanks for hospitality to Canadian Jewish members of the forces during the war.

I visited the Harrogate synagogue when I was in town and took a picture of the plaque for my album. I also have pictures of the graves that Caplan mentioned in his letter, each stone marked by a Star of David among the many crosses in the military section of Stonefall Cemetery. I'd been told that the local Jewish community tended the graves and said *Kaddish* annually for those who are buried there.

Caplan was among approximately 30 members of the Association of Jewish Ex-Service Men and Women (AJEX) who visited the graves of the Canadian Jewish servicemen to say *Kaddish* this year, following a Sept. 19 parade at the cemetery commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

"We remember them because they gave their lives for us," he wrote. In his letter, he included the names of the following men with some pertinent details.

- Jack Tass of Prince Albert, Sask., air gunner, RCAF, died May 15, 1944, aged 29
- Harry Ratner of Winnipeg, air bomber, RCAF, died May 25, 1944, aged 26
- Ernest Israel Glass, pilot, RCAF, died Jan. 2, 1944, aged 27
- Robert Sirluck of Winnipeg, air bomber, RCAF, died March 1, 1944, aged 22
- Morley Bernard Stock of Regina, flying officer, RCAF, died Feb. 18, 1944, aged 21
- R.P. Marks, flight engineer, died Dec. 16, 1943, aged 22
- Joseph Zareikin, air gunner, RCAF, died Oct. 5, 1944, aged 36

Harry Ratner

Within a week, Caplan had received some two dozen e-mails and heard from family members of two of the men. A third family made contact with him shortly afterward.

The extent of the response came as a surprise to him, because, he said, another AJEX member tried to locate surviving relatives a few years ago with no success.

Caplan, 76, was born in Manchester, England, and spent two years in Britain's Royal Air Force as compulsory national service, before moving to Toronto for a three-year stint in the late 1950s.

"Our main aim is that we make contact, and that people should know that the graves of their loved ones are visited at least annually – and that we haven't forgotten them," Caplan said. "There's not so many people around who remember the war."

* * *

Montrealer Morley Stock – the nephew and namesake of one of the men – was the first person to call Caplan.

"I was quite impressed with the fact he made the effort to try and find these families," Stock told *The CJN*.

Stock's uncle died piloting a Halifax bomber in an abortive mission. The plane crashed, killing all the crew except one.

The mission is the last entry in Stock's logbook, now a keepsake for his nephew.

Previous missions, recorded in Stock's tidy upper-case printing, took him over German cities including Cologne, Karlsruhe, Stuttgart and Berlin. Conditions were often perilous, as indicated in his terse remarks: "Lite flak, lost motor over France, second over Eng. coast;" "many searchlights with moderate flak no mishap" and "intense heavy flak with enemy fighters throughout no mishap."

The logbook also includes four poems, typed and signed by Stock. Halfway through the third, *To The Fallen Pilot*, he wrote: "Grieve not, because an eagle/ Was from the skyway hurled/ His soul will inspire others/ To build a new and better world.

"It's almost like he had a premonition," his nephew said. "He didn't really express any regrets about what he did."

Stock said he doesn't think his generation has a sense of what it was like to experience a world war. "My father was a broadcaster. He went into the army. My uncles were professionals. They all went in the army or air force. Today, if you had a kid and the kid was a lawyer, do you think the kid would run to enlist?"

* * *

In Winnipeg, Marcy Secter – who is married to Harry Ratner's nephew, Lloyd Secter – heard about Caplan's letter from her son, who had seen it online, as well as from a cousin in Calgary.

Her husband has been to his uncle's grave, as has her sister-in-law who lives in London, but "it's nice to know that someone is tending to things there," said Secter.

As well, former Winnipeger Nathan Isaacs, who now lives in Toronto, contacted the Ratner family. Isaacs, 88, had taken Ratner's sister, Minnie Karlinsky, to his high school graduation. The two families lived near each other, and Isaacs, a navigator during the war, arrived at the air-force station in Leeming, Yorkshire, shortly after Ratner was killed.

Losing their only son was "quite traumatic for the family," said Secter.

Karlinsky, 86, the youngest and last surviving sibling, expressed the same sentiment with a poignant recollection. Her mother used to sing all the time, she said, but "never sang a note" after losing her son. "It was a real tragedy."

Morley Stock

Karlinsky, who lives in Winnipeg and has been to Harrogate, remembers her older brother as handsome, kind and generous. He used to call her "Duchess" or "Princess" to get her to polish his shoes, she recalled. "Hey, Princess, how about polishing my shoes?" he would ask.

"He was a really sweet young man."

Ratner had worked at his father's lumber camp in Jones, Ont., and his father had wanted him to take it over, Karlinsky said. "That was his dream, which didn't materialize."

* * *

Ernest Sirluck – whose brother, Robert (Bert) – is buried in Harrogate – was an army major stationed in Leatherhead, in southern England, when Robert was killed in a bombing mission. He just missed the funeral, because a wire from the RCAF informing him about it had been intercepted by the British censor. By the time he received the notice by mail and rushed to Harrogate, the funeral had already taken place.

He has been there many times since, he said. Now 92, Sirluck – the second youngest of five children and the last surviving sibling – has lived in Toronto for many years. His parents, who immigrated from Russia, lived in Winkler, Man., about 75 miles southwest of Winnipeg.

Robert was killed on a bombing mission. "His promotion from flight sergeant to pilot officer came through the day after he was killed," his brother said. "He was a very committed fighter against the Nazis… He left university in order to enlist. He was actually a little under age, but he falsified his age, and stated it to be a year more than it really was."

Before the war, Robert had studied agriculture at the University of Manitoba, where a scholarship in Canadian history is named for him. "We were farmers, and the plan was for him to take over the farm when my father retired."

All five of the Sirluck children attended the university. Ernest, who studied 16th- and 17th-century English literature, was its president from 1970 to 1976, and was vice-president of the University of Toronto before that.

Robert Sirluck

His younger brother had flown more than a dozen missions, including over Berlin and Hamburg. "Bert told me the runs were becoming more and more difficult and more and more fraught. The defences were constantly increasing.

"He wasn't blind to the danger, but he was very resolute, very clear about the absolute necessity of overcoming that scourge."

* * *

Morley Stock said that as Remembrance Day approaches, "it's a situation of respect, and remembering that these guys made a pretty big sacrifice. Their careers went on hold. Many of them didn't come back. It's a tough situation for families. I think it's good to remember once in a while."

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U.S. VP stresses country's support for Israel

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

NEW ORLEANS — U.S. vice-president Joe Biden pledged that he and President Barack Obama would continue to support Israel and said they are committed to preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

Biden spoke at the annual General Assembly (GA) of Jewish Federations of North America on Sunday. The keynote speaker at the GA's opening plenary, he had just met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who was scheduled to address delegates on Monday.

For further coverage from the General Assembly, please go to cjnews.com

"This government will stand with Israel," said Biden. "It's in our own self-interest, beyond it being an absolute moral necessity."

As well, he referred to the necessity for peace talks. "There is no substitute for direct face-to-face negotiations leading eventually to states for two people secured – the Jewish State of Israel and the viable independent state of Palestine," he said.

"That is the only path to the Israeli people's decades-long quest for security, and the only path to the Palestinian people's legitimate aspirations for nationhood."

The three-day event brought together more than 3,100 delegates – lay and professional leaders of the Jewish community, and 600 students and student leaders – representing 157 member federations and 400 affiliated Jewish communities. There were about 130 Canadians at the Nov. 7 to 9 GA and the concurrent Lion of Judah conference for women who donate at least $5,000 to their annual UJA campaign.

Linda Kislowicz, executive director of the United Israel Appeal Federations Canada (UIAFC), said that it's "extremely valuable for Canadians to participate as part of a larger North American family of organizations. There's a tremendous focus on the future and on youth [at this GA]. We share the same concerns as our American colleagues in encouraging and engaging the next generation of leaders."

Shaun Bernstein, a Humber College journalism student, said he was there to learn to become a better reporter by focusing on Jewish ethics.

Joel Zimmerman, a second-year psychology student at Mount Royal University in Calgary, where he is president of Hillel — was attending his first GA.

Continued on page 46

David Engel and Linda Kislowicz at the General Assembly.
[Frances Kraft photo]

Thanks to Disabled Veterans like Dor, there is an Israel for all of us.

Dor Cohen was only a month short of completing his service in the Paratroopers Special Division.

It was the dead of night in Nablus, September 5, 2007. Dor's unit moved toward their target. Their mission was to capture an engineer known to produce lethal explosive devices, but they didn't find him. Instead, they found another terrorist involved in manufacturing and detonating deadly materials.

As Dor made his way back to his jeep, his life would suddenly change forever. **He stepped on a hidden explosive device which was detonated via remote control.** He suffered severe injuries to his right arm and leg. After many difficult surgeries and ongoing rehabilitation, Dor, once a champion long-distance runner, courageously took it all in stride.

Besides his own sheer determination and bravery, **one of the most important reasons for Dor's successful recovery has been Beit Halochem in Tel Aviv,** which is now a vital part of his life.

Dor works out in the fitness hall regularly and has joined the Beit Halochem kayaking group to further strengthen his body. "I am still a newly disabled veteran who is trying to find his way."

Today, with the help of a Beit Halochem scholarship, Dor is studying Agronomy and hopes to work in wine production.

With your support, Beit Halochem Canada, Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel, can continue to provide a home away from home for our wounded members at the Beit Halochem Centres in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Nahariya, Jerusalem and Beer Sheva. Help us care for Dor, and the other 51,000 extraordinary and courageous heroes who have given so much of themselves to protect Israel.

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Sharansky praises young delegates at GA

Continued from page 45

"I thought it was an opportunity I should jump on," he said. "I think it's good to see the amount of connection the Jewish community has."

Jewish Agency for Israel chair Natan Sharansky, speaking at a UIAFC reception, said it is important that young people are at the GA. Having visited several university campuses beleaguered by anti-Israel activity, he said he knows very well "how difficult it is to be a proud Jew in these universities, and how difficult it is to speak your mind."

Natan Sharansky *[Frances Kraft photos]*

Andres Spokoiny, CEO of Montreal's Federation CJA and a panellist at a workshop on "Finding Community in Difficult Economic Times," told *The CJN* there is a lot of "cross-pollination between communities" at the GA.

Ted Sokolsky, president of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, was heartened that the American federation system "has come on board in fighting the delegitimization of Israel."

Earlier, at the plenary, Biden had lauded the federations' new Israel Action Network, launched for that purpose. Sokolsky and the Toronto federation played a key role in getting it off the ground.

The location of the meeting was significant, an apt place to include a half-day of community service for the first time. Delegates were scheduled to assist in ongoing projects, five years after New Orleans was devastated by hurricane Katrina. The city was selected so the federations could celebrate and build on the $28 million provided by federations following the hurricane, a news release stated.

Biden lauded the federations for their "daunting but worthy goal" of repairing the world, and said that policymakers could learn a lesson from them: "To prevent poverty, make sure you're out there doing what you're doing."

He spoke of the federations' efforts both at home and in Israel, a country he said is close to his heart.

"My love for Israel was nurtured by my father, but was cemented after I made my first visit there in 1973 as a 30-year-old senator," said Biden, who is Catholic. He said that Golda Meir, Israel's prime minister at the time, told him that Israelis have a secret weapon: "We have nowhere else to go.

"All these years later, I find both alarm and solace in those words," he said. "I feel so absolutely certain that our support of Israel must continue forever."

He said any disagreements with Netanyahu, whom he referred to as his close friend, have been tactical but never fundamental. "The ties between our countries are literally unbreakable."

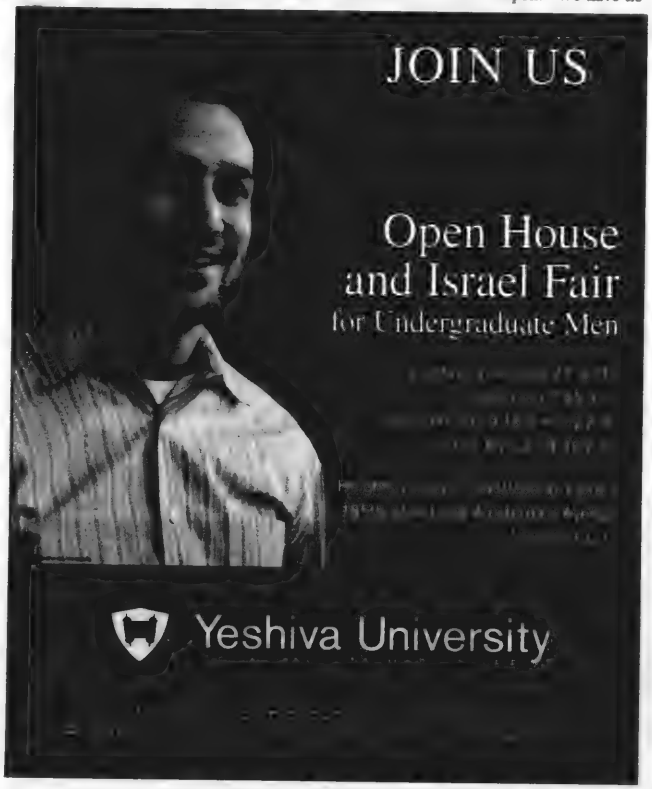
As well, he said, "it must be clear to all that efforts to chip away at Israel's legitimacy will only be met by unshakable opposition by the United States of America."

Television producer David Simon, creator of HBO's *The Wire*, who also spoke at the opening plenary, alluded to the significance of the location for this year's conclave, recalling that convention organizers cancelled bookings after Katrina, and also noted that federations are now focusing on non-Jewish causes as well as Jewish ones. "We are all connected, and New Orleans is living proof of that.

"The need [in New Orleans] is unbelievable. It's not just need. It's desperation," Simon said.

His speaking fee would go to help an organization that benefits musicians, he noted. "You might be shocked to know that the people who make New Orleans, New Orleans, are the ones with the least health care."

Volunteer Jessica Sharafi, of Montreal, and Toronto-based Dan Hadad of CIJA, the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy, staff a table at the General Assembly.



'Big Embrace' kicks off

© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

NEW ORLEANS — The annual General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America got started on Nov. 6 (after Shabbat, of course) in the heart of New Orleans, under the moniker "The Big Embrace in the Big Easy."

Some 4,000 people from more than 150 organizations, NGOs and charities flocked to the city for the conference and the biannual Lion of Judah gathering, which runs almost concurrently.

The conferences coincided with a massive real estate convention also taking place in New Orleans over the weekend, and the streets were packed with out-of-towners carrying paraphernalia from their respective gatherings, but almost all wearing Mardi Gras beads in gold, purple and green. "We are thrilled and proud to be gathering here in New Orleans for the 2010 General Assembly and International Lion of Judah Conference," said Jerry Silverman, president and CEO of the Jewish Federations of North America.

"More than 4,100 Jewish Federations and communal leaders of all ages are coming together to meet the challenges we face, from advocating for Israel to engaging young people in meaningful opportunities like Jewish service, to raising funds for meeting global Jewish needs.

"New Orleans, where Jewish federations helped rebuild after Hurricane Katrina, provides an especially fitting and powerful backdrop for our work together. We are honoured to be here and look forward to memorable events."

The GA traditionally tackles hot topics within North American Jewish communities – last year's gathering dealt with the challenges faced by the twin blows of the financial crisis and Bernard Madoff's Ponzi scheme. This year, the themes include Israel's image, with workshops such as "Confronting Israel's Delegitimizers: The Jewish Community Responds" and "U.S.-Israel Relations in a Changing World."

U.S. recommits to peace after electoral power-shift

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

The United States remains committed to forging an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal despite recent electoral gains by Republicans, who are traditionally more sympathetic to Israel.

U.S. State Department deputy spokesperson Mark Toner said President Barack Obama's administration still views the peace process as a priority and will work with Congress to see it through.

"It's going to remain a priority for this administration. And obviously, we're going to work hand in glove with Congress to advance direct negotiations and to ultimately reach a settlement," he said.

Voters swept Republicans into control of the House of Representatives and weakened the Democratic majority in the Senate in an election largely seen as a referendum on Obama's domestic policies.

President Barack Obama

Although Israel enjoys broad support across both parties, Republicans are seen as taking a more hardline approach. The incoming chairwoman of the House foreign affairs committee, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, is strongly pro-Israel.

The Israeli government is hopeful that a Republican majority House come January will be able to alleviate the pressure Obama has placed on Israel to negotiate peace with the Palestinians and to place a freeze on settlement expansions.

"The fact that Obama lost the majority in the House of Representatives will play into Israel's hands," a senior Israeli official, quoted anonymously by Israel Army Radio, said.

Nazi SS guard dies in Italy

JTA

ROME — A Ukrainian-born Nazi SS guard serving a life sentence for murders committed during World War II has died.

Officials said Michael Seifert, known as the "beast of Bolzano," died last Saturday in a hospital in Caserta, Italy, where he had been transferred Oct. 25 from the Santa Maria Capua Vetere prison because of a broken femur. He was 86.

In 2000, a military court in Verona convicted Seifert, who had lived in Canada since 1951, in absentia of murdering inmates while a guard at an SS-run prison transit camp at Bolzano in northern Italy.

Witnesses said Seifert tortured prisoners and committed other atrocities.

Seifert was extradited from Canada in 2008 to serve out his sentence after the Supreme Court refused to hear his appeal of a 2007 Federal Court ruling that he lied about his wartime past in order to enter Canada and obtain citizenship.

The 2007 Federal Court ruling, which came after years of legal wrangling in the case, was welcomed by Canadian Jewish Congress, which has long urged more urgent action against Nazi war criminals.

The camp at Bolzano had served as a transit camp for Italian partisans, forced workers, German army deserters and Jews being shipped north in 1944-45.

Seifert's lawyer, Paolo Giachino, complained to the ApCom news agency that judges had rebuffed efforts to allow Seifert to serve his sentence under house arrest because of "continued demonization by extremists in the Jewish community.

Germany ordains first female rabbi since Holocaust

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

BERLIN — The first female rabbi to be trained in Germany since the Holocaust was ordained Nov. 4.

Thirty-one-year-old Alina Treiger was born in Ukraine and came to Germany in 2002 after studying music in Moscow. She will oversee Jewish communities in Lower Saxony in eastern Germany.

She told Germany's ZDF TV that she recognizes the Holocaust is part of German Jews' past, but hopes Jews can identify with positive experiences they have today.

The German-Jewish community ordained its first female rabbi, Regina Jonas, in 1935. She was killed in Auschwitz in 1944.

Some 200,000 Jews live in Germany, more than half of whom came after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Rabbi Treiger was one of three rabbis ordained by Germany's Reform rabbinical seminary, the Abraham Geiger College. Ceremonies at Berlin's Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue marked its third ordination of graduates since it opened in 1999. Germany was the birthplace of Reform Judaism in the early 19th century.

Israel Briefs

Israel rises in ranks

The United Nations last week issued its annual Human Development Report, which, over the last 20 years has become a trusted indicator of development among nations. It ranked Israel at No. 15. The report is based on a composite national measure of health, education and income for 169 countries. Norway, Australia and New Zealand top this year's list, while Niger, Congo and Zimbabwe were at the bottom. For the first time, the report surveyed non-economic aspects of development, from political freedoms and empowerment to sustainability and human security. A spokesperson for the UN Development Program said Israel ranked relatively high thanks to life expectancy, gross national income per capita, and, most importantly, education.

Israel protests British law

Israel reportedly postponed a strategic dialogue with Britain to protest a law that allows for the prosecution of Israeli officials for alleged war crimes. Strategic dialogue between Israel and Britain on defence and security issues occurs annually. This year's strategic dialogue meeting, scheduled for last month in Britain, didn't take place, AFP reported. The British law provides the country's courts with "universal jurisdiction" to issue arrest warrants for alleged war crimes, including to visiting foreign politicians. British Foreign Secretary William Hague, who was in Israel last week for meetings with top Israeli officials, was set to discuss amendment of the law. Last month, Israeli Intelligence Minister Dan Meridor cancelled a visit to London because of rumours he would be arrested on charges stemming from Israel's interception of a Gaza-bound flotilla from Turkey, which led to the death of nine Turkish citizens. A British court issued an arrest warrant for opposition leader Tzipi Livni last December for her actions as foreign minister in the Gaza war of 2008-09, forcing her to cancel her visit.

UNESCO ties suspended

Israel suspended ties with the cultural body of the United Nations over its decision to classify the Cave of the Patriarchs and Rachel's Tomb as Palestinian. At the end of its biannual session last week, UNESCO, which is in charge of preserving historical sites, adopted several proposals by Arab states classifying Jewish and Muslim holy sites. It referred to Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem as a mosque, in addition to using its Jewish designation ,"Rachel's Tomb," and said the Tomb and the Cave of the Patriarchs was "an integral part of the occupied Palestinian Territories." It called both "Palestinian sites." Last February, Israel included both sites on its new national heritage list and allocated money to refurbish them. The decision was condemned by the international community, and UNESCO asked Israel to remove the sites from the list.

– from JTA and Ha'aretz

Nobel laureates denounce anti-Israel boycotts

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Thirty-eight Nobel Prize laureates have signed a statement denouncing academic boycotts and divestment campaigns against Israeli scholars and educational institutions in Israel.

The statement, issued by Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (SPME), was by chance released on Nov. 2, the 93rd anniversary of the Balfour Declaration.

SPME is a grassroots network of more than 60,000 scholars on 4,000 campuses around the world that believes Israel has right to secure borders and peace with its Arab neighbours.

"Academic boycotts are completely antithetical to the freedom of ideas and interchange, which have historically characterized academic life," observed Eric Kandel, one of the signers, in an interview last week.

"Boycotts are completely counter-productive," said Kandel, a Columbia University neuroscientist who shared the 2000 Nobel Prize in medicine for research on the physiological basis of memory storage in neurons.

Roald Hoffman, a Holocaust survivor and theoretical chemist on the faculty of Cornell University who won the 1981 Nobel Prize in chemistry, said, "One may disagree with Israeli government policy, but to institute a boycott against Israeli scholars is nonsensical."

He added, "Freedom of scientific exchange of ideas, for instance through seminars or meetings, is a fundamental part of the way science operates today. Scientists from all countries are welcome, provided they have something of interest to say."

Another signer, Sidney Altman, a professor of molecular, cellular and developmental biology and chemistry at Yale University who shared the 1989 Nobel Prize in chemistry, was equally dismissive of boycotts.

"I'm against boycotting any institution in the world, unless that institution is clearly a tool of any government propaganda effort," said Montreal-born Altman in an interview.

Sidney Altman

The statement was initiated by Roger Kornberg, a biochemist, professor of structural biology at Stanford University and the winner of the 2006 Nobel Prize in chemistry, and Steven Weinberg, a physicist at the University of Texas who won the 1979 Nobel Prize in physics.

The statement denounces academic and cultural boycotts, divestments and sanctions in the academy on three grounds.

They are antithetical to principles of academic and scientific freedom, contrary to principles of freedom of expression and inquiry and possibly discriminatory by virtue of national origin.

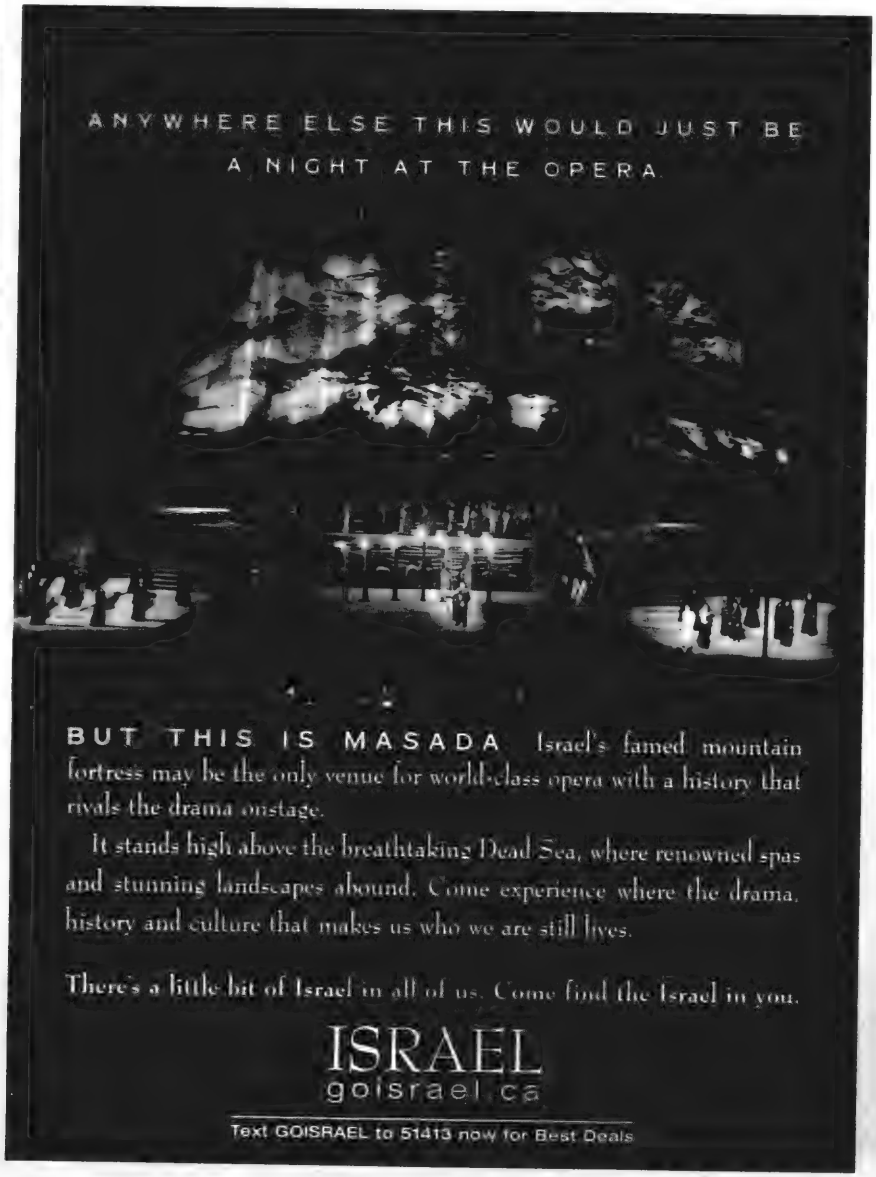
The signers appeal to students, faculty colleagues and university officials to denounce the BDS (boycott, divestment and sanction) campaign, which was launched in 2005.

They further encourage such persons to promote and provide opportunities for dialogue.

In closing, they say, "We believe that the university should serve as an open, tolerant, respectful, cooperative and collaborative community engaged in practices of resolving complex problems."

Apart from Kornberg, Weinberg, Altman, Kandel and Hoffman, the signers are: Lawrence Klein, Kenneth Arrow, Walter Kohn, Robert Aumann, Mario Capecchi, Harold Kroto, Aaron Ciechanover, Finn Kydland, Claude Cohen-Tannoudjil, Leon Lederman, Robert Curl, Tony Leggett, Edmond Fischer and Robert Lucas, Jr.

Additional signers are: Jerome Friedman, Rudolph Marcus, Andre Geim, Roger Myerson, Sheldon Glashow, George Olah, David Gross, Douglas Osheroff, James Hackman, Martin Perl, Avram Hershko, Andrew Schally, Richard Schrock, Russell Hulse, Phillip Sharp, Tom Hunt, Daniel Kahneman, Elie Wiesel and Torsten Wiesel.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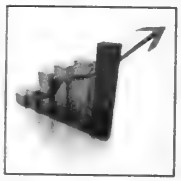
Luxury coach promotes travel to Israel

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The Israel Government Tourist Office last week announced the launch of its fall campaign, featuring a bus to the Holy Land.

The luxury coach will not actually drive passengers to Israel on some imaginary land bridge, but it has been decorated with images of Israel on either side, promoting travel to the Jewish state.



The six-wheel coach will ferry travellers between Toronto's Pearson International Airport and several high-end downtown hotels for the next four months.

In addition to the images of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem on either side, it carries the ad campaign's slogan, "There's a little bit of Israel in all of us. Come find the Israel in you."

"The exposure will be enormous," enthuses Oded Grofman, head of the Israeli tourist office in Toronto. The bus, which shuttles between the airport and downtown 10 times a day, will raise awareness of Israel as a travel destination and will supplement the broader campaign that will employ traditional means such as television, radio and print, as well as the new social media.

The bus ad is part of a $250,000 spend by the tourist office and is somewhat unorthodox for the government agency, said Grofman. After receiving approval for the project from the regional head office in New York, it was determined it would be operated as a pilot project and, if successful, be emulated in other North American cities, he said.

Altogether, some $15 million (US) has been allocated by the Tourism Ministry for North American advertising campaigns, said Grofman.

It appears the promotions are paying off. Israel is well on its way to setting a new record for tourism in 2010. In the first 10 months of the year, travel to Israel jumped by 17 per cent from the same period the year before, and altogether, 3.3 million visitors are expected for the year. Among them will be 75,000 to 80,000 Canadians, also a new record.

In addition to the country's traditional market of Jews and Christian supporters, a number of ethnic groups are discovering Israel as a travel destination, Grofman said. Filipino and Chinese groups are travelling to the Holy Land in substantial numbers, while the "Christian market" is expanding, as is interest from other organizations. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet recently visited Israel, as did a group from the Royal Ontario Museum.

In November, "a huge group," 550 strong, is expected to set out from Toronto.

Grofman believes a number of factors have led to the surge in travel. Since 2002, Israel has been experiencing a long-term trend in tourism growth, with numbers up almost every year. "Of course, geopolitics is a big factor," he said. "People feel safe. They see what happens in other countries, and people realize Israel is as safe as any other destination."

The advertising campaign has had an impact, he continued, and as demand for travel has increased, supply has attempted to keep up. "We now have more channels with tour operators and airlines, and that enables more and more tourists to come."

In the winter low season, El Al and Air Canada will offer three direct flights each, while during the peak summer season that just concluded, the airlines flew to Ben-Gurion International Airport a total of 12 times a week. That doesn't include flights through New York or Europe, he added.

But has the constant demonization of Israel and the calls for boycott by its opponents had any impact on travel, he's asked. "I never met any company that didn't want to meet us or sell Israel. I never heard any comment about boycott," he said.

The travel industry is increasingly interested in promoting Israel as a destination, he said, and he's constantly being asked for promotional material or to attend events and trade shows to highlight travel to the Jewish state. He's been invited on an almost weekly basis to address church congregations, including one event that drew 1,000 people.

Grade 1 students from the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School, pictured here with the head of the Israel Government Tourist Office, Oded Grofman, whose son attends the school, took part in the recent launch of a tourism promotion that features a bus decorated with images of Israel.

It's not just evangelical Christians interested in visiting the Holy Land. Half of Christian travellers to Israel are Roman Catholic, many of them from Quebec, "and it's growing," he said.

"That doesn't mean they're in love with Israel. But we don't deal with politics. We speak about the landscapes, food, hotels, the experience they can have in Israel."

So far, the experience appears to be a positive one. Post-visit surveys indicate more than half of travellers were on at least their second trip to the country.

To meet increasing demand, which is hoped will reach five million travellers by 2012, Israel is embarking on ambitious expansion of the hospitality sector. In October, the number of visitors was so high, the industry had trouble coping with the demand.

The government has been offering incentives for hotels to locate in Israel, and the Ritz-Carlton and the Waldorf Astoria, two prestigious names, are slated to open locations in Herzliya and Jerusalem respectively.

"Boutique hotels" in trendy parts of Tel Aviv are also being developed, he said.

Tourism remains an important part of the Israeli economy, Grofman said. Tourism provides employment for everyone from cooks and cleaners to management and guides, and it's not limited to the larger centres. Smaller communities also benefit from the influx of foreign travelers, he said.

In 2010, tourism constituted 6.4 per cent of the country's GDP. Earnings in 2010 from international visitors and tourism goods are expected to generate 6.5 per cent of total exports ($4.8 billion US). The contribution of the tourism sector to employment is estimated at 223,000 jobs in all, or 7.9 per cent of total employment, while investment in tourism-related industries is believed to be $2.3 billion (US) or 7.6 per cent of total investment.

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And now for something completely different: **HEEBONICS**

L.A. children's film festival to screen student's animated short

By CARA EDELL
Special to the CJN

Her film is called *The Little Things*, but Kayla Cooper's accomplishments are far from small.

The 22-year-old's animated movie will be screened at the sixth annual Los Angeles International Children's Film Festival on Nov. 13 at the Martin Luther King Jr. Theatre in Santa Monica.

Currently a student at York University in the faculty of education, Cooper graduated from the school's film program in June of this year.

Her children's movie was originally a project for one of her fourth-year courses, intended to be viewed by her professor and classmates. After sharing her work of art and receiving rave reviews, Cooper decided that her brainchild deserved a broader audience.

"There is no better outlet for this film than a festival that caters specifically to kids. I'm hoping to get my movie out there. It's tough when you're dealing with a short film, especially a five-minute one, so it needs to get this exposure at a festival directed towards children."

Cooper's film is categorized as Claymation (clay animation) and is a form of stop-motion (when an object is moved by hand in small increments between individually photographed frames, creating the illusion of movement when the series of frames is played as a continuous sequence). Each of her animated pieces is made of Plasticine, with unique and eye-catching details.

"I've always been interested in stop-motion. It's quite an interesting process," Cooper said. "Growing up, I loved Shel Silverstein's poems and Barbara Reid's children's books, which feature two-dimensional Plasticine illustrations. I figured I could experiment with it all and make a film out of it."

The idea behind the film's storyline is a story in itself.

"I woke up in bed one day and had a picture of an ice cream shop in my head from a dream. The last two lines of the film came to me first – 'If your eyes are bigger than your mouth, your heart best be even bigger.' I knew I had to elaborate on this."

A scene from Kayla Cooper's animated film, *The Little Things*.

Her ending phrase became the film's moral, and the script, written in rhyme, creatively narrates the lesson. "It's all about treating others the way you want to be treated and not being greedy. The main character does have eyes that are bigger than her mouth, so it's a very literal interpretation of the figurative expression."

Cooper said she has always loved rhyming. In Grade 3, she made it her mission to write as many poems as possible and ultimately surpassed her goal of 100. While she didn't realize the significance back then, this achievement was the first of many.

The Little Things was a year-long project that Cooper finished this past April. "The poem came together in the spring of 2009, and I created the sets that summer. My family's living room was covered with Plasticine for quite a long time. They were very patient with me."

The filming was a painstaking process, Cooper said. She borrowed a camera from her boyfriend and a set of lights from the school's film department. She then stayed at home in her pyjamas for four days straight.

Kayla Cooper

"I just moved the little pieces and took picture after picture, almost 1,200 photos in total. Every picture you take only counts for about a 30th of a second, so by the time you do the calculations, it's a lot of work!" she said.

"Time moves incredibly slowly when you're doing something like that. But then at the end, when you look at the objects move as you're fast-forwarding the pictures on your camera, it's pretty rewarding."

Cooper's first version of Stephanie, the film's main character, was unattractive and awkward, she said. A few sketches later, Cooper was able to bring Stephanie to life with features that really stand out.

"If you look at Stephanie compared to the other children in the story, their eyes are just black dots, while hers are big and beautiful, providing contrast to the rest of the kids."

Cooper said her film would not be the product it is today without the support of her loved ones. Her mother helped build the wire frames for the Plasticine characters, her friend Cassandra Luftspring helped with the music, her cousin helped make the gumballs and his girlfriend helped make the popcorn machine.

In the future, Cooper hopes to turn her story into a children's book and bring it into schools. "It would be a really great tool to incorporate literacy with the arts as well as video and Claymation for elementary school children," she said. "I've always loved kids and children's literature, which is why I'm going into education."

Cooper has spent a lot of time teaching art to children. For the past several years, she has worked at Seneca Summer Camp as an art instructor and supervisor. She now teaches art one-on-one, as well as a course at Curry's, an art supply store that offers classes for kids and adults in the GTA.

"In the long-term, I would love to do Claymation with children at a summer camp or in an extracurricular program. In the shorter term, I would love to get a job at a school and implement my arts background and interest into the programming," she said.

"What I would really and truly love to do is work with kids and have them create films – design the characters, write scripts, animate and edit. That would be the most rewarding thing. I want to help others and guide them along, to help them create something so that they can explore the medium and process."

Cooper said she can't wait until she travels to Los Angeles to see her film on the big screen.

"It's a good excuse to go and a really exciting reason to go. I'm so happy that people outside of Ontario are going to see my movie. I put in so many hours of work.

"When you're doing it, you feel like no one will ever see it or care. It's amazing that someone so far away will see it, thanks to this festival," she said. "My film is just starting its journey!"

For more information about *The Little Things*, contact Kayla Cooper at thelittlethingsanimation@gmail.com.

Arts & Travel

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

SLOVAKIAN FILM *BROKEN PROMISES* TO BE SHOWN AT CHAI TEA, NOV. 21

Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents *Broken Promises*, Slovakian director **Jiri Chlumsky**'s 2008 film about the experiences of a Slovakian Jewish boy and his family in Nazi work camps and then in the partisan underground. With a script that spans over a decade, Chlumsky captures an impressive 140 locations across four seasons, using a total of 130 actors. English subtitles. Chai Tea and a Movie, SilverCity Richmond Hill, 8725 Yonge St. (at Hwy 7). $15. Sunday Nov 21; tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. 416-599-8433. www.tjff.com

• • •

Media Mondays: Film critic **Adam Nayman** presents "Surfing the New Waves – Contemporary Foreign-Language Cinema," with film clips. Nayman tries to define the term "new wave" as he discusses recent art-house exports from numerous countries. A new series going over six Mondays, starts Nov. 15, 7 to 9 p.m. First lecture on the origins of new-wave cinema. $12 drop in per lecture. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• • •

Awards & Prizes

• A book of selected poems by Ottawa-based poet **Seymour Mayne** as rendered into Hebrew by **Moshe Dor** has been chosen to receive the J.I. Segal Award for the translation of a book on a Jewish theme. The prize is being given to *Fly Off Into the Strongest Light: Selected Poems* (Keshev Publishing House) this week at the Gelber Conference Centre in Montreal.

• Toronto klezmer folk band **Beyond the Pale** has been nominated in four categories of the Canadian Folk Music Awards. The band consists of six musicians who play a mix of klezmer, Balkan, Romanian and other styles. The awards are scheduled for Nov. 20 in Winnipeg.

• On the international scene, a graphic novel rooted in the Holocaust won the grand prize at an international cartoon and comics festival. *The Gateway to Zion*, by **Walter Chendi**, was awarded the prize at the International Comics and Games festival in the Italian city of Lucca.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Active Seniors at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre presents "Great Jewish Canadian Personalities – J. B. Salsberg." **Adam Fuerstenberg** discusses the life and times of this colourful personality. Thursday, Nov. 18, 1:30 p.m. Refreshments. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

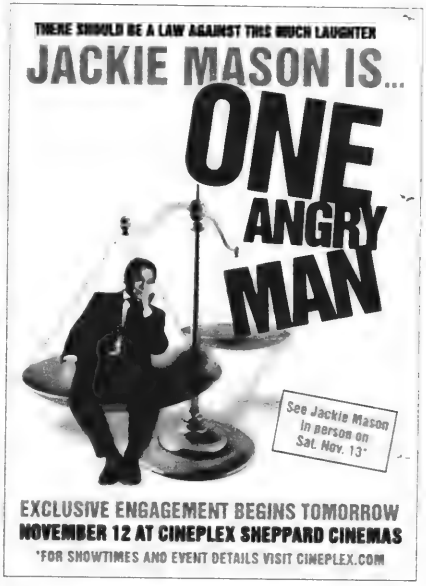
• Harold Green Jewish Theatre presents *Lenin's Embalmers*, an "absurdist, savagely funny dark comedy" about two Jewish scientists chosen to embalm **Vladimir Lenin** after his death in 1924. $49 to $76. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. Until Nov. 21. 416-366-7723. www.stlc.com

• Planet Music, Lectures on World Music for the Armchair Traveller. Series continues at Miles Nadal JCC, Nov. 11 & 18, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Drop-in for $18 per lecture. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Toronto not-for-profit theatre company Steppin' Out Theatrical Productions presents *Oliver!*, featuring a cast of local performers. The play is at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, Nov. 18 to 21. The company also presents a holiday show with the **Renanim Youth Singers** under the direction of **Susan Michael** and others, Dec. 2. www.steppinout.ca

• *Dogs*, a series of paintings by **Julie Glick**, is on view in the Jacobs Lounge Visual Art Space, Miles Nadal JCC, until Nov. 21.

***Broken Promises* screens at SilverCity Richmond Hill on Nov. 21**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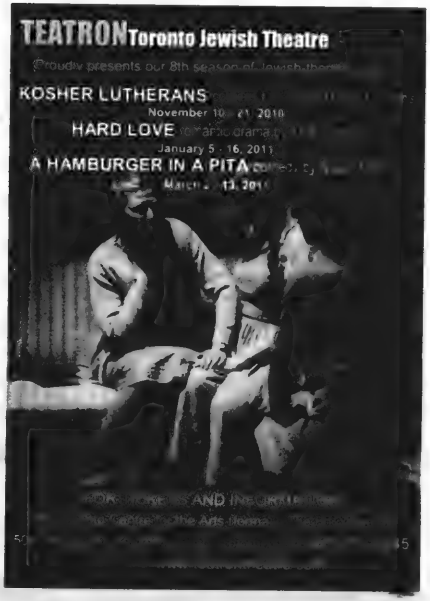

Conductor awarded peace prize

JTA

BERLIN — Conductor Daniel Barenboim was awarded a German peace prize for his efforts to bring Israelis and Palestinians together.

The Westphalia Peace Prize, worth about $70,000 (US), was presented by German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle in ceremonies on Oct. 30 in Muenster City Hall.

Barenboim, 67, a pianist and music director at Berlin's State Opera, was honoured particularly for his creation, with the late Palestinian scholar Edward Said, of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, which brings together Jewish, Christian and Muslim musicians. The award will be shared with the orchestra, according to news reports.

Several musicians from the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra performed at the ceremony.

Westerwelle praised the project as "an orchestra without borders" that brings younger generations together. He said that peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians must continue, with European support, but that Israel's security is top priority and "not up for debate."

Barenboim called the award "a great and deep honour" and added that a two-state solution to the conflict was urgently needed.

"It is not five before midnight, but 30 seconds before midnight," said Barenboim, who has passports for Israel, Argentina, Spain and a pass for the Palestinian territories, which he was given after a concert in Ramallah in January 2008.

The prize is given every two years by the Economic Association of Westphalia and Lippe to individuals or institutions considered role models in building peace. Past recipients include former UN secretary general Kofi Annan and conductor Kurt Masur.

Play examines big issues with big laughs

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

A Jewish couple who cannot have children is set to adopt a baby from a pregnant young woman living in a small town in Iowa. Realizing the woman doesn't know they're Jewish, the couple decides to pose as Lutherans until the adoption goes through.

Or so the story goes in *Kosher Lutherans*, onstage at the Toronto Centre for the Arts until Nov. 21.

The play is being staged by Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre, a company that puts on Jewish-themed plays. Teatron has presented two plays every season since 2002, and this season, it's staging three due to popular demand.

Ari Weisberg, Teatron Theatre's founder and artistic director, says *Kosher Lutherans* is a play that a lot of Jewish people will be able to relate to.

"[The play takes] a light, comic look at a dilemma that some Jewish couples could easily be facing... [the] situation of looking to have a child when you can't, and the relationship with friends and tradition."

Weisberg received the play two years ago from U.S. playwright William Missouri Downs. It has been produced a few times in the United States, but this is the first time it's being presented in Canada.

"I liked it," Weisberg says of his reaction when he first read the script. "It hit right in the niche that I was looking for."

Kosher Lutherans examines issues of morality, particularly when Franklyn (the husband of the couple trying to adopt), played by Ron Boyd, attempts to convince his best friends, Ben and Martha, played by played by Richard Hoffman and Jada Rifkin, to pretend they are Lutherans as well.

"Is it moral?" Franklyn gets asked when he's trying to get his friends to go along with the ruse.

"There are many levels of morality here... you could consult the highest rabbinical authorities on the nuances of our actions but... No! It's not moral! It's totally immoral!" is his response.

Kosher Lutherans is the first play Teatron is staging this season. From Jan. 5 to 16, 2011, *Hard Love*, by the Israeli playwright Motti Lerner, will be presented. Wrapping up the season, from March 2 to 13, 2011, is *A Hamburger in a Pita*, a comedy by Nina Shenhav, who is also a *CJN* columnist.

Kosher Lutherans runs Tuesdays to Thursdays and Saturdays and Sundays at 8 p.m., with Sunday matinées at 2 p.m. For tickets, call 416-616-5350 or visit www.teatrontheatre.com.

From left are Ron Boyd, Melissa Battey-Pratt, Veronika Brylinska, Jada Rifkin and Richard Hoffman, the cast of Teatron Theatre's *Kosher Lutherans*.

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Singer is an award-winning sensation

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — Opera singer Lara Secord-Haid, 21, celebrated her capture of five gold medals in the Manitoba Music Festival with a special concert recently at the Mennonite University.

A graduate of Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate, the Winnipeg native is currently in her third year at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston studying with Lorraine Nubar.

"It always feels good to get some positive recognition for the work you're doing, and I always find the assessment of my weaknesses to be helpful, too," Secord-Haid says.

"In any festival, I hear so many other singers who have their own set of strengths, so it all comes down to the preferences and esthetic values of one judge to assign marks."

Secord-Haid, a lyric coloratura soprano, won in the categories of Italian art song, French melody, Aria, German *Lieder* and Spanish *cancion*, as well as one silver medal in Oratorio.

She won the Alma Wynn Memorial Trophy at the 2006 Winnipeg Music Festival.

Her father, Marshall Haid, says that when she first began singing, "it was hard to believe that such a powerful voice could come out of her small frame."

Secord-Haid says she was drawn to opera because the drama always captivated her.

"Like an actor, an opera singer can express with the body and with the voice, but composers write subtext, implications, feelings or psychology that can't be shown with the body into the orchestral part, and to me, that's where the magic comes. Opera has the means to express some of the most intense aspects of the human experience."

Lara Secord-Haid

In 2010, Secord-Haid performed the role of Mme. Silberklang in *The Impresario*, put on by the Little Opera Company, as well as the role of Daria Garbinati in *Viva la Mamma*, put on by the New England Conservatory. This season, Secord-Haid was added to the artists' roster of the Boston Metro Opera.

For her concert here, she performed selections from Donizetti's opera *Don Pasquale* and was joined on piano by Darryl Friesen, who made his professional orchestral debut with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

Secord-Haid, who undergoes rigorous training to prepare for her roles, wowed the audience to a standing ovation with her powerful voice.

"My training consists of a one-hour voice lesson and two musical coachings every week, as well as diction and repertoire lessons in German, French and Italian. I practise generally between one and two hours a day, depending on vocal health and fatigue," she says.

As for what her future holds, Secord- Haid says, "My next step will, I think, be grad school and competitions. I will only take the professional auditions I am ready for. It's really easy to be overly ambitious."

Secord-Haid says she chose to hold her recent concert in Winnipeg at the Mennonite University "because they have a lovely auditorium with nice acoustics and a beautiful piano. What more could I want?"

Foran writes definitive biography of Mordecai Richler

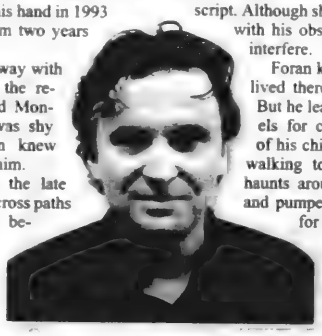
'It was all about trust'

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Charles Foran, a Toronto novelist and non-fiction writer, met Mordecai Richler only twice, shaking his hand in 1993 and chatting with him two years later.

Beyond coming away with the impression that the renowned and outsized Montreal-born novelist was shy and reserved, Foran knew precious little about him.

Although he and the late Richler would never cross paths again, Foran would become his biographer. It is probably fair to say that no one outside Richler's immediate family and circle of close friends and relatives knows more about him today than Foran.



Charles Foran
[James Lahey photo]

Foran, 50, spent four years researching and writing *Mordecai: The Life and Times* (Alfred A. Knopf Canada), the definitive biography. It was officially published on Oct. 23.

Given Richler's integral role in Canadian literature, *Mordecai* is not the first biography on Richler. But it is the first to draw on family letters and the Richler archive at the University of Calgary.

Of Irish and French ancestry, Foran was drawn to Richler because no other Canadian novelist meant as much to him. From the moment he read *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* in high school to the time he finished *Barney's Version*, Richler's last novel, Foran enjoyed his satiric humour and pathos and admired his craft.

Foran also appreciated Richler's public persona, a bracing mix of reserve, irascibility and candour, and shared with him an interest in Jewish Montreal, fishing, snooker and Scotch.

"Everything about Richler was fascinating," Foran said in an interview at his publisher's office.

He suspects he could not have delved as deeply into his subject without the help of Richler's widow, Florence, the executor of his estate and the person who smoothed his rough edges and made him a better man.

Florence read a couple of Foran's books and liked them. His body of work runs the gamut from *Sketches in Winter* and *Butterfly Lovers* to *House on Fire* and *Carolan's Farewell*.

After Foran talked to her and visited Richler's grave on Mount Royal, she granted him access to all materials, including medical records.

Satisfied that Foran was the man for the job, she gave him her blessings and urged her five children – Daniel, Noah, Emma, Martha and Jacob – and Richler's best friends – filmmaker Ted Kotcheff, journalist Bill Weintraub and editor Robert Gottlieb, among others – to cooperate.

"It was all about trust," Foran said.

Florence, who divides her time today between Montreal and Toronto, wanted a fair, balanced and unauthorized book.

To ensure accuracy and richness of detail, Foran allowed her to read the manuscript. Although she did not always agree with his observations, she did not interfere.

Foran knew Montreal, having lived there from 1989 to 1995. But he leaned on Richler's novels for constructing a portrait of his childhood there, went on walking tours of Richler's old haunts around St. Urbain Street and pumped more of his friends for vital information.

As well, Foran read the fragments of Richler's final, unfinished novel, which he describes as "ribald" and "really wild." Reflecting on its 50-odd pages, he said, "For an old guy, he had a lot of juice left."

When he finally finished *Mordecai*, he had written 315,000 words, the equivalent of about 1,000 book pages. The manuscript being too long, Foran deleted 70,000 words. Cut out were his observations on Richler's books and on about 100 people Richler had known.

Far from being a self-hating Jew, an accusation levelled against Richler after the publication of his second and third novels, *Son of a Smaller Hero* and *A Choice of Enemies*, he was actually "a natural-born provocateur," Foran said.

As he grew older, he added, Richler took a greater interest in his maternal grandfather, Yudel Rosenberg, an Orthodox rabbi from Poland, and steeped himself in Jewish tradition, albeit on his own terms.

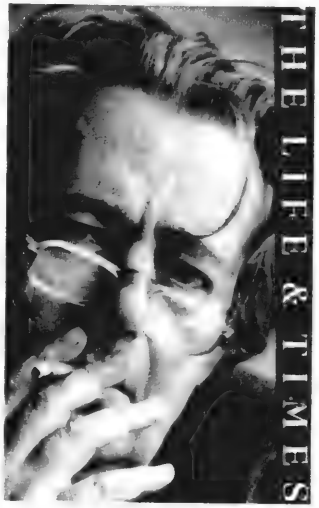
Richler irretrievably distanced himself from his mother, Lily, whose divorce and sexual indiscretion caused him immense distress. Yet Foran is sympathetic to Lily. "She was born into a community that didn't give her a chance to breathe and develop, and she was betrayed by being married off to an unsuitable man in an arranged marriage."

In his view, Richler's finest novels were his last three: *Joshua Then and Now*, *Solomon Gursky Was Here* and *Barney's Version*.

"He got better as he went along. He took risks."

His earliest novels, he noted, were "apprentice works." Before *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, his breakthrough novel, Richler did not make use of his comedic talents.

To Foran, Richler is one of the handful of "essential" Canadian novelists, in a league with, say, Margaret Atwood and Alice Munro.



"He informed his novels with vitality, passion and humour. He is a singular figure."

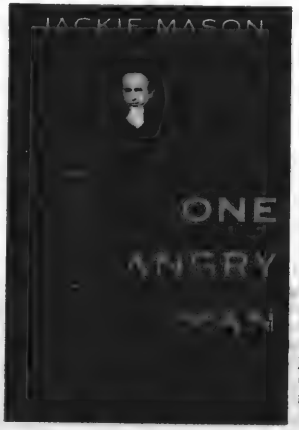
Charles Foran will appear at Beth Tzedec Congregation on Nov. 24 at 7:30 p.m. A book review of his biography will soon appear.

Jackie Mason promotes new comedy film

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Mister? You wanna see a new movie?

Legendary Jewish comedian Jackie Mason will be in Toronto on Friday to perform at and then host the Canadian première of his new film, *One Angry Man*.



Based on the 1957 classic courtroom drama *Twelve Angry Men*, Mason said it had always been a dream of his to re-enact the film, only as a comedic satire. And revolving around one angry guy... him, starring as himself.

The premise has Mason being called in for jury duty just weeks before he is to begin a new Broadway show run. This upsets him and biases his participation on the jury.

"It aims a lot more for laughs, and I think it's a hilarious comedy," Mason told *The CJN* in an interview from his New York office last week.

He added that the reaction in focus-group screenings of the film was positive, and he knows because he snuck in to the screenings and hid to gauge reactions.

"I like to see how the audience reacts to the picture. Every time a person confronts you directly, they always tell you how brilliant it was, even if it stinks. It's the same way you can't ask a person, 'How good do I look?' Not too many people answer, 'You don't look so hot,'" Mason quipped.

The movie's plot revolves around the fate of a man who's up on murder charges and the jurists' deliberations about his guilt or innocence.

And there's more than a smattering of one-liners and comedic timing as jury member battles jury member.

"The arguments go back and forth and become hilarious as they fight it out among themselves," he said.

Mason said while he didn't personally script the film, he worked hard on the editing. He added that while there's no specific Jewish angle in the film, "I add a Jewish angle just by showing up."

One Angry Man opens at the Cineplex Odeon Sheppard (4861 Yonge St., 416-590-9271) on Nov. 12.

Mason will also be in town to perform at a Canadian Friends of Hebrew University tribute gala on Monday, Nov. 15, at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, in honour of former Senator Jerry Grafstein's philanthropic contributions to the university's Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada.

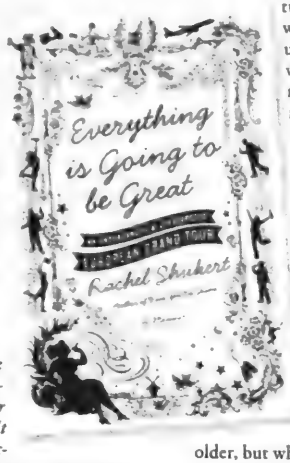
For more information about the gala, call 416-485-8000, ext. 123.

Traveller's experiences coloured by ghosts of the Holocaust

By GREGORY LEVEY
Special to The CJN

On Oct. 14, Rachel Shukert, author of the recently released memoir Everything Is Going to Be Great: An Underfunded and Overexposed European Grand Tour *(Harper Perennial), visited Toronto to do a public reading of her book.*

Afterward, she sat down with Gregory Levey, author of How to Make Peace in the Middle East in Six Months or Less Without Leaving Your Apartment *(Free Press), to discuss writing, Jewish identity, and being a young Jewish author today.*



Gregory Levey: *Rachel, your book is about your travels and experiences living in Europe shortly after you graduated from university. It seemed to me, particularly in the sections where you write about your time in Vienna, that a lot of your experience was coloured by the lingering ghosts of the Holocaust. Would you say that's true, and why?*

Rachel Shukert: Well, like a lot of Jewish kids of my generation, I grew up at a remove from the immediacy of the Holocaust, but I was raised on a lot of literature about it – much of it written for children. I grew up in Omaha, Nebraska, where the Jewish community was very small and relatively insular compared to those in larger cities, like Toronto or Montreal. So I really internalized this sense of difference, at how that could make you a target for persecution, and that grew into this sort of preoccupation with the Holocaust that really haunted me for much of my childhood. I mean, to the point where my mother was a little worried about me. It went away as I got older, but when I went to Europe and was confronted by this kind of collective memory, and in some cases physical evidence, it came back a bit.

GL: *What kind of physical evidence?*

Gregory Levey

Rachel Shukert

RS: There's a story in the book that takes place in Vienna, where I go to a flea market with this Austrian man I've been dating, and I actually find an old yellow Star of David, like the Nazis made the Jews wear, in this box with a bunch of old papers and things. That's not something that's easy to forget.

GL: *But I noticed that you were actually criticized in some quarters for pointing this stuff out. How is that possible?*

RS: It's weird, right? You'd think the Holocaust wouldn't exactly be a lightning rod for debate, but in some of the angrier parts of the Internet, there's been some weird stuff. When this part of the book was excerpted, some Internet commenters really went crazy, accusing me of being some kind of Zionist secret agent trying to drum up sympathy for an impending attack on Iran. And I'm like, seriously? I'm just trying to write about my dating life!

GL: *Sounds familiar.*

RS: Right. You must get a lot of the same thing, writing about the Middle East and your adventures in its more extreme wings.

GL: *Absolutely. In my new book, for example, I mention one e-mail I got where the writer tells me that neither I nor my ancestors could possibly be Jewish, because I'd written something satirical about Israel.*

RS: Yeah, it's not something people tend to have much of a sense of humour about, which is why your book is so great. It wouldn't be so terrible if both sides of the Middle East conflict would take themselves a little less seriously.

GL: *There's something else I've been wanting to ask you, which you touch on a bit in your book. There's so much going around now about how Europe is becoming more anti-Semitic. Do you there's truth in that, or is it overstated?*

RS: It's a bit of both, I think. There's certainly a groundswell of anti-Zionist feeling in Europe, some of it based on legitimate critique of Israeli policy, and some of it completely irrational. There's some truth in the idea that for some, anti-Zionism has become a way to be anti-Semitic in public and maintain a veneer of respectability. But on a day-to-day, interpersonal level, I think it's important not to generalize. Being Jewish in Europe is a bit more exceptional than it is in North America. You're a bit more conspicuous. Eventually, someone might say something a little awkward, and you can choose to get really offended, or you can recognize that it's probably not coming from a malicious place. And I think that it's a more powerful tool in eradicating prejudice to give people the benefit of the doubt. Not everyone who asks you a question about being Jewish is a closet Nazi, and when you take offence where it's not meant, it lets the real bigots off the hook. It normalizes them.

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Spice of Life

Kosher laws have not changed

Continued from page 42

Kosher laws haven't changed, Rabbi Hecht says. What they ate was 100 per cent kosher. But "our grandparents were living in a different world. There were not as many kosher products on the market, and there were a lot of issues. Rabbis very much had to apply more lenient viewpoints.

"Seventy-five years ago, when there was one product on the market, the kashrut agency [might have said,] 'we'll apply this leniency, because without [this product], people who want to keep kosher will have a really difficult time.'"

The COR's communal kashrut standard has had the benefit of unifying our community, Rabbi Hecht says, in a way that's rarely seen in areas with multiple kashrut organizations.

On the other hand, multiple organizations usually serve different populations. "Certain hashgachahs [kosher agencies] apply leniencies because, through their leniencies, they're able to get certain products to be kosher and therefore open up some standard of kashrut for people who may not otherwise keep kosher."

Rabbi Hecht disagrees with the language used in some circles of "not trusting" a particular organization or kosher symbol. "Those symbols are applying certain standards of Jewish law; they are reaching out to a certain community. It's valid to say, 'I personally don't want to rely upon those leniencies,' but not to use deprecating or suspicious language. The key is simply understanding that organization's mandate and the population it serves.

"If people were more aware of how Jewish law worked, then some people might say, 'We don't agree with COR's conclusions,' but then they'd be able to… create an intelligent debate, based upon real issues."

For instance, some observant Jews are "very angry" over standards requiring a lightbox and magnifying glass to search for insects (which are only forbidden if they're visible to the naked eye), saying these new devices "take away from the integrity of the halachic system."

Proponents of the tools, however, say the insects are definitely visible to the naked eye: the lightbox and magnifier simply clarify whether the specks are dirt or insects.

"It's important for people to know the real way the decisions are made. If people don't understand how Jewish law really works, it's very hard to have intelligent debate."

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Mifalot brings together youth through soccer

By CORY SCOTT STERLING
Special to The CJN

TEL AVIV — In the steaming temperatures of a September afternoon in Tel Aviv, I stepped off the bus and quickly found my destination: Hapoel Tel Aviv FC's headquarters.

The green grass of the soccer fields was a foreign sight to my eyes, even after having lived in Israel for a month. It was the day before Rosh Hashanah 5770 (2009) and I was about to meet my new co-workers at Mifalot, an organization that supports development through sport, for a New Years l'chaim.

As I lifted my cup of wine and participated in a prayer for a sweet year, I looked around the smiling faces in the room and immediately knew that I had found the right place.

Mifalot was founded in 1997 by the then-owners of the Hapoel Tel Aviv soccer team with a mission to provide all young people with opportunities to learn, grow, excel and be active members of their community and the world. Mifalot's core business is education and youth development through soccer.

I had originally sought out an organization such as Mifalot after growing frustrated and exhausted with the bombardment of media negativity concerning Israel. I decided it was time to dedicate a chapter of my life to living in Israel and focusing on making a positive impact instead of brooding on the negatives. Once I learned about the variety of programs Mifalot organizes, I decided to get involved.

The work I was able to do with Mifalot varied greatly throughout the nine months I spent living in Israel. At first, I was placed with two different Mifalot "teams" and helped coach their weekly classes. One class put me with a group of Sudanese children who had recently fled their perilous homeland and had been accepted by Israel.

In the other class, I was helping a group of children who all had different challenges ranging from autism to Asperger's syndrome to ADHD. All the children were very sweet and appreciative of the free programs that Mifalot facilitated and organized for them.

Cory Scott Sterling poses with some of the Sudanese kids he met while working in Israel.

It didn't take too long before I was able to connect my passion for travelling with my contribution at Mifalot. My job description quickly changed from static to mobile, as I was assigned to visit Mifalot classes across the country and blog about my experiences. Soon, I was boarding Egged buses heading in every direction, from the Negev to the north, learning about all of Mifalot's different programs, meeting with their staff and learning more about the work the organization does.

In every single instance, I was moved. Whether it was the warmth and friendliness showed by the coaches, the joy on the children's faces or the endless falafel lunches, each trip forged a new special memory. Slowly, I was starting to realize just how substantial an impact Mifalot's work was making on thousands of children across every inch of Israel.

At the moment, there are more than 20,000 children active in Mifalot programs throughout the Middle East. Their programs focus on the promotion of coexistence and friendship between Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians, the inclusion of new immigrants into Israeli society, teaching life skills to youth with special needs and providing assistance and social integration to at-risk or disadvantaged youth.

Undoubtedly, I was most intrigued and impressed by Mifalot's programs that brought Israeli and Palestinian children together through soccer.

One day, I was brought along to the small village of Tuena in the Palestinian territories, where a think-tank involving Israeli and Palestinian teachers and a special EU envoy was located. The afternoon was a parade of languages – a comment would be made in Hebrew, then translated into Arabic and explained in English. At the end of afternoon, we cheerfully broke bread and exchanged contact information to keep in touch. We became friends that day, which fills me with an optimism to believe that a road for peace will always exist, as much as we choose to embrace it.

It seems that Mifalot's incredible programs have started to gain the international exposure and attention they so rightly deserve. In this past year, they have won two prestigious awards – the European Club Associations Best Social and Community Project 2010 and Beyond Sport 2010 Team of the Year given to Hapoel Tel Aviv. These accolades demonstrate that Mifalot is a global and industry leader in the sport for development field, which is a great boost to Israel's fragile public image.

I will always be grateful and deeply indebted to Mifalot for letting me contribute to their amazing work. The best part of the entire experience was working with such incredibly wise and welcoming people whom I was able to learn so much from and I still think of each and every day.

You can learn more about Mifalot from its website (www.mifalot.co.il/mifalot/language/english).

Cory Scott Sterling graduated from the University of San Francisco with a degree in sports management.

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Media hypes health-care crisis

By MICHAEL GORDON

The Senior Side of Life

Newspapers often print headlines such as this one in the January 2010 *Winnipeg Free Press*: "Baby-boomer dementia a rising national crisis, study says," or this one from a report in a recent Toronto Dominion Bank economic-position paper: "Make rich seniors pay for drugs, health-care report says."

You get a sense from such articles that Ontario and the rest of western civilization awaiting a veritable "tsunami" of seniors coming over the hills in their wheelchairs and walkers, ready to take over the finances of society and selfishly bankrupt them by illness and disability.

To counteract this vision, Moses Znaimer, the president of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, wrote a refreshing article for the May 30 edition of the *Toronto Star* titled "Demographic tsunami? Let's dance!"

Znaimer makes cogent arguments that seem to have been ignored by those who predict doom and gloom for western countries because of their aging populations. It is his positive view that I believe should be the focus of those who are entering their zoomer/boomer period and those who are already in their senior years. One of the many important points made in the article is that current zoomers and those in the younger cohort have a distinctly different view of lifestyle and health promotion than those who are currently more senior.

It is bizarre that with all the effort that's going into encouraging people to eat well and exercise, with the observed effect of their living longer and being healthier and less disabled and dependent in their senior years, seniors are being vilified for being the cause of an upcoming national financial health-care crisis. Maybe we should stop exhorting everyone to exercise and eat smartly, and encourage them to take up smoking again, with the hope that if they do everything possible to counteract good and active living, they might die before they are eligible for drug-benefit programs. What a money saver!

What is easily forgotten is that one of the great miracles of modern medicine, which builds on healthier lifestyles, is the use of medications for conditions that previously led to severe disability, medical dependency and premature death. We now can treat such conditions as high blood pressure, heart disease and arthritis, to name a few, turning them into chronic diseases that can be managed so that individuals with these conditions can continue to function well and lead productive lives.

It is easy to forget the fantastic contributions that seniors make to our society, not only in terms of the richness they bring to families, but also their legacies, stories and observations and commentaries. They bring much to contemporary life, and their perspective should go into important societal decisions.

Can anyone imagine a world devoid of loving grandparents in the lives of grandchildren, or seniors acting in the volunteer roles that they increasingly undertake late into their mature years? It is also forgotten that seniors spend money, contributing financially to society, as does everyone else.

Meanwhile, until all the pundits figure out what the solutions are to the financial implications of the international mortgage crises, failed banks and other financial disasters, let the world's seniors prosper and continue to contribute to their families and societies, and let us stop blaming them. Instead, let's honour them for what they give us.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents (Dundurn Press). His latest book, Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare, follows his previous book, Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey. All can be researched at his website: http://www.drmichaelgordon.com.

MALAYSIAN LATKES

1/2 c chopped peanuts
1/4 c chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1/4 c finely chopped red pepper
2 tsp grated fresh ginger
1 1/2-2 tsp salt
1 tsp curry powder
3 eggs
2 lg baking potatoes, peeled, cut into wedges
1 medium onion coarsely chopped
1/4 c flour
Vegetable oil for frying

Combine nuts, parsley, red pepper, ginger, salt, curry powder & eggs in large bowl. Shred potatoes & onions in food processor with shredding disk. Drain well in paper towels squeezing to release as much liquid as possible. Add potatoes & onions to egg mixture; combine well. Stir in flour. In large skillet, heat enough oil to cover bottom of pan on medium-high heat. When oil is quite hot, add scant 1/4 c batter per latke without crowding; flatten with fork. Cook on 1 side until crisp & brown; turn over and repeat. Remove patties to paper towels to drain.

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How to eat healthy when travelling

About Nutrition
By LISA WEINBERG

Most people find it a struggle to maintain their diet and good eating habits when they are away. Many report gaining weight – a common but avoidable problem.

Whether you are on a 24-hour business trip, a weekend away, a family vacation or spending the winter in a warm destination, you can avoid gaining weight.

The first thing to keep in mind is that when eating out frequently, or for all meals, you must watch three things: your choices, the portions and the hidden fat and calories. For example, you order hot oatmeal for breakfast, a healthy choice, rather than a greasy three-egg cheese omelette with home fries and buttered toast. But how much oatmeal have they served you? Remove some and eat a sensible portion.

When ordering, ask for food to be prepared the way you want it – that omelette could be ordered with veggies instead of cheese, egg whites only, spray in the pan instead of butter and dry whole wheat toast. Or order poached eggs – no added fat possible there – with dry toast and jam.

When eating so many meals out, you can't afford to order the food you love every time. You often have to order the healthy choice, not the tempting one.

Watch calories from beverages: avoid pop and juice, and control alcohol consumption. Avoid the bread basket and limit dessert frequency and portion – share!

If you are staying someplace where you have access to a kitchen, plan to prepare some meals yourself. Make fruit and yogurt or cottage cheese or cereal for breakfast, salads or lean sandwiches at lunch and fruit for snacks.

In airports, look for yogurt parfaits, turkey sandwiches, fruit, salads with grilled chicken, skim milk lattes or nuts, and lots of water for hydration.

Most importantly, plan ahead! And be active – take walks, swim, play tennis, golf without a cart, bike, run. The extra calories you burn can help offset the extra calories you may be eating. Bon voyage!

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. You can also follow Weinberg at http://www.lisaweinberg.ca. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

Thank you to all good soldiers

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

Emma Gold rushed past the shoppers in the long lineups in the grocery store and asked people in one of the lines if they would let her go to the front. Shabbat was early, and she was hoping her daughter would call before sunset.

It had been three weeks since she had communicated with her daughter, Leah, as Leah's field commander had banned e-mails, knowing they could be intercepted by the enemy.

The world was at war once again. There was word on the street that enemy troops were planning to attack Toronto, Halifax and Vancouver to secure our water supplies.

Jewish boys and girls had been inducted into the Canadian Armed Forces, and after four years of fighting, thousands had perished. There was an awful feeling in the world, one of gloomy darkness, as if that finger from hell was on all of us.

Emma longed to hold her daughter in her arms, to kiss her and tell her over and over she loved her. She and her husband would get out of bed, often at 3 a.m., to watch their daughter's bat mitzvah video. It seemed like yesterday that she had read the Torah on Beth Tzedec Congregation's bimah.

At night, Emma cried, thinking about her only daughter's graduation from Community High only three years before, and the grace she displayed while accepting her awards.

She was their little girl, and it was unfathomable that she was a medic on the front lines. Emma looked at pictures of her little girl at Kibbutz Sh'alavim and shuddered, knowing Israel was in tatters and fending off more enemy battalions than it could handle.

"Thank God Israel exists," she thought. "So many Jews saved."

Shabbat was approaching. The table was set, and all the children were in white. Since Leah had gone to join the war effort, the family had started keeping Shabbat. It gave them peace and a sense that God was in the world, as many felt He was when the Jews were in concentration camps and the world was under attack.

She approached the table, her head was covered, and she stared at the candles. Slowly, she struck a match and extended her arm to light the candle. She waved her hands to invite Shabbat in and covered her eyes. Silently, she said to God, "God please end World War III. I cannot bear the suffering of the innocent and pledge to become a better Jew should you answer my prayers. Thank you for our blessings and bring Leah home safely, and all our children."

The phone rang. Emma hesitated. Having children at war creates a terror every time the phone rings. She ran for the phone and picked it up.

It was Leah. "*Eema*," she yelled above loud noises in the background.

"I'm safe. I love you. Good Shabbos," she sobbed.

"Good Shabbos," Emma cried. "I love you. Please come home. Please come home, my Leah."

On Remembrance Day, remember those who fought and those who died for us, Jew and non-Jew. Commit to fighting injustices so that we never need to face hell, as our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents did.

Thank you to all Canadian soldiers and all good soldiers everywhere, then and now. It is because of you I am able to write this column. It is because of you we can live freely as Jews and citizens of this great country, Canada. It is because of you the State of Israel was born. God bless.

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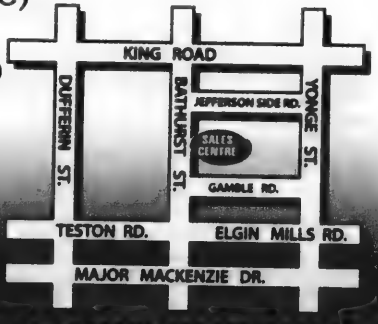

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The Canadian Jewish news

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This Week

National

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Jews must defeat the bigots, journalist says. *Page 12*

Party Planner

See inside for our special supplement. *Section B*

Books & Authors

New collection of Vasily Grossman stories and essays. *Page 50*

On cjnews.com

Vichy regime was anti-Semitic, Nazi fighter says.

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Netanyahu mulling new construction freeze

U.S. requests 90-day moratorium

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JERUSALEM — U.S. President Barack Obama on Sunday praised Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for trying to win approval from his coalition government for a U.S. proposal to extend a freeze on West Bank settlement construction.

"I commend Prime Minister Netanyahu for taking, I think, a very constructive step," Obama told reporters upon arriving in the United States after a trip to Asia. "It's not easy for him to do, but I think it's a signal that he is serious."

The Palestinians halted peace talks after the 10-month Israeli moratorium on settlement construction expired in September.

The Obama administration has offered Israel diplomatic and defence incentives to renew the freeze for 90 days.

An Israeli political source said earlier Sunday that Netanyahu would probably win narrow approval from his coalition for the U.S. package of incentives.

Netanyahu, who visited the United States two weeks ago, convened his cabinet to outline the proposal, which he said was still being drafted with the Americans. Once ready, it would be put to a vote in Israel's 15-minister security cabinet, he said.

"In any event, I insist that any proposal meet the State of Israel's security needs,

Continued on page 41

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Barack Obama at their White House meeting in September. *[IGPO photo]*

Ontario partners with Israel for brain research

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, left, and Israeli President Shimon Peres met in May during the premier's economic mission to Israel. *[Sasson Tiram photo]*

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Israel and Ontario are teaming up to combat neurological disorders.

On Monday, the province announced it will provide $15 million over three years in startup funding to establish the Ontario Brain Institute at Sunnybrook Hospital's Health Sciences Centre in Toronto.

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty said the new institute is a direct outgrowth of talks he had with Israeli President Shimon Peres while on an economic mission to Israel last May.

At that time, Peres proposed the creation of a joint Israeli-Ontario "virtual institute" on brain research.

According to the province, this new institute will help its life-sciences companies "win a bigger share of the global market for products that support patients with brain diseases and disorders" such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's disease, dementia, autism and schizophrenia.

Israeli medical sector organizations will be among the first to sign partnership agreements with the Ontario Brain Institute.

A spokesperson for the premier told *The CJN* that although there were "no official" Israeli partners signed to collaborate with the institute yet, the province and institute are currently in preliminary discussions with potential Israeli partners who will be "determined in the months to come."

The initiative aims to pair the top brain researchers with "people who know how to commercialize good ideas.

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Arrests made for alleged fraud at Claims Conference – please see page 42

The News in Brief

Canada

New Holocaust Poll

MONTREAL — French-Canadians are significantly less likely than English-Canadians to say Jews share their values – 34 versus 73 per cent, respectively – a new poll says. The survey, conducted in Canada, the United States, Germany and Spain for Postmedia News by the Association for Canadian Studies in Montreal, was released last week to coincide with a conference in Ottawa on anti-Semitism. Some 51 per cent of anglophones think anti-Semitism is a problem in Canada, compared to 45 per cent of francophones. Germans were most likely – 56 per cent – to say anti-Semitism is a problem in their society, and to say Jews share their values, while about 85 per cent claimed good knowledge of the Shoah. In Spain, only 49 per cent cited anti-Semitism as a problem and 39 per cent pointed to shared values, while Spaniards were least likely to claim good knowledge of the Holocaust.

Prostitution Laws

MONTREAL — Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom is one of just two Canadian Reform synagogues – and possibly the only two Jewish congregations in North America – fighting to abolish prostitution in Israel by calling for a law there that would jail johns. The synagogue is collaborating with Israel's ATZUM Task Force on Human Trafficking on a North American letter-writing campaign urging Israel to pass such a law that will culminate with a "Stop the Traffic" mission to Israel on Jan. 12 and 13.

Alzheimer's Disease

MONTREAL — Researchers at the Jewish General Hospital's Lady Davis Institute for Medical Research (LDI) believe they may have discovered one of the root causes of Alzheimer's disease, and it's not where anyone else was looking. A research team headed by Dr. Andréa LeBlanc, of the LDI's Bloomfield Centre for Research in Aging, is pointing to Caspase-6, an enzyme that belongs to a family of similar enzymes that play a role in cell death and inflammation, but has never before been linked to Alzheimer's.

World

Rabbi Convicted

NEW YORK — A Brooklyn rabbi faces up to 20 years in jail after he was convicted Nov. 10. Rabbi Milton Balkany, 64, director of a Jewish day school, was convicted of trying to extort a $4-million donation to his school, Bais Yaakov of Midwood, from billionaire Steven Cohen's SAC Capital using damaging information he obtained from an inmate at a prison where he served as a spiritual adviser. He's to be sentenced Feb. 18.

Film Trailer Released

ISTANBUL — A trailer for an anti-Israel Turkish movie, filmed in part aboard the ship the Mavi Marmara, has been released. *Valley of the Wolves-Palestine*, to be released in Turkish theatres Jan. 28, dramatizes the May 31 boarding of a Turkish ship in a flotilla trying to break Israel's blockade of Gaza. Nine Turkish nationals were killed. The movie, the third in a series, follows a fictitious hit squad that travels to Israel to kill military officers who directed the operation. It's a spinoff of a TV show that often demonizes Israel and Jews, and has contributed to a rift in diplomatic relations. A previous film in the series showed Israeli doctors harvesting Iraqis' organs for transplant in Israel.

Prize Targets Boycotts

LOS ANGELES — In response to the anti-Israel boycott movement, the U.S.-based Israel-education organization StandWithUs recently announced a "Divest from Terror" writing and cartoon contest, intended to spotlight those who delegitimize Israel. Winning entries will be incorporated into the StandWithUs campaign. Deadline for submissions is Dec. 31. First prize is a trip to Israel. Cash and other prizes will also be awarded. Details are at www.standwithus.com/contests.

Leaders Meet

WASHINGTON — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton ended a six-hour meeting with little more than an agreement on the usefulness of direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Art Returned

NETHERLANDS — The government of the Netherlands will restitute a valuable painting to the estate of prewar Jewish art dealer Max Stern. An Old Master painting will be turned over to the Stern estate and three university beneficiaries – Concordia and McGill universities, both in Montreal, and Hebrew University in Jerusalem – at the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage in The Hague. The Nazis ordered Stern, who ran the Julius Stern Gallery in Dusseldorf, Germany, to liquidate his gallery's artwork of more than 400 pieces after Jews were banned from selling art. In 1943, after recovering a fraction of the works, Stern moved to Canada and purchased the Dominion Gallery of Fine Arts.

Marrow Registry Founder Wins Hero Title

NEW ORLEANS — Jay Feinberg, founder of the Gift of Life Bone Marrow Foundation, has been tapped as the second Jewish Community Hero.

Jay Feinberg

The announcement came Nov. 9 in New Orleans at the General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America, which sponsored the online contest. Judges picked Feinberg, 42, of Boca Raton, Fla., from among five finalists for a $25,000 Jewish Federations grant. More than 300,000 people cast online votes to determine 20 semifinalists. The panel whittled the list to five before choosing Feinberg. The other four will get $1,000 grants.

Feinberg founded Gift of Life in 1991 to search for a bone marrow donor after being diagnosed with leukemia. He found his match in 1995. He has developed the organization into a major public registry for bone marrow, blood stem cell and umbilical cord blood.

This was the second Jewish Community Hero campaign sponsored by Jewish Federations.

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Survivors take 'revenge' by having grandkids

Two Canadian Jewish War Veterans and the bugler during the Remembrance Day ceremony on Nov 9. *[Jeremy Cartridge photo]*

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The 30th Holocaust Education Week wound up last week at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation with a candlelighting tribute to the six million dead, a stirring call to remember the ultimate triumph of survivors, and a military procession to honour Canadian soldiers who fought the Nazis and who fight today in Afghanistan.

Survivors lit six candles during the closing event, recalling the six million Jewish victims of the Nazis. At the same time, tribute was paid to those who survived the Holocaust and gained "revenge" not through violence, but by making new lives, marrying, and having children and grandchildren, said Ephraim Kaye, director of international seminars for educators at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

Delivering the closing event's keynote address, Kaye said the first post-Holocaust wedding took place in the summer of 1945, only months after the defeat of the Nazis. By 1946 displaced persons at Bergen-Belsen celebrated the 1,000th Jewish wedding.

They took "revenge" by "replacing sorrow with happiness, death and destruction with birth and creativity," he said.

"But the real revenge was not in having children, but in having grandchildren."

Speaking on the theme "may your memory be love," Kaye said that "the family cycles that had been destroyed by the Nazis and their collaborators had been recreated."

Quoting from the Talmud – whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world – Kaye noted that German businessman Oskar Schindler didn't just save 1,200 Jews. Today, those survivors and their descendants number some 15,000 people.

"One person can make a difference," he said.

The film *Schindler's List* was followed by creation of the Shoah Foundation, a project spearheaded by director Steven Spielberg to catalogue the testimony of Holocaust survivors. More than 55,000 testimonies have been recorded.

Continued on page 18

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[1] Over the last 16 quarters the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange (TASE) has significantly outperformed the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX). 30% better. As of September 30, 2010
[2] Past results are not a guarantee future performance. Results will vary depending on many factors including market conditions and available opportunities.

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By any measurement, last week's Ottawa Conference on Combating Antisemitism was a remarkable event.

The most riveting headline, indeed, the most riveting story, to emerge from the 2-1/2-day gathering was of the landmark statement by Prime Minister Stephen Harper on the first morning of the conference in which he pledged: "As long as I am prime minister, whether it is at the UN or the Francophonie or anywhere else, Canada will take that stand [exposing and fighting anti-Semitism] whatever the cost."

From the editor's desk...

But there were many worthwhile and compelling stories to emerge from the conference. It is important to note at least the newsworthy gist of some of them.

• The mere holding of the conference was itself an important story. It was the continuum of a project started by British MP John Mann and Canadian MP Irwin Cotler. Mann and Cotler founded the Interparliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism (ICCA), which held its founding meeting last year in London.

Unlike many ennobling endeavours, this one did not founder and lose energy after the exciting flush of the first meeting. There was neither loss of enthusiasm nor abatement of commitment.

In fact the very opposite occurred.

With the support of Jason Kenney and the partnership of the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, the Ottawa meeting was more extensive in breadth than the inaugural conference and attended by a larger number of individuals. More than 150 parliamentarians from 53 different countries, along with some 100 experts and observers, attended the conference.

• The international steering committee of the ICCA is comprised of serious individuals, each committed to the high values and permanence of democracy and proven, through long years of arduous endeavour, to be a true fighter for the protection of human rights worldwide. The group consists of Irwin Cotler; Yuli Edelstein, member of the Knesset and minister of public diplomacy and Diaspora affairs; John Mann, member of the British Parliament; Fiamma Nirenstein, member of the Italian Parliament; Christopher Smith, member of U.S. Congress, and Gert Weisskirchen, former member of the German Bundestag. Cotler is chair of the committee.

• Deliberations at the conference were divided into two very busy, very activity-oriented working groups, namely of parliamentarians and of experts, specialists and observers in the field. In addition, there were plenary sessions in which all attended for wider discussions. Among the subjects discussed were: State-sanctioned Anti-Semitism; Hate on the Internet; Hate on Campus; Policing, Prosecutions and Legal Remedies; and Anti-Semitic Discourse. The panelists and experts who participated in the various working groups travelled from all over the world to share their experiences, expertise and ideas.

Each working group submitted suggestions for policy recommendations to the conference organizers, most of which were distilled into the final document of the conference called the Ottawa Protocol.

• The protocol is a serious document intended to build upon the one issued by the London conference, which was signed by then-British prime minister Gordon Brown.

The Ottawa document will further anchor the standard of international conduct by which propagators of anti-Semitism and other forms of hatred and ethnic calumny can be called to account.

It is divided into two sections: (1) the preamble which sets a historical, social, political and intellectual context for the need to oppose and combat anti-Semitism, and (2) the commitments agreed to by the parliamentarians who attended the conference. (*The protocol appears on the Perspectives page in this issue.*)

• • •

As if announced in a long-reach echo chamber, the words of the Ottawa Protocol demonstrated their immediate relevance three days later.

Liberal Democrat peer, Jenny Tonge, the iconic, anti-Israel activist in the United Kingdom, renewed her attacks on Israel. She told the House of Lords last Friday that "the treatment of Palestinians by Israel is the root cause of terrorism worldwide.

"Why do we let it continue?" she rhetorically asked. "Is it Holocaust guilt? Is it the power of the pro-Israel lobby here and in the U.S.A.?"

Tonge's scurrilous accusation against Israel (and Jews) is precisely the sort of statement that the protocol would capture within the definition of anti-Semitism. The following appears in the Protocol.

"Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective – such as, especially but not exclusively – the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy, or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions."

The ICCA was created to help create tools to fight anti-Semitism on an international basis. Yuli Edelstein expressed why it is important to do so. "In combating anti-Semitism, we not only defend the rights of the Jews, but we also defend our way of life, upholding freedom and liberty for all citizens of democracy."

–MBD

SeeJN

CONFERENCE WRAPS UP

The Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee Fellowship Conference recently wrapped up in Ottawa. The conference brings together university-aged political activists and provides opportunities for them to hear from officials across the political spectrum. This year, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, New Democratic Party leader Jack Layton and Liberal MP Ken Dryden spoke. Above are the conference participants.

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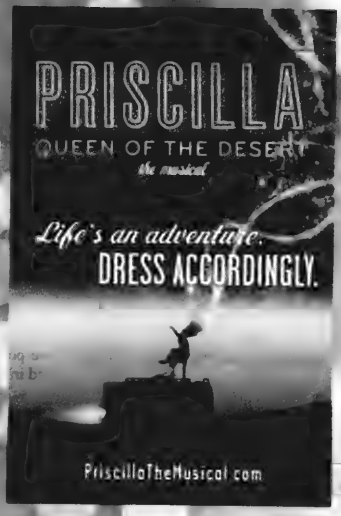

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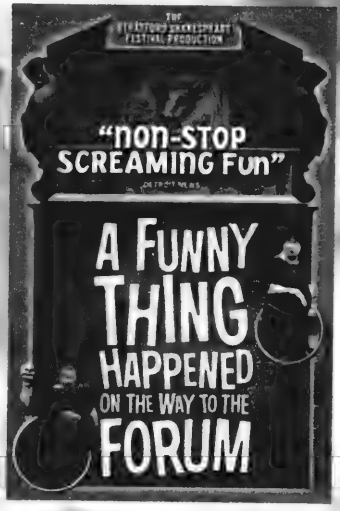

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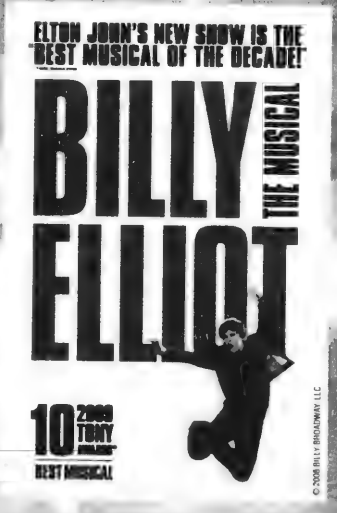
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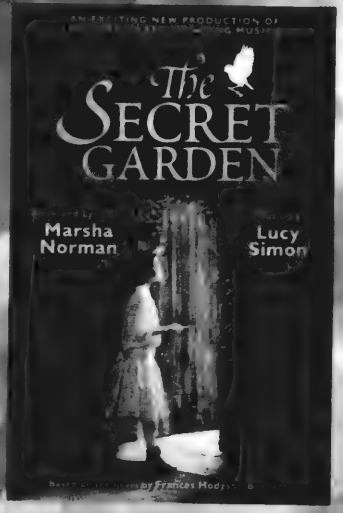

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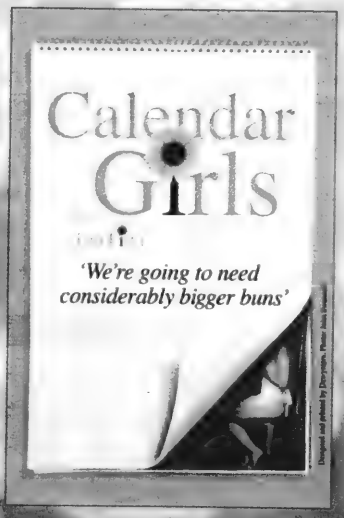

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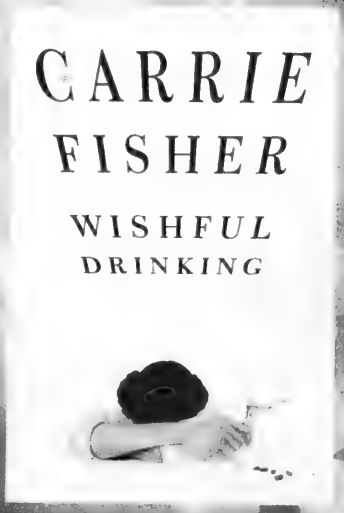

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Chinese academic focuses on Jewish culture

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

In 1988, university lecturer Xu Xin was intensely curious about life in Israel. For about a decade, he had made Jewish studies the focus of his academic career, and he had managed to get permission to travel abroad, where he lived with the Friend family in Chicago for two years.

He attended life-cycle events, celebrated Jewish holidays and got first-hand exposure to a culture that fascinated him.

But expanding his studies by travel to Israel seemed out of reach. At the time, the two countries had no formal diplomatic relations. Xu was surprised to learn that while he couldn't travel directly to Israel from China, he could do so from the United States, so that year he accepted an invitation from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and made the trip.

It was a real eye-opener, Xu said on the telephone from East Lansing, Mich., where he is a visiting as part of a 14-city tour.

"I saw that all the stereotypes [about Israel], the negative things were gone. Seeing it is different," he said.

Xu, professor and director of the Institute of Jewish Studies at Nanjing University, will be in Toronto for 11 days beginning Nov. 19. On Nov. 21, he will lecture at Congregation Darchei Noam, discussing the Jewish Diaspora in China, including contemporary Jewish communities. He is scheduled to deliver a Shabbat morning talk on Nov. 27 at Temple Emanu-El, and he will also meet academics and religious leaders while he's here.

Four years after his first of seven visits to Israel, the two countries established diplomatic relations. That opened the academic floodgates, Xu recalled, and Chinese researchers who, like himself, were interested in all things Jewish, began to study Jewish civilization and Israel in a big way. Today, 10 universities offer programs in Jewish studies.

"This is a field people are interested in," said Xu, founder and president of the China Judaic Studies Association.

"I realized that as China was about to open to the world and become part of the global village, to do business and have good relations with western countries, you have to understand their culture."

Xu Xin

Western nations owe their civilizations to the Greco-Roman and the Judeo-Christian traditions. For years, study of the latter was frowned upon by the officially atheistic Chinese government but with the thaw, that changed. He and other academics began to look at Jewish culture, history, life and literature.

"Now we focus on Judaism," he said. "Jews have a different tradition with a long history and have a unique lifestyle.

"In China, most Chinese were very impressed by Jewish achievement and admire [Jews]. We admire that they didn't have a home and they kept their traditions and culture and in modern times, integrated into the modern world," said Xu, who has taught at Nanjing University for more than 30 years.

Chinese academics and even government officials, especially admired "how you went from the ghetto, were segregated, and became part of the modern world."

China, too, was isolated and segregated. "Jews could provide lessons in how to integrate into the modern world, modernize and be democratic, rather than just be an ancient people with a long tradition. There is lots of discussion about that," he said.

Chinese also share "the belief that the Jewish element is important in American politics. That is why most want to improve the relationship with Israel."

"The relationship [with Israel] is much better than is being reported. China is officially more pro-Palestinian, but the relationship is very good with Israel, too. The people, especially academics, have a more positive view of Israel and people are more pro-Israel than pro-Arab, in general."

Shanghai University's Jewish studies department is often consulted by government, while policy papers by Israel experts are widely read in government circles, he added.

As to the Jewish presence in China, Xu traces it back to at least the seventh century. By the 11th, there was a substantial community in Kaifeng, then the capital and a trade centre on the Silk Road. By the end of the 19th century, the organized community in Kaifeng, which had consisted of Persian Jewish immigrants, had disappeared save for a few people who did not practise Judaism but who claimed descent from the city's original Jewish inhabitants.

In the mid-19th century, Jews came to China with other westerners and established a community in Shanghai. In the early part of the 20th century, about 15,000 Russian Jews, fleeing pogroms and the Communist Revolution, entered Harbin and established a community there. During World War II, some 20,000 central European Jews fleeing the Nazis settled in Shanghai. Most of the latter two groups have left for the West or Israel, he said.

Currently, there are communities of 2,000 to 3,000 Jews in several major cities, including Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing and Tientsin. "Most are business people, diplomats, students," he said.

Jewish studies continue to expand in China but "it needs support" – everything from books to funds for scholarships, Xu said.

Thanks to Disabled Veterans like Falah, there is an Israel for all of us.

Falah El-Hiyab, an Operations Officer of the Bedouin Tracking Regiment in Gaza, was the last casualty of Operation Cast Lead in 2009.

The war had just ended when Falah's unit was searching the area for infiltrators, lethal booby traps and explosive devices. After 15 minutes of patrolling, **six explosive devices turned the area into a hailstorm of burning metal and fire.**

Severely wounded, Falah and his unit came under further heavy enemy attack. As more forces rushed in to cover them, his wounds were dressed by a medic, and he was evacuated to hospital.

Six surgeries later, Falah's right leg was amputated. He was also left with limited use of his right hand.

The entire El-Hiyab family is distinguished for their loyal and courageous service to the State of Israel since pre-1948. Falah still dreams of going back to serve in the IDF, despite his physical condition.

He frequents Beit Halochem in Haifa, where he receives physiotherapy, occupational and hydrotherapy. He also swims and cycles with the hand-biking group, and participates in specialized fitness programs.

Falah visits Bedouin schools and encourages children to volunteer in the army, defend their country, their people and our freedom.

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Bold and principled

The photo inset of a mobile bulletin board outside the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto conveys the emotion that so many Canadians felt last week after seeing, hearing or reading Prime Minister Stephen Harper's landmark statement regarding the government's determination to stand with the State of Israel and against the purveyors of anti-Semitism.

His remarks to the Ottawa Conference on Combating Antisemitism, the second gathering of the 50-nation Interparliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism (ICCA), displayed acute insight into the modern manifestations of that "most ancient of hatreds," rock solid loyalty to his principles and steadfastness of character.

The prime minister first staked out the nature of the problem: "We must also combat anti-Semitism beyond our borders, – an evolving, global phenomenon. And we must recognize, that while its substance is as crude as ever, its method is now more sophisticated. Harnessing disparate anti-Semitic, anti-American and anti-western ideologies, it targets the Jewish people by targeting the Jewish homeland, Israel, as the source of injustice and conflict in the world, and uses, perversely, the language of human rights to do so."

Then, in plain, succinct language he staked out a course of action: "But when Israel, the only country in the world whose very existence is under attack, is consistently and conspicuously singled out for condemnation, I believe *we are morally obligated to take a stand* [our emphasis]. Demonization, double standards, delegitimization – the three Ds – it is a responsibility, to stand up to them."

And then he staked out what Canada will do: "As long as I am Prime Minister, whether it is at the UN or the Francophonie or anywhere else, *Canada will take that stand, whatever the cost* [our emphasis]. Not just because it is the right thing to do, but because history shows us, and the ideology of the anti-Israeli mob tells us all too well, that those who threaten the existence of the Jewish people are, in the longer term, a threat to all of us."

The prime minister's remarks reverberated far beyond the House of Commons committee room where they were delivered. For example, David Harris, executive director of the American Jewish Committee, praised the speech as being "nothing short of historic." "Prime Minister Harper minced no words in speaking with a remarkable moral courage and clarity that, sadly, is all too rare in today's world," Harris said.

Harper's statement gives heart to the supporters of the beleaguered Jewish state. It also puts on notice those who wish to do it harm that there are bold, principled, democracy-loving leaders in the world who will not pander to Holocaust-deniers, anti-Semites, Israel bashers and their evil schemes.

And for that, just like the students at TanenbaumCHAT, we convey our deepest appreciation.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Shoshana Cardin, the president of the Council of Jewish Federations told her organization's 34th General Assembly, held in Washington, D.C., that "the single greatest threat to our Jewish community is disaffiliation and non-affiliation." She urged the 3,000 delegates to encourage fellow Jews to join and participate in Jewish groups and organizations.

Editorial Advisory Board: Guy Aboodi, Maurice Benzacar, Michael Brown, Donald Carr, Rabbi Michael Doigin, Daniel Ferman, Igor Korenzvit, Keith Landy, Hindy Najman, Lou Rouson, Alan Sandler, Rabbi Philip Scheim, Mike Shriqui, Pamela Medjuck Stein, Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, Ehud Telem, Nelson Wiseman.

Ignatieff resurrecting 'moral equivalence'

Liberal party Leader Michael Ignatieff states in his letter to the editor, "Balance means that there are two peoples and that the land has to be shared – out of fairness for both, and out of a need for security for both" ("Ignatieff on Mideast policy," Nov. 11) But is security for the Palestinians really as much of an issue as it is for the Israelis? And does he really believe that creating a 23rd Arab state is a goal as important as preserving the one and only state of the Jewish people? In reality, he is just resurrecting the tired, old Liberal "moral equivalence."

Contrast Prime Minister Stephen Harper who last week denounced anti-Semitism more forcefully than any predecessor has done, and who has steadfastly defended Israel's right to exist and defend itself ("PM pledges government's support for Israel"). Sadly, instead of seizing the opportunity to agree that anti-Semitism is bad and the only democracy in the Middle East deserves our fullest support, Ignatieff instead chose to politicize the issue with partisan rhetoric, attacking the prime minister for taking these positions for only "domestic… political reasons." In fact, the prime minister may actually lose votes over his principled stance on Israel and anti-Semitism. At least Ignatieff's letter helps shed light on what the election of a Liberal government would really mean for Israel.

Rabbi Yisroel Janowski
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Ignatieff shows contempt for Jewish state

Michael Ignatieff attempts to demonstrate his party's support for Israel, but skilfully does so by simultaneously showing his contempt for the Jewish state ("Ignatieff on Mideast policy, letters, Nov. 11). While the Conservative government has become a staunch ally of Israel in its fight against radical Islam, Ignatieff calls for a return to the previous Liberal governments' "more balanced" approach to the Mideast conflict. This Liberal party leader would presumably favour more condemnations of Israel in the United Nations and other world bodies, as Canada traditionally engaged in such outrageous conduct against our democratic ally in the past. With friends like this, who needs enemies?

Joseph Y. Adler
Toronto

* * *

Jewish community should reject militarism

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is trying to get the Canadian Jewish community to sell our birthright as a peace-loving nation for a mess of pottage. While I am pleased that someone with a greater grasp of global peace, like Liberal party Leader Michael Ignatieff, got the lead letter to the editor in *The CJN* last week ("Ignatieff on Mideast policy"), Harper seems able to grace the cover of your paper at will ("PM pledges government's support for Israel," Nov. 11).

As Ignatieff reminds us, the loss to Canada of a UN Security Council seat is highly significant. We should join other peace-loving nations in asserting that you cannot bring peace to a fractious region by continually pouring weapons into it. It is appalling that the United States is about to sell some $60 billion worth of high-tech weaponry to the Saudis, whose second-greatest export is the extreme Wahhabi variant of Islam. The superpowers keep inadvertently fuelling this global mess, and nations like Canada should be too smart to have any part of it. Our Jewish community should be at the forefront of rejecting militarism as a substitute for hard diplomacy, diplomacy that includes tough oil sanctions.

Ron Charach
Toronto

* * *

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1608

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

Harper is a shaliach of peace

As a Holocaust survivor, I remember vividly the years 1933 and after, when Nazi Germany and its European friends spread hatred and anti-Semitic slogans against the entire Jewish population. Prime Minister Stephen Harper is a shaliach of peace, harmony and humanity to all people of goodwill ("PM pledges government's support for Israel," letters, Nov. 11).

Baruch Cohen
Montreal

* * *

Incorrect information in obituary

The obituary "Winnipeg's Gray was a philanthropist" (Oct. 21) states that Gerald Gray was a nephew of M.A. Gray, the first Jewish MLA in the Manitoba legislature. That is incorrect. My father, S. Hart Green, was the first Jewish member of the Manitoba legislature. He was elected in 1910 as a Liberal member for the North End. He was probably the first Jewish member of a provincial or federal government in Canada since Confederation. In a recent book called *Coming of Age*, by Allan Levine, a history of the Jews of Manitoba, there is a very good article about S. Hart Green.

Patrick Hart Green
Toronto

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Ottawa Protocol on Combating Antisemitism

Parliamentarians from six continents were on hand on Nov. 9 to release the Ottawa Protocol – a document which represents global co-operation in the fight against anti-Semitism.

The Ottawa Protocol is a major outcome of the 2010 Conference on Combating Antisemitism, where parliamentarians and experts from over 50 countries gathered in Ottawa from Nov. 7-9 to take part in it.

The conference, which was hosted by the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism (ICCA) and is the largest of its kind, provided the opportunity for delegates to explore data and exchange best practices to learn about the best ways to combat anti-Semitism around the world.

Preamble

We, representatives of our respective parliaments from across the world, convening in Ottawa for the second conference and summit of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism, note and reaffirm the London Declaration on Combating Antisemitism as a template document for the fight against anti-Semitism.

We are concerned that, since the London Conference in February 2009, there continues to be a dramatic increase in recorded anti-Semitic hate crimes and attacks targeting Jewish persons and property, and Jewish religious, educational and communal institutions.

We remain alarmed by ongoing state-sanctioned genocidal anti-Semitism and related extremist ideologies. If anti-Semitism is the most enduring of hatreds, and genocide is the most horrific of crimes, then the convergence of the genocidal intent embodied in anti-Semitic ideology is the most toxic of combinations.

We are appalled by the resurgence of the classic anti-Jewish libels, including:

- The Blood Libel (that Jews use the blood of children for ritual sacrifice)
- The Jews as "Poisoners of the Wells" – responsible for all evils in the world
- The myth of the "new *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*" – the czarist forgery that proclaimed an international Jewish conspiracy bent on world domination – and accuses the Jews of controlling government, the economy, media and public institutions.
- The double entendre of denying the Holocaust – accusing the Jews of fabricating the Holocaust as a hoax – and the nazification of the Jew and the Jewish people.

We are alarmed by the explosion of anti-Semitism and hate on the Internet, a medium crucial for the promotion and protection of freedom of expression, freedom of information and the participation of civil society.

We are concerned over the failure of most OSCE [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe] participating states to fully implement provisions of the 2004 Berlin Declaration, including the commitment to:

"Collect and maintain reliable information and statistics about anti-Semitic crimes, and other hate crimes, committed within their territory, report such information periodically to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and make this information available to the public."

We are concerned by the reported incidents of anti-Semitism on campuses, such as acts of violence, verbal abuse, rank intolerance and assaults on those committed to free inquiry, while undermining fundamental academic values. We renew our call for national governments, parliaments, international institutions, political and civic leaders, NGOs, and civil society to affirm democratic and human values, build societies based on respect and citizenship and combat any manifestations of anti-Semitism and all forms of discrimination.

We reaffirm the EUMC – now Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) – working definition of anti-Semitism, which sets forth that:

"Contemporary examples of anti-Semitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective – such as, especially but not exclusively – the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy, or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

Examples of the ways in which anti-Semitism manifests itself with regard to the State of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic anti-Semitism (e.g. claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the State of Israel.

However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as anti-Semitic.

Let it be clear: Criticism of Israel is not anti-Semitic, and saying so is wrong. But singling Israel out for selective condemnation and opprobrium – let alone denying its right to exist or seeking its destruction – is discriminatory and hateful, and not saying so is dishonest.

Seen are, back row from left, U.S. Congressman Chris Smith, Israeli MK Yuli Edelstein, Guillaume Ngefa of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gert Weisskirchen of Germany, Belgian MP Vivienne Teitelbaum and Father Nortbert Hofmann of the Vatican); front row from left, Italian MP Fiamma Nirenstein, Canadian MP Irwin Cotler and British MP John Mann. *[Victor Turco Photo]*

Members of Parliament meeting in Ottawa commit to:

Calling on our governments to uphold international commitments on combating anti-Semitism – such as the OSCE Berlin Principles – and to engage with the United Nations for that purpose. In the words of former UN secretary general Kofi Annan, "It is… rightly said that the United Nations emerged from the ashes of the Holocaust. And a human rights agenda that fails to address anti-Semitism denies its own history";

Calling on parliaments and governments to adopt the EUMC working definition of anti-Semitism and anchor its enforcement in existing law;

Encouraging countries throughout the world to establish mechanisms for reporting and monitoring on domestic and international anti-Semitism, along the lines of the "Combating Antisemitism Act of 2010" recently introduced in the United States Congress;

Encouraging the leaders of all religious faiths – represented also at this Conference – to use all means possible to combat anti-Semitism and all forms of hatred and discrimination;

Calling on the Parliamentary Forum of the Community of Democracies to make the combating of hatred and anti-Semitism a priority in their work;

Calling on governments and parliamentarians to reaffirm and implement the Genocide Convention, recognising that where there is incitement to genocide, state parties have an obligation to act;

Working with universities to encourage them to combat anti-Semitism with the same seriousness with which they confront other forms of hate. Specifically, universities should be invited to define anti-Semitism clearly, provide specific examples, and enforce conduct codes firmly, while ensuring compliance with freedom of speech and the principle of academic freedom. Universities should use the EUMC working definition of anti-Semitism as a basis for education, training and orientation. Indeed, there should be zero tolerance for discrimination of any kind against anyone in the university community on the basis of race, gender, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or political position;

We encourage the European Union to promote civic education and open society in its European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and to link funding to democratic development and respect for human rights in ENP partner countries;

Establishing an international task force of Internet specialists comprised of parliamentarians and experts to create common indicators to identify and monitor anti-Semitism and other manifestations of hate online and to develop policy recommendations for governments and international frameworks to address these problems;

Building on the African representation at this conference, to develop increased working relationships with parliamentarians in Africa for the combating of racism and anti-Semitism;

We urge the incoming OSCE chair, Lithuania, to make implementation of these commitments a priority during 2011 and call for the reappointment of the special representatives to assist in this work.

The Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism (ICCA) brings together some 46 countries and over 250 parliamentarians from around the world to lead the fight against resurgent global anti-Semitism. Its principal purpose is to share knowledge, experience, best practices and recommendations, encouraging their dissemination in an attempt to deal more effectively with contemporary anti-Semitism.

For more information on the ICCA, please visit www.antisem.org.

Correction

The caption under the photograph that accompanied the Perspectives piece "Nazi crimes have been downgraded in Lithuania" (Oct. 7) included incorrect information. Rachel Kostanian is not under investigation by the Lithuanian authorities. *The CJN* apologizes for the error.

Opinions

Outreach, not outrage

Pamela Geller, a notorious and much read New York Jewish blogger, describes herself as a "racist-Islamophobic-anti-Muslim-bigot." A recent profile in the *New York Times* suggests that the way she spreads fear of Islam and dehumanizes Muslims is comparable to the anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism of earlier eras.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

Though even some of her allies now say that she has gone too far, I hear versions of her views at respectable dinner parties in Toronto. The fact they're expressed by Jews is cause for added alarm. Though psychologists may have something to say about how victims yearn to become victimizers, such disregard for Jewish history and teaching is ominous.

Doing it in the guise of defending Israel is no excuse. There are compelling reasons for eradicating Islamic jihad in the Middle East and guarding Israel against its repercussions, but promoting guilt by association that indiscriminately condemns all Muslims is unconscionable, especially by those whose forbears have been subject to it for centuries.

Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League in the United States, isn't known as a bleeding-heart liberal. Yet he has come out strongly against such profiling when he wrote: "The Muslim community in America is being confronted by ugly in-your-face religious bigotry, and we must speak out against it, educate against it and label it anti-American." It's no less anti-Canadian.

The way some people seem to get around it is by expressing feigned disappointment that exponents of mainstream Islam don't publicly condemn the militants. A Rosh Hashanah sermon by an Atlanta rabbi – widely circulated on the Internet and even highly recommended by the editor of this paper – seems to have been calculated to radicalize congregants. Deploying the fashionable cliché, it compared Muslim militants to German Nazis.

It also implied that in the same way as ordinary Germans became passive bystanders implicitly condoning the Nazis and their crimes, so ordinary Muslims today condone, perhaps even protect, extremists in their midst.

Recently I had an opportunity to meet with a few such ordinary Muslims, many of them young, at an interfaith event in a mosque. Allowing for the limitations of anecdotal evidence, it struck me that they're no less worried about the effects of militant Islam than we are. But in the same way as we're inhibited from attacking fellow Jews in public, so they refrain from criticizing their own in front of strangers.

Reaching out to them with sympathy and understanding, and finding practical ways to co-operate, is likely to be much more effective than venting outrage at worshippers in Atlanta or spreading panic in Canada.

Small people, small world

The world is small and rapidly getting smaller. While that's no great revelation, it's noteworthy that this bit of conventional wisdom is but a metaphor for our earth, which has not changed in size over the millennia, and that this radical idea of a small world is as ancient as our own people.

Seymour Epstein in Toronto

When we utter this notion, we are relating to travel at speeds beyond our ancestors' imaginations, and instant communication via the ether that even our parents couldn't have dreamed of. But when our Creation story became the formative myth of early Israelite culture and ultimately a Jewish belief shared by most of western civilization, the idea of a small world created by one God was indeed radical. Early humans couldn't see beyond their horizon and couldn't travel much further. How did they fathom the earth as one system designed and governed by one creator?

Later, but not much later, Isaiah (in Chapter 2) had this vision of Jerusalem: "And it shall come to pass that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it… And He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Isaiah the prophet clearly had a broader view of the world than early man, and he could not be as innocent. Yet, he, too, shared this idea of a small manageable (and managed) world, and further developed the idea many centuries before the League of Nations and the United Nations.

Even Rashi, in 11th-century France, saw the world as one entity, with Jerusalem as its capital. In his commentary on the Song of Songs, Rashi echoes Isaiah by stating that Jerusalem is destined to be the capital of the entire world.

It's ironic that this notion of reducing the vastness of our earth – with its huge oceans, vast mountain ranges, wild variety of biology, hundreds of languages and rainbow of ideas – into a smaller metaphor that has system and design came from one of the smallest peoples that ever inhabited the planet. All of us have seen that map of the Middle East, with its vast Muslim-controlled tracts of land and the tiny sliver that is Israel, justifiably demanding its place under the sun as a Jewish nation. We know of the famous quip by a sociologist that the world's entire Jewish population is equivalent to a statistical error in the Chinese census.

Yes, despite God's promise to Abraham that we would become as numerous as the stars in the heaven, we've remained a small people. Indeed, every time we've started to grow and multiply, another of God's children – from Pharaoh to Haman to Hitler – has tried to thwart our growth.

Another irony is to be found in the expansion of the star metaphor. We moderns can barely see the stars at night because of light pollution from our great cities, but we know through science that they're infinite in number. Abraham probably had an awesome view of thousands of stars and could easily have believed that to be their true number.

From our earliest days, we Jews have been contemplating our relationship to the wider world, small as we are and vast as is the planet. That's why our story begins with the Creation of the universe and not merely with our own national history. We're not alone in that type of story. Other cultures, including some of our Canadian aboriginal myths, begin in a somewhat similar fashion, but ours is unique to us. Our life story demands that we see the world as a designed system in which we humans share God's sense of responsibility to make it a better place – to repair this small world.

Anti-Semitism: looking for solutions

I was heartened by the resolve of the parliamentarians from almost 50 countries attending the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism to commit their countries to opposing anti-Semitism. But I was struck, too, by the hard work ahead in bringing that resolve to fruition – hard work that must be borne not only by governments but by ordinary citizens.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

The 2-1/2 day meeting on Parliament Hill featured panels of experts on anti-Semitism describing the full scope of this hatred. Participants weren't just seeking more information and analysis, but a solution. What will staunch the growth of anti-Semitism? The development and enforcement of legislation is profoundly important in this struggle. But so, too, is the engagement of ordinary citizens in winning over their neighbours.

Several concrete ideas emerged from the conference.One recurrent emphasis is that we work to put anti-Semitism back on the anti-racist agenda, making it a shared concern of our community – whether that be our campus, neighbourhood or civic culture – rather than a parochial focus of Jews alone. Today – odd as it may seem to *CJN* readers – anti-Semitism has fallen out of the mission of many groups concerned with combating racism, sexism and other nefarious "isms."

To do so, we need to be willing to get our hands dirty – to enter the fray, to be willing to take on anti-Semitic speech, imagery and other acts. This isn't as easy as it sounds. It goes beyond writing letters to editors, politicians and others in positions of power from the safety of our computers – although that kind of speaking out remains important. It involves stepping outside our comfort zones, speaking with people who think differently from us and engaging them and their ideas.

It's easy to denounce blatant behaviour, imagery and rhetoric. But anti-Semitism comes in many guises, and its proponents have learned to deploy an increasingly sophisticated arsenal of strategies. Except on rare occasions, I don't believe we can persuade extremists to change their views. But the audiences that extremists target – people of goodwill who want to do the "right" thing, but are only vaguely informed – are open to reason and persuasion. That audience is, essentially, our fellow citizens. We need to speak to them in the language of shared Canadian values, and we need to fine-tune arguments that can puncture the manipulative and insidious language in which anti-Semitism is couched today.

For example: "I'm Jewish, so you can't call me anti-Semitic." Those who say that would be the first to point to the fallacy of a woman declaiming: "I am against a women's legal right to abortion or to birth control. You can't call me sexist, because I am a woman." It's not about the person saying the words, it's about the words that are said.

Another example: "Here they go again, the Jews crying 'wolf.' So predictable." Such statements pull anti-Semitism off the agenda entirely. It's an old tactic, one I remember from the beginning of my career, when a colleague at an American university declined to include the perspective of Jewish studies in a conference on "the other" that included presentations from African-American studies, women's studies, Chicano studies and so on. Why? "Oh, you know Jews. They'll just sit around and talk about anti-Semitism." So why not turn the tables? "So predictable, the 'apartheid' rhetoric. Anyone who knows anything about South Africa knows it doesn't hold water."

Produced two years after World War II, *Gentleman's Agreement* was one of the first major Hollywood movies to take on anti-Semitism in America. In it, a Jewish soldier returning from the battlefield tells a high-placed friend that Americans need to fight anti-Semitism not because of the "poor, poor Jews" but because America cannot be America if it tolerates this hatred. The same is true of Canada and all democratic societies. Our country's commitment to oppose anti-Semitism isn't merely to protect a minority vulnerable to prejudice, but to protect itself, to prevent its foundational principles from unraveling.

The Kirshner File

A warts-and-all portrait of Mordecai Richler

It has been left to Charles Foran, a Canadian novelist, journalist and book reviewer of Irish and French descent, to write what is surely the definitive biography of Canada's most accomplished Jewish literary figure, Mordecai Richler, who died at 70 in 2001. Foran's *Mordecai: The Life & Times* (Alfred A. Knopf Canada) takes a reader on a never less than interesting journey from his birth to his death in Montreal, with prolonged stops in Europe, where Richler honed his craft as a writer. The book benefits from its access to family letters, private archives and posthumous interviews with his wife and friends.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Yet *Mordecai* is not an authorized work. Published on the heels of Reinhold Kramer's *Mordecai Richler: Leaving St. Urbain*, Michael Posner's *The Last Honest Man*, Joel Yanofsky's *Mordecai & Me* and Ada Craniford's *Mordecai Richler: A Life in Ten Novels*, Foran's work is a full-blooded, warts-and-all account of an irreverent man who challenged hypocrisy and valued the truth and was sometimes accused of being a self-hating Jew. It is also a portrait of a son who was estranged from his mother, a husband who dearly loved his second wife and a father who was devoted to his children.

A secular Jew who traded on his roots, he was the scion of Orthodox Jews from Poland. Richler was raised in Montreal's Mile End district, a city-within-a-city whose poor residents were mostly immigrants. The house on Esplanade in which he, his older brother and parents lived was near local landmarks that found their way into Richler's satirical and evocative novels: Paperman's Funeral Home, Baron Byng High School, Schwartz's Hebrew Deli, the Colonial Baths and the Balfour building, the hub of the garment industry.

Lily, his intense and difficult mother, had contempt for his father, Moses, a gentle and passive person. Lily, whose father, Yudel Rosenberg, was a respected rabbi, divorced Moses as she was having an affair with her boarder, a German-Jewish refugee named Julius Frankel. Lily's infidelity had a detrimental effect on Richler's relations with her, as Foran documents at some length. The searingly frank letter Richler wrote Lily in 1976, contained in a chapter titled "Dear Maw," shattered their relations for good.

Richler was a bold and outspoken boy, and at the Talmud Torah where he studied, his *pisk* – his mouth – earned him a measure of admiration from fellow students. Although smart, he was not a stellar student. He managed a 78 per cent in English literature, but his overall average on graduation from Baron Byng was 64.6. Falling just short of being admitted to McGill University, he enrolled at Sir George Williams University, where, as an aspiring journalist, he wrote for the campus paper, the *Georgian*.

In his final year at Sir George, the only "A" he got was in an English course. By then, he was freelancing for the *Herald*, a racy tabloid that bought his unsigned stories on social and sporting events in and around Sir George at five cents a word.

Foran describes the youthful Richler as a "poser" whose manner resembled that of a pool-hall hustler rather than an up-and-coming man of letters. The only person he could confide in was Evelyn Sacks, his former teacher who may have been his first lover.

At her suggestion, Richler visited her cousin in New York City, Elie Abel, a Montrealer who wrote for the *New York Times*. Abel advised him to stay in school if he wanted to be a reporter and start writing if he wished to be a novelist. So at the ripe old age of 19, Richler, unhappy at home, set sail for Europe, having decided that Montreal was a boring provincial backwater. Moses, who had bought him a typewriter two years before, voiced support for his decision. Lily cashed in his $800 insurance policy for him.

Richler landed in Paris, where Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Morley Callaghan had preceded him in the 1920s. "Did I tell you about this Richler?" Richler's older friend and fellow Montrealer, Bill Weintraub, wrote in a letter to aspiring novelist Brian Moore. "He's from Montreal, has a peculiar first name and wants to be a writer. Very young and rather cheeky."

Subsisting in Paris on care packages from home, Richler decamped to the unspoiled Spanish island of Ibiza, which was considerably cheaper in terms of its standard of living. From Ibiza, Richler informed Moses that he could no longer accept "the ritualistic dogma" of Orthodox Judaism.

Mordecai Richler as a young man

In his one-dollar-a-day room, he mapped out a novel, *The Rotten People*, which, Foran observes, was "a screed, cross-eyed with self-absorption and judgmental to the point of being hateful." Mavis Gallant, then an acquaintance, found it a juvenile and pointless exercise in revenge. It remained unpublished.

Returning to Paris, Richler enjoyed its pleasures through alcohol, hash, carousing and jazz and through friendships with Terry Southern and James Baldwin. Still broke, he resided in a grimy hotel that had once been a brothel. Although one of his short stories had already been published, others were summarily rejected by the likes of *Harper's* and *Atlantic*. But he struck paydirt when a British agent accepted *The Acrobats*, his first published novel.

Back to Montreal for a brief period before settling in Britain for an extended stay, he worked at odd jobs and cranked out radio news copy for the CBC. Richler, then known as Mort, married Cathy Boudreau, a Franco Canadian, in 1954. His parents were not amused.

Richler's next novel, *Son of a Smaller Hero*, was generally panned, with the *Globe and Mail* saying it would hardly "further the interests of the Jewish race." The newspaper, however, praised his fourth novel, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, which came out two years after *A Choice of Enemies*. Calling it Richler's breakthrough novel, the Toronto daily noted that he had now proved himself "a mature and brilliant writer" after three false starts. Richler's subsequent novels, from *The Incomparable Atuk* and *Cocksure* to *St. Urbain's Horseman* and *Joshua Then and Now*, generally impressed readers and critics alike. But in Foran's considered view, *Solomon Gursky Was Here*, which was published eight years before his final novel, *Barney's Version*, was his magnum opus, one he had been born to write after decades of "lived experience, literary training and deepening wisdom about human affairs."

As Foran tells it, Richler was a workaholic, hewing to a seven-day work week and always "novelizing." His second wife, Florence Wood Mann – a beauty with brains and a warm personality whom he married in a church because no rabbi in Montreal would bless an intermarriage – accepted his work ethic because she believed in his gift and loved him.

Apart from novels, as Foran notes, Richler produced one short-story collection (*The Street*), children's fiction in the form of the *Jacob Two-Two* triology, travelogues (including *This Year in Jerusalem*), film scripts, essays (*Shovelling Trouble* and *Belling the Cat*, among other works), magazine and newspaper journalism and anthologies. He had no trouble providing for his growing family, often demanding stratospheric fees.

Foran burrows deeply into his personality, taking note of his silences, his discomfort with strangers (as I personally discovered in two separate interviews with Richler in the 1980s), his enjoyment of material pleasures – whisky and cigars in particular – and the company of old and new friends. Foran, too, delves into Richler's acrimonious battle with the Quebec separatist movement and cursorily looks at his position on Israel. Foran's reflections of Richler's last days before he tragically succumbed to an assortment of ailments is poignant. *Mordecai* is well worth reading.

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Jews must go on offensive: British journalist

By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN

It is time Jews and other victims of "western irrationality" stopped playing defence and went on the offensive.

"We have to stop trying to argue with bigots, and set out to defeat them instead. Diaspora Jews have to rethink. It's time to change the narrative. Time to stop the handwringing."

It was a no-punches-pulled address last week by British journalist and author Melanie Phillips to a lunchtime gathering of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies in Toronto.

Melanie Phillips

A columnist for the *Daily Mail* and author of *The World Turned Upside Down: The Global Battle over God, Truth and Power*, Phillips, known for her bluntness, did not disappoint at the event, billed as a "State of the Union" luncheon also featuring conservative pundit David Frum.

It's time, said Phillips, "to stop conniving with the premise of our enemies that the Middle East impasse would be solved by establishing a state of Palestine to which the [Jewish] settlements – and thus by extension, Israel – are the obstacle. [It's] time for us to stop agreeing that the Jews are to blame for their own predicament."

To applause, Phillips said Jews should demand of the world "why it expects Israel to make compromises with people who have tried for nine decades to wipe out the Jewish presence in the land and are still firing rockets at it."

'It's time to change the narrative. Time to stop the handwringing.'

They should ask "why America, Britain and the EU single Israel out for pressure which they apply to no other victims of genocidal aggression. For in any other such conflict, their cause of the aggressors would be deemed totally forfeit by their behaviour."

Jews should also be asking left-leaning progressives – including Jewish ones – why they support the "racist ethnic cleansing of every Jew from a future state of Palestine.

"Why they are not marching against Hamas on account of its tyrannical oppression of Palestinians in Gaza?" wondered Phillips, a popular figure in right-wing circles. "Why they are not mounting a boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against Mahmoud Abbas' Palestinian Authority on account of his Holocaust denial and the PA's continued incitement of Arab children to Jew-hatred, murder and genocide?"

She conceded that prejudice cannot be fought with reason.

"We have a duty as Jews to bear witness to the truth," she said. "And we have a duty to fight in our defence. We can best do this by getting off our back foot and putting them on theirs. We should accuse them not of anti-Semitic motives we cannot prove, but of absurdities and contradictions and untruths they cannot deny."

She drove the point home: "We should ridicule them, humiliate them, destroy their reputations; boycott them, not invite them to our houses, show them our disapproval and contempt. Treat them as pariahs. Turn their own weapons against them.

"In short, we must get up off our collective knees and fight. Justice, human rights and truth are on our side, not theirs. We must reclaim them as our own."

In his remarks, Frum, a columnist and speechwriter for former U.S president George W. Bush, recapped the results of the recent U.S. midterm elections, which saw the Republican party surge in popularity.

David Frum

Frum said relations between the two American political parties "have broken down," and the Republicans are "now splitting" into "formal and informal" camps, the latter the populist, right-wing Tea Party movement.

"You have to wonder who's really in charge," he said.

Because it's going to be "more difficult" for the Congress to act, the "action" will shift to the U.S. Federal Reserve, Frum predicted.

He said the United Nations' sanctions against Iran have been "reasonably effective" because the country's nuclear ambitions appear stalled.

Sounding a note of optimism, Frum said he sees a "new global movement" of support for Israel as a symbol of freedom in the Middle East.

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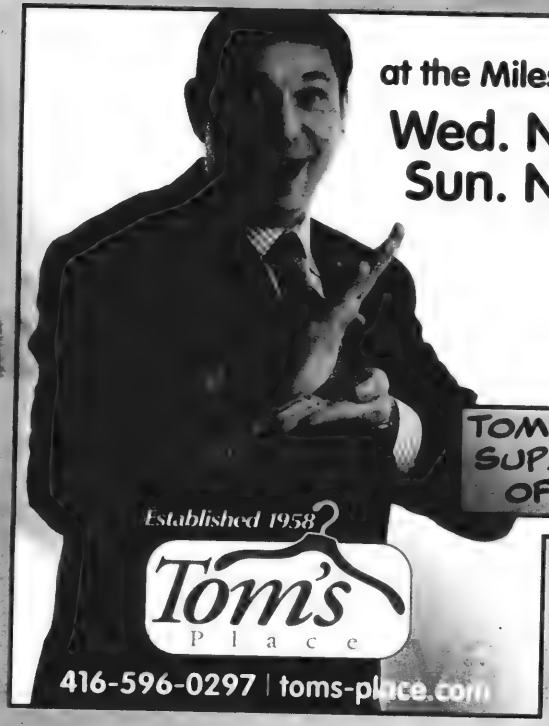

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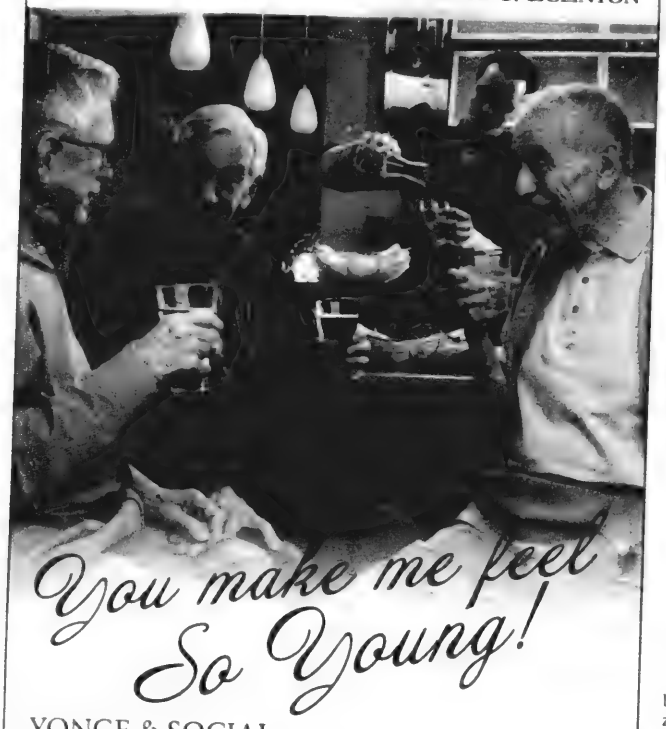

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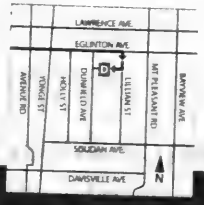

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Holocaust Education Week

Levent Bilgen, Turkey's consul general in Toronto, left, and Arnold Reisman. *[Uluc Ozguven photo]*

Wartime ambassador's actions focus of debate

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The heroism of a Muslim Turkish ambassador who saved Jewish lives in Nazi-occupied France was the subject of a sharp but friendly debate between a Jewish researcher and Turkey's consul general in Toronto.

The encounter, which took place recently at Temple Sinai Congregation during Holocaust Education Week, pitted Arnold Reisman against Levent Bilgen.

Reisman, the author of *An Ambassador and a Mensch: The Story of a Turkish Diplomat in Vichy France*, claimed that Behic Erkin's decision to rescue some 3,000 Jews of Turkish origin was personal and altruistic, but at variance with official Turkish policy.

"It's my position, in all friendship and respect, that there was not a policy by the Turkish government to help Jews," said Reisman, a professional engineer who survived the Holocaust in Poland and immigrated to the United States after World War II.

Bilgen, a Turkish diplomat who was posted to Turkey's embassy in Israel from 1999 to 2002 before assuming his current position in Toronto, sharply disagreed with Reisman.

Far from being a loose canon, he asserted in a rebuttal, Erkin acted in accordance with directives from the Turkish government.

Bilgen claimed that Reisman's presentation was implicitly disrespectful of Turkey's genuine efforts to help Jews during the Holocaust and was part of a "sinister" campaign to defame and harm Turkey.

The object of their clash, Behic Erkin, was Turkey's ambassador to France from 1939 to 1943. He arrived in Paris several weeks before the outbreak of World War II and about nine months before Germany's conquest of France.

Born in 1876 in Istanbul, Erkin was a close friend of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the revered founder of the Republic of Turkey after World War I and the first president of Turkey.

During World War I, when Ottoman Turkey was aligned with Germany, Erkin won a German Iron Cross medal for bravery. Later, he fought in Turkey's War of Independence and served in Ataturk's cabinet as a minister.

From 1928 to 1939, he was Turkey's ambassador to Hungary, and on the eve of World War II, he was hand-picked by the Turkish president, Ismet Inonu, to be Turkey's envoy to France.

Reisman, who until recently was a professor of operations research at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, began his lecture on an upbeat note by saying that Turkey, a neutral power during the war, should be commended for having come to the assistance of Jews in their darkest hour.

As the United States and Canada dithered while Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe were murdered, Erkin and his staff worked hard to rescue Jews in France who had Turkish passports or an ancestral connection to Turkey, said Reisman, who started taking a serious interest in Turkey after visiting that predominantly Muslim nation as a tourist some years ago.

By his estimate, France was home to 20,000 Jews with Turkish roots when it was invaded by Germany in 1940. Jews of Turkish descent comprised slightly more than six per cent of France's Jewish population at the time.

About eight per cent of such Jews were deported to German concentration camps, he said.

In saving some 3,000 Jews, Erkin contravened Turkish policy, he said. "In Turkey today, the politically correct view is that it was the policy of Turkey to help Jews." But in fact, Erkin risked his career to assist Jews.

Continued on page 15

50 Jews rescued by Turkish consul general

Continued from page 14

In German-occupied Greece and Yugoslavia, he noted, Turkey did not extend assistance to Jews with Turkish roots out of fear of angering Germany.

On the island of Rhodes, however, Turkey's consul general, Selahattin Ulkumen, incurred the wrath of the Nazis by rescuing about 50 Jews, Reisman acknowledged. After the war, he noted, Ulkumen was honoured by Yad Vashem as a Righteous Gentile.

In an explanation of Erkin's unilateral behaviour, Reisman suggested he had a well-established record for acting independently and traded on his excellent connections in Turkey.

As well, German officials in France deferred to Erkin, not wishing to offend Turkey, which maintained cordial diplomatic and substantial commercial relations with Germany throughout the war.

Behic Erkin

Finally, the Germans were in awe of Erkin's status as one of the very few foreigners who had ever won the coveted Iron Cross medal.

According to Reisman, the pro-German Vichy French regime pressured Turkey to recall Erkin in 1943. Shortly afterward, he said, Erkin submitted his resignation. He died in 1961.

Reisman said Erkin deserves to be recognized by Yad Vashem as a Righteous Gentile, and will support all such efforts.

Taking the floor again after Reisman's talk, Bilgen said Erkin was not recalled after three tours of duty, since he had already reached retirement age.

In an allusion to Reisman's accusation that Turkish diplomats in Greece and Yugoslavia had not come to the aid of Jews, Bilgen said moral judgments are improper in light of the difficult circumstances that prevailed in those countries during that period.

Turkey allowed Jewish refugees to transit through Turkish territory and permitted the Jewish Agency to maintain an office on its soil, he said.

Turkey's centuries-old bonds of friendship with the Jewish people cannot be broken, notwithstanding current political tensions between Turkey and Israel, Bilgen said.

Reisman, in an attempt to credit Turkey for humanitarian work, praised the Turkish government for having admitted 190 German Jewish refugees, all academics, fleeing Nazism. And he absolved Turkey for the Struma tragedy. The Struma, a passenger ship filled with hundreds of Romanian Jews bound for Palestine, was ordered out of Turkish territorial waters and then sunk by a Soviet submarine. Reisman blamed Britain, the mandatory power in Palestine, for the Struma disaster.

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION: **Grade 8 students from the Toronto Heschel School and Claude Watson School for the Arts learned about the Holocaust and genocide at a workshop entitled, "Everyone Has a Name," in partnership with Holocaust Education Week. The students heard the testimony of a Righteous Gentile and reflected on their experience through writing, visual arts and drama. Pictured are students Dorothy Lin and, left, Shalhevet Gobrin talking about their backgrounds following an ice-breaker exercise facilitated by two students.**

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Holocaust Education Week

Polish hero Jan Karski remembered

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

He was described as a hero who desperately tried to save Polish Jews during the Holocaust.

Jan Karski, a courier for the Polish underground during Germany's wartime occupation of Poland, twice snuck into the Warsaw Ghetto and once visited Izbica, a concentration camp where Jews were sent before being transferred to the Belzec and Sobibor death camps.

Karski took his report of Nazi atrocities in Poland to Britain and the United States, speaking to British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden and U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, but his pleas for help were reportedly met with incredulity and indifference.

And so the Nazis were able to murder three million Jews in Poland with impunity.

Karski's mission, the stuff of heroism, was recalled at a recent forum sponsored by Holocaust Education Week at Pride of Israel Synagogue.

Jan Karski

Poland's consul general in Toronto, Marek Ciesielczuk, credited Karski with having provided the Allies with the first "trustworthy" report about conditions in Poland under the Nazis.

Ewa Wierzynska, the featured speaker and manager of a project to perpetuate Karski's memory, expressed hope that he can be a bridge between Poles and Jews, whose historic relationship has been uneasy and unsettled.

"He had empathy for the Jewish people," said Wierzynska, who initiated and now manages the Jan Karski Unfinished Mission. "He was haunted by the Holocaust."

Wierzynska, a journalist and an adviser to the Polish History Museum currently under construction in Warsaw, listed the biographical highlights of Karski's life.

Born as Jan Kozielewski in 1914 in Lodz, he was the eighth child of a Catholic leather worker and grew up in a largely Jewish neighbourhood. He joined the diplomatic corps after his university studies.

Mobilized after the outbreak of World War II, he served in an artillery detachment on the eastern front. Taken captive by the Red Army, he was released in a prisoner exchange.

He was recruited by the Polish resistance movement, taking the nom de guerre of Jan Karski. Due to his photographic memory, Wierzynska noted, he became a courier, making secret trips to France, Britain and Slovakia, where he was arrested and tortured by the Gestapo. After escaping, Karski returned to active service in the Home Army's information and propaganda bureau.

In 1942, just months before the Nazis rounded up and deported tens of thousands of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto to the Treblinka death camp, he undertook one of his most courageous missions.

Ewa Wierzynska

At the behest of Polish Jewish leaders, he visited the Warsaw ghetto, witnessing deprivation and terror on a grand scale. "He was profoundly affected," said Wierzynska.

Karski also went to Izbica. "I came out sick, seized by fits of nausea," he would write years later. "I vomited blood. I had seen horrifying things there."

Karski, whom she called "this most incredible witness," delivered a report on his visits to the British and U.S. governments, but to no avail. Neither Britain nor the United States, caught up in a monumentally difficult war, took steps to stop the machinery of the Holocaust.

The skepticism and indifference Karski encountered in government circles in the United States must have been demoralizing. Roosevelt was not really interested in Karski's findings about the Holocaust, she said, while Roosevelt's friend, the Jewish Supreme Court justice Felix Frankfurter, voiced utter disbelief.

After meeting Karski, Frankfurter said, "A man like me talking to a man like you must be totally frank. So I must say I am unable to believe in what I have just heard."

Unable to return to Poland after his cover had been blown, Karski remained in the United States, writing a best-seller about his horrific experiences in Poland.

In the aftermath of the war, Karski, a staunch anti-Communist, became a U.S. citizen as well as a political science professor at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

Continued on page 17

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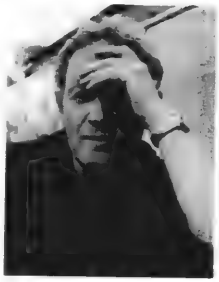
Honour pays tribute to Canadian war vets

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The idea was formed in Yuri Dojc's mind 13 years ago.

Dojc, a Jewish photographer who settled in Canada as a refugee in 1969, was flying back from his father's funeral in Czechoslovakia when he struck up a conversation with his seat mate.

Gerald Fry



Yuri Dojc

The man, a Jew, told Dojc about his ordeal in the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Dojc was moved by his words.

The man said soldiers, not governments, had liberated Nazi concentration camps.

"Those words rang in my ears," Dojc recalled.

Spurred on by their conversation, Dojc, one of Canada's pre-eminent photographers, began taking pictures of Canadian veterans of World War II.

Many of his subjects lived in the Chartwell seniors' home in Mississauga.

Chartwell operates more than 150 retirement homes and long-term residences in North America.

Last week, 65 years after the end of World War II, Dojc paid tribute to Canada's vets by bringing out a book about them.

Honour, published in a hardcover edition by Chartwell, contains 35 black-and-white and colour photographs and stories of the old soldiers.

Remembrance Day 2010

Dojc, whose photographs have appeared in art magazines and books, is pleased with *Honour*.

"It was one of the most fulfilling experiences I have been involved in," he writes in the forward.

He adds, "It was evident early in this project that we were not just photographing people, we were capturing history."

Among the vets featured in *Honour* is Gerald Fry, who was born in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 1924.

The son of a Jewish physician who served in the German army in World War I and was murdered in Auschwitz, Fry was sent to Britain by his parents in 1939, when he was 15 years old.

Fry, who lived with foster parents, never saw his mother and father again.

When he was of age, he enlisted in the British army. "I had a score to settle with the Germans," he says in *Honour*.

Net proceeds from the book will be donated to Canadian organizations committed to the remembrance of Canada's vets.

Clinton was one of Karski's students

Continued from page 16

One of his students would be a future U.S. president, Bill Clinton.

In 1965, he married the Polish Jewish dancer Pola Nirenska, whose family was murdered during the Holocaust and who committed suicide in 1992.

Recognized as a Righteous Gentile by Yad Vashem in 1982, Karski was made an honorary Israeli citizen in 1994. He died in 2000.

On the 10th anniversary of his death, Wierzynska, in conjunction with the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, established the Jan Karski Unfinished Mission to commemorate a Pole who risked life and limb to alert the world to the unfolding tragedy of the Holocaust.

Karski, she observed, was a good Christian who was ready to stand up for and defend people of a different faith.

The Jan Karski Unfinished Mission is not the only project of its kind in Poland today, said Wierzynska, who has worked for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which is scheduled to open in Warsaw in 2012.

She cited the Jan Karski International Institute for Dialogue and Tolerance in Ruda Slaska, the Jan Karski Society in Kielce and the Stradomskie Dialogue Center in Cracow.

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Grandchildren were key to reliving experiences

Continued from page 3

Kaye said a lot of time had to pass before survivors were willing to tell their stories publicly. He believes it was the arrival of grandchildren with their questions about the war that finally prompted an outpouring of their Holocaust experiences.

"Survivors needed time, a sense of continuity and that's what grandchildren are."

Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial authority, in conjunction with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, has produced eight films that followed survivors back to their birthplaces in Salonika, Greece, Hungary, Ukraine, Poland, Belarus and the Netherlands. It reflects "a kaleidoscope of the Jewish people before World War II."

The survivors spoke about their lives before the Holocaust, their experiences during the war and then "their return to life" afterward.

Kaye presented excerpts from the films, one of which – *May Your Memory be Love* – featured Hanna Bar Yesha, in which the retired school principal revisited her home in Hungary and then travelled to Birkenau, where she was sent with her mother and aunt.

"The film connects youths to people who had lives, who were not born in concentration camps. They came from rich, caring homes," Kaye said. "That creates empathy."

Holocaust survivor and Canadian army veteran Martin Maxwell, a Viennese Jew who witnessed Kristallnacht, said he was moved by the respect the Dutch still show Canadian veterans. The Canadian army liberated Holland, and the Dutch make sure their children and grandchildren know that history and "the sacrifices made to free them."

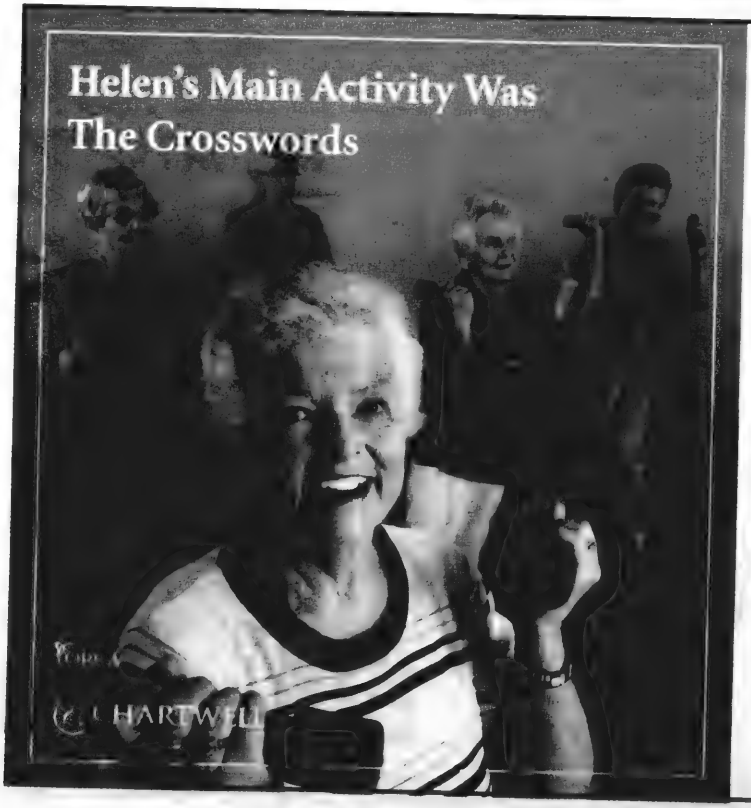
"Today we remember the 42,000 Canadians who did not come home and the 152 military who came home to us in coffins from Afghanistan," he said.

Shaarei Shomayim's spiritual leader, Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, delivered a dvar Torah in which he lamented the political correctness that inhibits discussion of "good and evil." A pernicious form of Holocaust denial attempts to put the Holocaust in the past and rejects the need to remember it and take lessons from it.

That Holocaust, he said, "makes us look evil in the eye and say it happened."

MONTREAL JEWISH COMMUNITY REMEMBERS

Survivor Leo Dortort lights the memorial candle at the annual Kristallnacht commemoration in Montreal. To read full story, please go to cjnews.com.



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Blue Ribbon committee ensures Jewish Toronto reaches its full potential

Community's business leaders help oversee over one million square feet of community space

By Daniel Horowitz

In order to effectively oversee and operate UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's rapidly expanding real estate portfolio, its Campus Management Committee, headed up by chair Leo Goldhar and vice-chair Ariella Rohringer, has enlisted some of our community's best and brightest.

The Committee, which began operations in 2009, was established to ensure that UJA Federation's Tomorrow Campaign campuses: The Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan; Sherman Campus at Bathurst, north of Sheppard, and downtown's Miles Nadal JCC and The Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life, and other properties owned and operated by UJA, were run as efficiently and professionally as possible, something that Goldhar sees as vital.

"As chair of the Campus Management Committee, I have the privilege to coordinate management of all of UJA Federation's capital projects, as well as its complete real estate portfolio, and to make a difference in the way they're managed," says Goldhar, a Tomorrow Campaign pioneer who, in 2000, along with Lou Greenbaum, had the vision and imagination needed to help UJA Federation acquire the 50-acre parcel of what was then nothing more than farmland, on which the Lebovic Campus now stands. Today, Vaughan is home to one of the fastest growing Jewish communities in North America. To keep up with that growth, the Tomorrow Campaign is currently building a new, 200,000 square foot community complex on the Lebovic Campus, complete with more than 350 underground parking spots.

"It's absolutely vital that when you're talking about something with the breadth and scope, and importance, of the Tomorrow Campaign, there is transparency and that it's managed responsibly and professionally," adds Goldhar.

Leo Goldhar

Ariella Rohringer

Construction of the Schwartz/Reisman Centre on the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan is well under way.

Together, the committee members make up a formidable team that brings considerable business acumen and real estate experience to the table.

Rohringer, herself a lawyer with over 24 years of experience in the real estate sector, and a former chair of the annual UJA Campaign, is a prime example.

"As a former chair of UJA's campaign, I gained a great deal of knowledge of the many agencies that UJA serves and I wanted to couple that knowledge with my legal expertise," says Rohringer.

"My role as vice chair of this committee permits me to use my experience, and assist in ensuring that UJA Federation's real estate assets are managed in the most cost efficient, productive, effective and prudent manner possible from a cost and use perspective, and in line with industry standards and in accord with the wishes of our community," she says.

Besides the three community campuses created by UJA Federation's Tomorrow Campaign, UJA Federation also owns, among other holdings, Haliburton Properties, the site of Camp Northland.

The Campus Management Committee is divided into five taskforces, all of which include Goldhar and Rohringer:

- The Facilities Taskforce includes Lillyann Goldstein, David M. Peltz and Jeff Ross.
- The Seniors Taskforce is made up of Leonard M. Abramsky, Richard Diamond and Louis I. Greenbaum.
- The Prosserman JCC Advisory Taskforce includes Jeffrey I. Cohen, Peter Cohen, David M. Peltz and Harold Wolkin.
- The Schools Taskforce includes Warren Kimel and Marty Rochwerg
- The Downtown Taskforce includes Sheldon H. Goodman, David Y. Green, Michael Harris and Harold Wolkin.

The new Lipa Green Centre, including the Prosserman JCC and Donald Gales Family Pavilion on Sherman Campus.

"As the Tomorrow Campaign and UJA Federation continues to expand Toronto's Jewish community, and its outreach to Jews across the GTA, this committee will ensure that growth and future development reach their capacity, and that our community continues to benefit," says Sherry Kulman, a well-respected executive director of large non-profit agencies for over 20 years, and currently the vice president of Campus Operations, UJA Federation.

"It's true we have aimed to create compelling campuses with inspiring architecture that will capture the imagination of a new generation. However, as valuable and impressive new buildings might be, what's far more important to all of us is what will be happening – and what is happening – on those properties and within those buildings that will help to enrich Jewish life in the Greater Toronto Area," says UJA Federation of Greater Toronto President and CEO, Ted Sokolsky. "This is not just about real estate and construction, it's about celebrating life. We're striving to provide a platform to highlight the best contributions our partner agencies and schools have to offer. Through effectively managed campuses, we can help in creating efficient behind-the-scenes support that will enable them to deliver services and programs that best suit the uniqueness of the local campuses and neighborhoods."

"I've travelled to many, many Jewish communities across North America and the world, and I'm proud to say that when the Tomorrow Campaign has completed its work, Toronto will stand tall as one of the world's preeminent Jewish communities, outside of Israel, and I'm so proud and excited to be part of it all," says Goldhar.

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Makom makes it to the top 50

By VICKY TOBIANAH
Special to The CJN

Makom, a new non-profit organization that serves downtown Toronto's growing Jewish community, has been named one of North America's 50 most innovative Jewish non-profits by Slingshot '10-'11, a guidebook that helps funders identify up-and-coming organizations.

Founded in 2009 and based in Toronto's historic Kensington Market, it brings together a variety of Jewish traditions and serves as a place for learning and connecting to Judaism, as well as working for social and environmental justice.

"I had come to Toronto to be the campus rabbi at Hillel of Greater Toronto. While living downtown, I felt a distinct lack of Jewish life that spoke to me," said founder Rabbi Aaron Levy. "And from conversations I had with my friends, I knew others felt disconnected from Jewish life, but they were not averse to connecting if an organization emerged that appealed to them."

The decision to locate the organization – whose full name is Makom: Creative Downtown Judaism – in Kensington Market, the epicentre of an area that was once home to more than 60,000 Jews in the early to mid-20th century, was intentional.

"We are rooted in the space of downtown Toronto, literally a *makom* [place] for creating an organic Jewish community for downtown Jews," Rabbi Levy said. "We're unique, because we focus equally on the creative arts, learning and social justice. We're primarily concerned with creating a unique Jewish community, focusing on downtown spaces, such as holding services in the Kiever Shul and doing Tashlich on Lake Ontario."

Rabbi Aaron Levy drumming at Makom Kabbalat Shabbat Services.

[Andrea Toole photo]

Makom offers a mix of programming, such as a partnership minyan that requires a minimum of 10 men and 10 women to participate, as well as meditation and contemplative Judaism and what it calls a "Jewish Urban Homesteading Workshop Series."

"There were needs that were not being met in the downtown Jewish area, and I felt a desire to reconnect to the Jewish downtown past," Rabbi Levy said.

"We hope that in the long term, there will be a revitalized Jewish community downtown, in which Makom will have been the catalyst."

Since its founding, Makom has been hosted by the Kiever Shul for biweekly Friday night services and many other programs. It's allowed Makom to facilitate Jewish renewal in a beautiful and historic shul that's a tangible reminder of downtown Jewish history.

Rabbi Levy grew up in Maryland and moved to New York to study neuroscience research

"I never had the intention to become a rabbi Over the course of my undergraduate degree, I realized that the volunteer work I was doing as an informal Jewish educator for high school students was much more meaningful to me," he said. "It was thrilling and then it dawned on me to become a rabbi and do it full time."

He was ordained in 2004 in the first graduating class of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, a modern Orthodox seminary in New York City. In 2006, he moved to Toronto to work at Hillel

Rabbi Levy said he was was thrilled to hear Makom made Slingshot's Top 50 list. It's the first time a Canadian organization has been recognized in the guidebook's six-year history. Since 2005, Slingshot has become the recognized source for identifying new and innovative organizations dealing with concerns such as Jewish identity, community, and tradition.

"It's a real validation of our hard work and the success of building a new, inclusive Jewish community to fill the gaps of downtown Jewish life. Hopefully, we're just the first of many Canadian organizations who will make the list, as more and more Jews start thinking positively about Jewish life."

To learn more, visit www.makomto.org or e-mail info@makomto.org.

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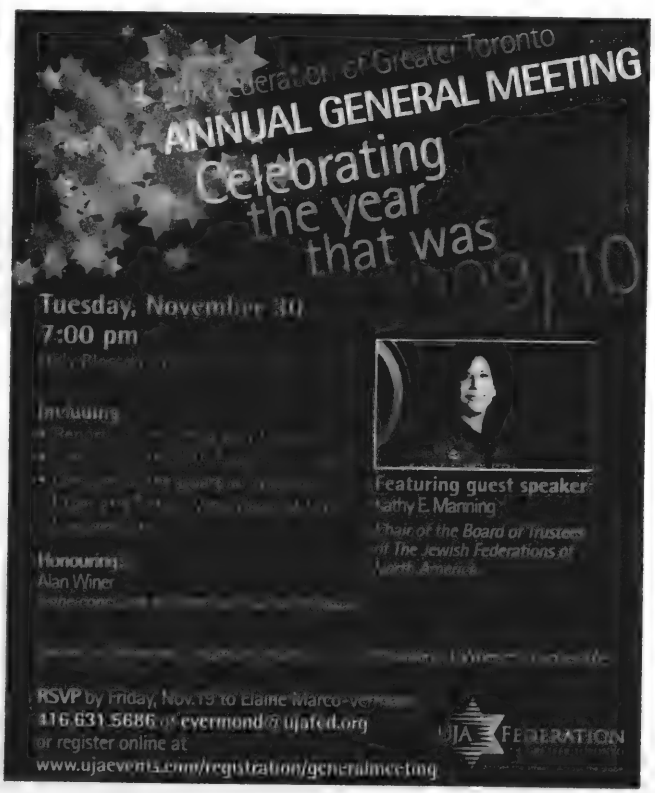

Coast to Coast

Alleged Paris bomber seeks stay of extradition hearing

Compiled by CJN Staff

The extradition hearing against alleged terrorist Hassan Diab began last week with his lawyer asking the court to stay the proceedings.

Defence lawyer Donald Bayne told Ontario Superior Court Justice Robert Marager that evidence against Diab is unreliable and suspect because it may have been acquired through torture.

Bayne argued that evidence provided by France may have come from unknown sources, perhaps foreign intelligence agencies, including those of Germany and Israel. "We don't know where Israel obtained its intelligence," said Bayne.

"If it's from foreign sources as opposed to your own, you have no control over the circumstances in which the intelligence was produced," Bayne said, according to the *Ottawa Citizen*.

Diab, a Lebanese-born former sociology professor at the University of Ottawa, is facing extradition to France in connection with the 1980 Rue Copernic Synagogue bombing.

Four people were killed and 40 wounded when a bomb placed in the saddle bag of a motorcycle outside the synagogue exploded. French police allege five men from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine were responsible, and they fingered Diab as being in Paris at the time with false papers and living under an assumed name. They allege Diab made the bomb and planted it in the motorcycle.

Diab has denied the allegations. Last week he released a statement saying he was innocent and that the accusations against him were motivated by his Middle Eastern heritage.

"Since Sept. 11, 2001 the presumption of innocence and other core values of our legal system have eroded, especially for people from particular minority backgrounds," he stated.

Crown prosecutors had yet to present their case when *The CJN* went to press. The hearing is expected to run into December and its outcome will determine whether Diab will be sent to France for trial.

THE FIRST STEP: Quebec Premier Jean Charest, third from right, takes part in the official groundbreaking for the Jewish General Hospital's (JGH) new critical-care pavilion. The Quebec government has committed $93.8 million for the first phase of construction of Pavilion K, which will replace the over-stretched emergency department that now receives 70,000 patients annually. It will also eventually house intensive, coronary and neonatal intensive care units. Others seen are, from left, D'Arcy McGee MNA Lawrence Bergman, Finance Minister Raymond Bachand, Environment Minister Pierre Bachand, JGH executive director Hartley Stern, Health Minister Yves Bolduc, JGH president Bernard Stotland, and planning director Philippe Castiel.

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Conference releases Ottawa Protocol

'Selective condemnation of Israel is hateful'

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

"Criticism of Israel is not anti-Semitic, and saying so is wrong. But singling Israel out for selective condemnation and opprobrium – let alone denying its right to exist or seeking its destruction – is discriminatory and hateful, and not saying so is dishonest."

That's the blunt statement of the Ottawa Protocol on combating anti-Semitism, which was drafted last week as the outcome of the three-day 2010 Conference on Combating Antisemitism held in Ottawa.

(The protocol is reproduced in its entirety on *The CJN*'s Perspectives page this week.)

On Nov. 9, the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism (ICCA) – which co-hosted the conference along with the government of Canada – ratified the protocol, a series of recommendations that seeks to end hateful propaganda online and in places such as university campuses.

The 250 experts and politicians from 53 countries who attended said in the protocol that the coalition aims to stop the growth of the kind of criticism of Israel that the delegates say is increasingly a vehicle for anti-Semitism.

The coalition also called on universities to "combat anti-Semitism with the same seriousness with which they confront other forms of hate."

The Internet is the next frontier in the fight against anti-Semitism, the protocol says, adding that the "explosion" of hate on the web needs to be addressed, as it is "a medium crucial for the promotion and protection of freedom of expression, freedom of information, and the participation of civil society."

The coalition hopes to convince major Internet companies such as Google and YouTube to play a bigger role in the fight against anti-Semitism and remove offensive material from their websites.

Mount Royal Liberal MP and ICCA co-founder Irwin Cotler told *The CJN* that the conference – the second such event after an inaugural one in London last year – was a success.

Aside from the number of delegates in attendance, Cotler said it was the "representative character" of the event that was important to note.

Irwin Cotler

"We had important representation from Africa, Kenya, Rwanda, the Congo and from Asia… all unanimously battling anti-Semitism," he said, adding that delegates from these areas of the world weren't present at the inaugural conference in London last year.

"It's difficult to ever get a consensus [on an issue], let alone unanimity. But here you had parliamentarians from more than 50 countries who adopted the protocol. And the protocol reflects both the compelling nature of the concerns and the unanimity with respect to what had to be done," Cotler said.

As a result of this conference, going forward, the ICCA steering committee will now include African and Asian members, he said.

Protocol signatories also committed to various actions to confront the spread of anti-Semitism and racism in general. These include, the establishment of "an international task force of Internet specialists" to identify and monitor anti-Semitism and other manifestations of hate online and the development of policy recommendations "for governments and international frameworks to address these problems," the protocol says.

U.S. Congressman Chris Smith will head up the task force and chair a special forum on the subject in the United States next year.

Signatories also promised to build on African representation at the Ottawa conference in order to "develop increased working relationships" with that continent's parliamentarians to help fight racism and anti-Semitism.

The Ottawa Protocol expands on the Declaration on Combating Antisemitism crafted in London last year – also known as the London Declaration – at the founding conference of the coalition.

With files from JTA

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Karsenty continues to expose al-Dura 'hoax'

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When French media analyst Philippe Karsenty first expressed doubts that the Israeli army had killed 12-year-old Mohammad al-Dura at the onset of the second intifadah, he was widely reviled as a nut case or right-wing extremist.

After all, everybody knew that al-Dura had been killed at the Netzarim junction in Gaza, as his father and he huddled behind a concrete barrel to avoid Israeli fire. The prestigious government-owned France 2 network had reported it, hadn't they? And France 2's Jerusalem bureau chief, Charles Enderlin, who narrated the news story, was acclaimed as a top-notch journalist, wasn't he?

Today, however, if you Google "al-Dura hoax," some 19,000 results pop up. Two years ago, a French appeals court ruled in Karsenty's favour in a case brought by Enderlin, finding that Karsenty did not libel the France 2 journalist when he claimed Enderlin's al-Dura coverage was a fabrication.

Today, Karsenty is finding a much more receptive audience when he argues that the al-Dura incident was a concoction of Palestinian media misinformation, a technique that has been dubbed "Pallywood."

Philippe Karsenty

"At first, people said Karsenty was a nut case. I wasn't mainstream," Karsenty said last week. "Now it's mainstream."

Karsenty, who doggedly continues to expose the al-Dura case 10 years after the event, was in Toronto as part of a four-day trip that saw him address audiences in London, Toronto and Ottawa. He appeared on CTS' *Michael Coren Show*, where he debated the veracity of media coverage of the incident. He was in Toronto as a guest of the International Free Press Society and in Ottawa he appeared at the 1st Annual Free Thinking Film Festival.

His North American tour also includes stops in Los Angeles, Berkeley, Palm Beach, Washington and New York City.

Clearly the al-Dura case continues to motivate him and interest the public, even after so much time has passed. Why so?

"The truth," he said. "The truth is an icebreaker. This is why the truth will prevail. We're not working for the news of tomorrow, but for history. This is a historical case that has caused so much damage and which proves the reporting of news from the Middle East is inaccurate."

Karsenty asserts that the al-Dura coverage and photos from the incident "have inflamed the Muslim world against the western world and Israel." The incident has been cited by Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, a still image of the incident was visible in the background when Islamic extremists murdered American journalist Daniel Pearl, and "Muslim and Arab states have issued postage stamps with al-Dura."

"It's been hard to convey the message that it was a hoax," Karsenty said. "For most of the time, people wouldn't even listen to me or debate. Yesterday was the first debate we ever had [on the *Michael Coren Show*]. It's [hard] to believe it was such a fabrication. It took time for people to admit the concept of a huge fraud."

Take a look at the last video image of the boy, in which he is apparently dead, Karsenty said. There is no blood, even though he and his father were supposed to have been hit by 15 bullets altogether.

Even after he exposed the incident as a fabrication, the French establishment rallied to support Enderlin, Karsenty said.

Enderlin recently published a book, *A Child Was Killed*, in which he continues to assert the veracity of the al-Dura narrative.

"All the book is about his suffering, that he's the victim of conspiracy theorists," Karsenty said.

"I'm getting more and more allies," Karsenty continued. "At the beginning, most of my support was from the right, but now extreme leftists [from Israel's Meretz Party and *Ha'aretz* newspaper] are coming on side. The truth is stronger than politics."

The Israeli government is now offering stronger refutation of the al-Dura allegations, and even in his home in Neuilly, France, fellow Frenchmen are ignoring the "character assassination" campaign aimed at him, Karsenty said.

Two years ago, he won a race for deputy mayor of the Parisian suburb, where French President Nicolas Sarkozy once served as mayor. He defeated one of Sarkozy's aides in the race.

Karsenty believes he won because "the constituents are more intelligent than the establishment. People have common sense and understand they have been manipulated by the media."

Karsenty urges consumers of Middle East news to be skeptical about reports from the region.

"A narrative was created 30, 40 years ago that depicts Israel as monsters and criminals and the Palestinians as victims. Since then, in every case the media try to make [events] fit this narrative, so Israel is always criticized."

That perspective doesn't necessarily put him on the Israeli side. He wants the public to be skeptical even when hearing the views of Israeli authorities.

"Bring me evidence," he said. "I'm cautious... Nobody will deliver bad information about themselves."

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Ordination in Berlin: a cantor's account

From left are Rabbi Robert Jacobs, Cantor Gershon Silins, Rabbi David Lilienthal and Rabbi Walter Rothschild. *[Tobias Barniske photo]*

By CANTOR GERSHON SILINS

The Reform Judaism of my childhood in Chicago was imbued with a German spirit, of which I was barely aware.

I did not know then that Reform Judaism had begun in Germany in 1810 and had flourished there until it was sent into exile by the murderous betrayal that was the Holocaust.

Guest Voice

This liberal German Judaism featured remarkable figures such as Rabbi Herman Schaalman, the Munich-born rabbi of the Chicago congregation I grew up in, and Max Janowski, the Berlin-born, Chicago-based musician and composer perhaps best known for his wonderful setting of *Avinu Malkenu* and with whom I sang when I was a teenager. And there were those that I met later, such as Rabbi Gunther Plaut in Toronto and Rabbi Walter Jacob, whom I met in the early 1990s, when I was the cantor in Ernest Bloch's *Sacred Service* at the rededication of the Pittsburgh congregation Rabbi Jacob has served for so many years. The German Reform Jewish Diaspora, with its values of scholarship, liberalism and nobility of the human spirit, has spread through the entire world. It was the air I breathed as a child and youth.

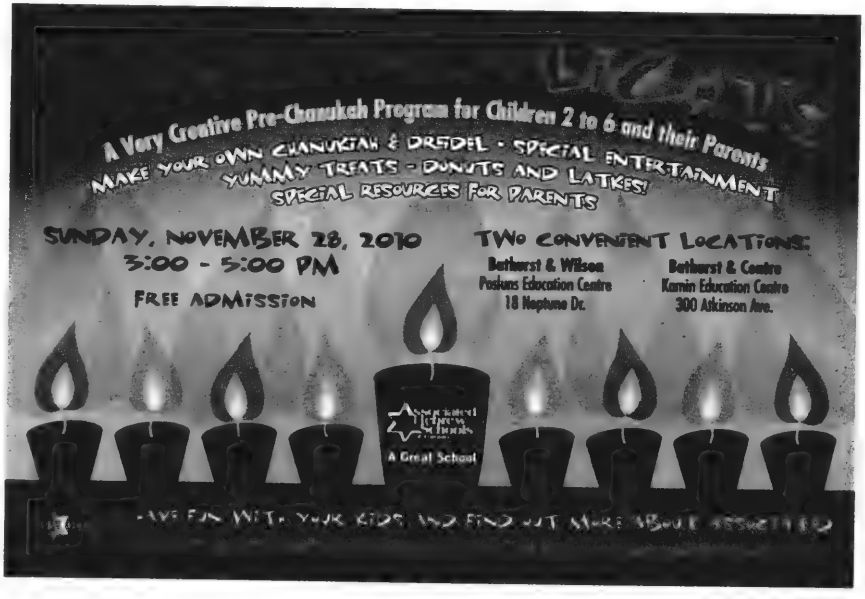
On Nov. 4, 2010, Reform clergy gathered to participate in the ordination of rabbis at the Abraham Geiger College in Berlin. They were joined by clergy of all denominations, as well as diplomats and political figures from Europe, North and South America and Africa. Featured prominently among them was Christian Wulff, the president of Germany, something unimaginable only a few decades ago.

It was an extraordinary honour for me to be invited to serve as cantor at this service at the historic Pestalozzi Street Synagogue, one of the few German synagogues to survive Kristallnacht. The world press had its imagination further captured by Alina Treiger, the first woman rabbi to be ordained in Germany in 75 years. Her predecessor, Regina Jonas, the first female rabbi ever to have been ordained, died at Auschwitz.

In so many ways, this event marked the powerful resurgence of progressive Jewish life not only in Germany but in all of Europe. The three rabbis who were ordained were all from the former Soviet Union, the children of yet another Jewish Diaspora, exiled from a regime that sought to destroy Judaism. And now here, they were bringing back to Germany the values that German Reform Judaism had given to the world. Extraordinary, too, is the fact that the Abraham Geiger College, the seminary that has produced these new rabbis, is located in Berlin.

It was inspiring for me to sing the music of Janowski, which I had sung with him as a teenager, as well as two settings by Ben Steinberg, who has made the Reform values so manifest in his music, and with whom I have worked closely for many years. As I stood on the bimah facing the open ark, I could see the tears on the face of Rabbi Treiger and I heard the voices of my childhood, and the spirit of a people who have, despite all, not been vanquished, sing through me.

Gershon Silins is the cantor of Temple Sinai Congregation of Toronto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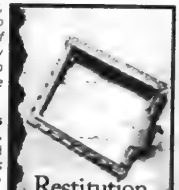

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Jewish Life

Chanukah 'app-ticipation'

Jewish & Digital
By Mark Mietkiewicz

Chanukah is quickly approaching but if you can't wait and want a quick holiday fix, just head over to the Apple iTunes store. You'll find an assortment of free and low-cost apps for your iPhone and iPod Touch to put you in the holiday mood.

Menorah is not only free, it's great. You can choose to read the Chanukah blessings in Hebrew, English or transliterated into English script. And during the holiday, the animation will show you which direction to light the candles. [http://bit.ly/chapp1]

If you don't happen to have a real dreidel around, **Dreidel, Dredel, Dradel** (free) can come in handy. Double-tap on the screen to watch the virtual dreidel spin and eventually stop. You'll have to keep track of bets and who's winning manually. (And yes, that is how this app is spelled.) [http://bit.ly/chapp16]

Dreidel Dreidel Dreidel ($1.99) gives you another version of the game (along with more consistent spelling). The game works fine, but I'm perplexed by a game that has a dreidel spinning and landing on sheets of matzah! [http://bit.ly/chapp17] I also did a double-take when I saw its oh-so-serious warning: "Rated 12+ for the following: frequent/intense simulated gambling."

Save your money for **Super Dreidel** (99¢). Finally, a game that lets you select the number of players, enter their names, choose how much money you want in your bank and keeps score, too. You can even select variations of the game, including Traditional, Vegas and Turbo. (My only gripe is that some of the Hebrew letters are printed backwards on the dreidel!) [http://bit.ly/chapp18]

Dreidel tap (free) doesn't really have anything to do with Chanukah but that doesn't mean it's not fun. You are presented with an assortment of dreidels careening around the screen. Your goal is to tap them as quickly as possible without hitting any of the floating burning candles. [http://bit.ly/chapp19]

I found **Hanukkah Match** (free) even more addictive. In the manner of the old Concentration memory game, you tap on the screen and are presented a glimpse of symbols of the holiday (menorahs, gelt, latkes, etc.) Your goal is to remember where each symbol is and match it up to its twin as quickly as possible. [http://bit.ly/chapp20]

Chanuka Guide (free) has a great deal of valuable information about the holiday and even some humour. Unfortunately, I can't give it a complete thumbs-up because I found the interface confusing. To get the most out of the guide, you'll have to learn how to manoeuvre through it. [http://bit.ly/chapp14] Unless you need info at your fingertips, consider doing a simple online search.

Almost all the apps that I came across were designed for iPhone and iPod Touch. But if you happen to have an Android-based phone, you're in luck. **Happy Chanukah** (free) lets you "light" the candles on the go. [http://bit.ly/chapp13]

Although many Apple apps cost only 99¢, sometimes I felt even that low price was way too steep. For example, do I *really* need an app like **Hanukkah Gift Tracker** just so I can write down all the Chanukah gifts that I have received? [http://bit.ly/chapp11] And although I'm sure that **Days to Hanukkah** does precisely what it sets out to do, I think I'll save the buck and check out my calendar. [http://bit.ly/chapp12]

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based website producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be contacted at highway@rogers.com.

An open-source Jewish future

Class Act
By Daniel Held

If the headliners at the federation system's General Assembly in New Orleans last week were Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden, the warm-up act was the Jewish Futures Conference. A collaborative effort of the Covenant Foundation, JESNA's Lippman Kanfer Institute and New York's Board of Jewish Education, the two-hour conference was designed as a TED Talk (www.ted.com), brief 18-minute presentations to showcase the types of creativity and innovation that will drive Jewish education in the 21st century.

I have been to many conferences that discussed and debated the Jewish future. This one brought new ideas and new voices to the table in two ways.

First, the speakers weren't the usual Jewish-conference-philes. Ori Brafman, an Israeli who founded healthy fast food restaurants; Laurie Karr, a marketing and strategy expert, and Marc Prensky, creator of educational gaming software, bridged their areas of expertise with the needs of today's Jewish community. I was particularly excited to learn – via live Twitter feed – from Prensky, who coined the phrases "digital native" and "digital immigrant" that I've used in previous columns.

Second, in the lead-up to the conference, organizers convened the Jewish Futures Competition. Young innovators from around the world were asked to submit short videos of their ideas. The winners were invited to speak at the conference.

Russel Neiss and Charlie Schwartz created one of the winning entries. The pair met during the PresentTense summer fellowship for social innovators, and their partnership birthed www.mediamidrash.org, an online platform that links YouTube-type videos with educational lesson plans.

Neiss and Schwartz's animated video is pithy and fun to watch. Telling the story of the Cohens, a fictitious family of four, Neiss and Schwartz lay out what they believe to be the four cornerstones of 21st-century Jewish education: that it be open, remixable, meaningful and relevant, and community-building. Each of the Cohens – four-year-old Rose, college-aged David, Mother Molly, a physician, and father Robert, a teacher – is engaged in Jewish learning that represents these values. The final submission – both its animated clips and its central ideas – is fascinating. But rather than focus on their pitch, which you can find at www.sendcharlieandrusseltonola.com, I'd like to focus on how they developed their ideas.

Neiss and Schwartz used open-source technology to garner ideas and contributions from a wide range of thinkers. Open source is a system that promotes the transparency and sharing of source data. In the computing world, Wikipedia and Linux are examples of open, collaborative projects that believe they can garner the best results by sharing their intellectual property and asking for refinements and contributions. Recently some pharmaceutical companies have tried a similar tactic in malaria research by opening their research databases to speed up development of drugs treat the mosquito-borne disease.

Rather than hide their ideas from potential competitors, Neiss and Schwartz put their plans online and asked for feedback. Contributors posted questions and comments, links to articles and videos that helped fine-tune the vision. The final submission was created out of this collaborative and open process.

In addition to visions, the Jewish future needs more thinkers such as Neiss and Schwartz who are willing to share their ideas and open them to critique and collaboration. By engaging in open-source thinking, leaders in Jewish education will be able to harness the new forms of creativity demanded by a diverse and dynamic Jewish community.

Jewish Life

AEPi fraternity stresses philanthropy

Oct. 3 marked the Alpha Epsilon Pi (AEPi) Canadian conclave in the nation's capital, Ottawa. At the University of Ottawa, brothers from across the country met with one another and with international delegates to discuss the future of the fraternity.

ON CAMPUS
By Justin Dahan

After the meeting, AEPi members decided to participate in a small philanthropic event. They took a large case of fresh DiRenzo's turkey, roast beef sandwiches and two large containers of pasta to the Ottawa Mission on Daly Avenue, just a few minutes away from the university campus. The mission helps the homeless and those at risk of being homeless in the Ottawa region.

Two Ottawa brothers went into the mission's office and spoke to the staff about donating food. The mission's staff members took the fraternity members to the kitchen to set up the food for the homeless.

"The staff seemed thrilled when we told them we were donating all this food. It always feels good to help out the community. It is events like this that make me proud to be part of AEPi," said Mark Klibanov, one of the brothers who made the donation. Klibanov is an active member of AEPi Ottawa, and he's also the president of the Israel Advocacy Committee at the university. He has always been active in AEPi's philanthropic events.

The second brother who was involved in the food donation to the mission is Ilan Orzy. Orzy, who is the philanthropy chair for the Ottawa chapter of AEPi, carried the sandwiches to the mission. He believes that events like this are important and was pleased to take part in it. "I was glad that we were able to help out, even by doing something as simple as taking a box of sandwiches to hungry people," Orzy said.

Robert Rinkoff, the president of AEPi Ottawa, spoke about the emphasis the fraternity puts on philanthropic events. "Every year at our conventions [this past year in New Orleans], AEPi national is always stressing philanthropic events, and the building of AEPi and surrounding communities," Rinkoff said.

The donation to the Ottawa Mission is neither the first nor will it be the last event to demonstrate AEPi's philanthropy. Philanthropic events such as AEPi's participation in the Chabad Food Bank menorah drive show that AEPi cares about the availability of kosher food for the community, he added.

"Every person has something to give during this time of the year, and AEPi wants to show that everyone should be able to have food on Chanukah or Christmas. It's a great feeling to be a part of something we all believe is special," Rinkoff said.

Every year the Ottawa chapter holds annual philanthropy events, including a blood drive and volunteering for a heart institute telethon. As well as their annual events, the chapter has always added events that soon became traditions. Hopefully, donating sandwiches and participating in the Chabad Food Bank menorah drive become annual events.

Both Orzy and Rinkoff are aware that although they have started this year off strongly as far as philanthropic events go, they still need to continue to plan more events that will continue to enhance AEPi's reputation in Ottawa.

My new take on turning 40

In my youth, I remember people talking about turning 40. Many said it was the time when aches and pains begin to appear, the time of mid-life crises, the age when you begin to realize that you are getting old.

Consequently, it always seemed to me an age that I should approach with trepidation.

Turning 40 recently, I started to think about the significance of this number, and my feelings about turning 40 began to change.

SEPHARDI WINDOW
By Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Columbia University professor Walter Plitkin, considering the age-old question of whether or not life really does begin at 40, emphatically says "yes" in his famous and oft-quoted 1932 bestseller *Life Begins at 40*. The Torah agrees that life does begin at 40, though not in the same way that Plitkin maintains it does. Forty is a richly symbolic number in the Torah, as we shall see.

The number 40 is ubiquitous in the Torah, where it consistently underscores themes of transformation and renewal. Yom Kippur, for instance, is the 40th day of the repentance period. The Torah tells us that Moses ascends Mount Sinai to commune with God for 40 days and to receive the life- and world-transforming Torah.

Moses, having returned to a people worshipping a golden calf, smashes the tablets and returns on Rosh Chodesh Elul to climb the mountain yet again to convene with God for another 40 days. We observe the day of Moses' second descent as Yom Kippur, the 10th day of Tishrei. He returns this day with a second set of tablets, signifying God's forgiveness of His people, His acceptance of their repentance, and His people's new lease on life.

In Deuteronomy, Moses, after leading the Jewish people for 40 years in the wilderness, tells them, "God has not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, until this day" (29:3-4). Here we see that it took the Jewish people 40 years in the desert before they could internalize, mentally and spiritually, the events that took place.

Furthermore, the Mishnah in Ethics of Our Fathers (5:24) tells us, "A person of 40 attains understanding." Rashi's comment on this Mishnah is that a person who turns 40 has the maturity to understand the essence of the issues and challenges confronting him throughout his life.

Elsewhere, the Torah states that, when a person becomes ritually impure, he must immerse himself completely in a mikvah, a ritual bath, which the Talmud (Yoma 4b) tells us must be filled with 40 measures of water. After this immersion, he leaves the mikvah ritually pure, just as the world emerged pure after it rained for 40 days and 40 nights, as we learn in the story of Noah.

When I ponder these ideas at some length, I feel reassured that 40 is indeed a positive, even hopeful, number. We see that 40 is truly a recurring and powerful symbol of birth, rebirth and change. Just as Rabbi Akiva started his Torah life at the age of 40, I suspect that all of us, upon review and inspection, may well find that the number 40 features significantly in each of our lives.

I understand now that, in many ways, life really does begin at 40!

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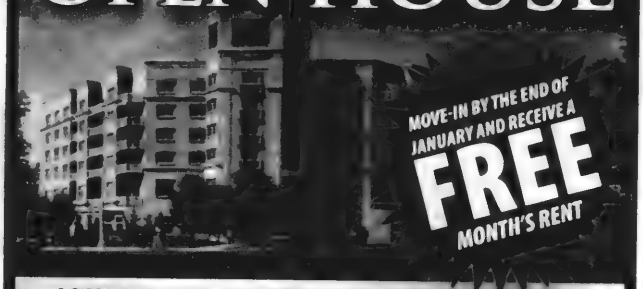

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Class Acts

REAL RUNNERS: Bialik Hebrew Day School Grade 4 girls, from left, Kylie Barkin, Kaylen Soriano, Lauren Lewis, Margot Sigel, Jayden Rouhi, Shira Wine and Carly Lanfer, pose with their coaches Poppie Butler, left, and Robyn Rosen Codas after finishing in top spots at the recent Jewish Day School Cross Country Meet.

ISRAELI PROMOTION: Senior kindergarten students at Leo Baeck Day School's Thornhill campus place handmade badges on Israeli Defence Forces emissary Roi Zohar-Melamud after a visit and discussion about army life in Israel.

TZEDAKAH LESSON: Grade 4 and 5 students at Netivot HaTorah Day School recently learned about the important work of the Hazon Yeshaya Humanitarian Network, which serves thousands of hot meals daily and provides free dental and vocational services for Israelis in need. Pictured after the assembly on the topic are, standing from left, Grade 5 students Tohar, Daniel, Dveer and Rena with, seated, Sharon Bobrove, a Hazon Yeshaya volunteer, and Rabbi Abraham Israel, the group's founder and director. *[Rebecca Ansel photo]*

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Only paid Family Moments announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first-come, first-served basis, as space allows.

Mazel tov announcements featured on onlysimchas.com will appear as space permits.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum.

To send in digital photos, please visit

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and click the Family Moments banner at the top.

Congratulations Jenn & Joe on your recent engagement. We are so happy for both of you. We love you both. From your family.

Yoel Aharon, you were brilliant at the Kotel and stupendous at shul on Sukkot! Mazel tov on your bar mitzvah celebrations. Love, the Yakobi family.

Mazel tov Ronnie & Bella Weber on your 50th anniversary. Love, Danny, Sandy, Hillel, Emily, family and friends.

Mazel tov Tola & Ben Granek, celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary. Life partners, inspiring us with their quiet heroism. Love, Marvin, Joanne, Justin, Willie, Henry.

Mazel tov to Harry & Hanna Fisher celebrating their 70th anniversary and 90th birthdays in 2010. Love your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov to Jackie Sherkey & Dave Schwartz on their engagement. Delighted parents are Shelley & Evelyn Sherkey and Jack & Nina Schwartz and families.

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What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

Our regular columnist, Leila Spetsman, is away on medical leave.

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Deadline for Dec. 2 is Nov. 22. Deadline for Dec. 9 is Nov. 29. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Nov. 18

INTER-GENERATIONAL JAZZ

Jazz for Juniors and Spirited Seniors at Baycrest, Winter Garden Court. 7-8 p.m. Meet neighbours of all ages by enjoying jazz together.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Rabbi Jared Grover talks about Jewish websites. Beth Tikvah. 2-4 p.m. $3. Refreshments served.

Friday, Nov. 19

SOUNDS OF SINAI

"Jews and the Jazz They Made," with **Cantor Gershon Silins**. Hear **Andrew Scott** and friends play music from the Andrews Sisters, **Johnny Mercer** and **Al Jolson**. 8 p.m. Temple Sinai. 416-487-3281.

Saturday, Nov. 20

SHABBAT SERMON

Shaar Shalom social action team presents "Homelessness and Poverty in the Suburbs." With **Rehana Sumar**, executive director of the Mosaic Interfaith Out of the Cold. All welcome. Service at 8:45 a.m. Sermon at 10:45 a.m.

SHABBAT SERVICE (1)

B'nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel's monthly Shabbat service, 10 a.m. in Oakville. Conservative, egalitarian congregation. bnaishalom.ca, 905-901-9889.

SHABBAT SERVICE (2)

Kol Yisroel is a Conservative synagogue. 9:30 a.m. Kiddush follows. No membership fees. Borochov Cultural Centre. 416-930-9444.

TWINNING WEEKEND

Temple Emanu-El and Noor Cultural Centre. 7:30 p.m. Noor Cultural Centre, 123 Wynford Dr. "Inner Battles and Outer battles – Struggling With the Language and Imagery of War Within Our Traditions." Free.

TPM MEETS

Rabbi Daniel Sperber, Talmud professor at Bar Ilan U, speaks at TPM Central. 9 a.m. torontopartnershipminyan.com. TPM South – next meeting Nov. 27 at Beit Habonim, 9 a.m. TPM Thornhill next meeting Dec. 4 at Reena Centre, 9 a.m.

'WOMEN AND RITUAL'

"The Changing Role of Women and Ritual," panel discussion with **Rahel Bercovits, Rivkah Blau, Rabbi Aryeh Frimer** and **Rabbi Daniel Sperber**. Or Chaim Yeshiva. 8 p.m. 416-633-5770.

CHINA AND ISRAEL

Xu Xin, director of the Glazer Institute for Jewish Studies at Nanjing University. "Chinese-Israeli Relations: Past, Present and Future." 8 p.m. Congregation B'nai Torah.

Sunday, Nov. 21

MEET THE SHADCHANS

Unique opportunity to network face to face with male and female shadchanim. Clanton Park Synagogue, 11 Lowesmoor Ave. Men: 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Women: 1:30-4:30 p.m. All ages. Bring multiple shidduch profiles with photos. First come, first served. 416-256-4497.

AARON NUSSBAUM SPEAKS

Beth David Brotherhood presents **Aaron Nussbaum** on "Dead Sea Scrolls – Miqsat Ma'ase Torah – MMT – the beginnings of Rabbinic Judaism." 9:15 a.m. following breakfast. All welcome. $5 at the door covers breakfast.

JUDAICA SALE

Beth David Synagogue's Judaica-shop sale. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Up to 50 per cent off selected items.

WOMEN'S BEIT MIDRASH

Featuring **Elana Stein Hain** on "The Role of Rabbinic Loopholes." Ulpanat Orot, 45 Canyon Ave. 9:30-11:45 a.m. 416-633-5770.

Continued on page 31

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Continued from page 30

Tuesday, Nov. 23

LUNCH AND LEARN

Gary Clement, political cartoonist for the *National Post*, on "Seriously Funny: My Life as a Cartoonist." 12:15 p.m. Beth Tikvah. By reservation only. 416-221-3433, ext. 352

Wednesday, Nov. 24

PAUL PENNA OPEN HOUSE

Paul Penna Day School, senior kindergarten to Grade 6 open house 10 a.m. 750 Spadina Ave. RSVP: 416-928-3537 ext. 135.

BIALIK INFO SESSION

Bialik Hebrew Day School invites prospective parents living in the north GTA to attend an upcoming session about their new branch on the Lebovic Campus, Bialik North. 7 p.m. TanenbaumCHAT Kimel Centre. 9600 Bathurst St. Perlis boardroom **Danielle**, danielle_waltman@bialik.on.ca.

Other News

NCSY CONCERT

30th annual NCSY concert and gala dinner. **Eli Gerstner** and Yeshiva Boys Choir perform. Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. Toronto Centre for the Arts. ncsy-concert.com, 905-761-6279, ext. 230, for tickets.

WEEKEND RETREAT

Beth Tikvah weekend retreat: "Pathways to Faith and Prayer through *Mussar*," with **Alan Morinis**. Nov. 26-28. 416-221-3433.

'NEW JEWISH PHILOSOPHY'

Temple Har Zion adult education committee presents **Michael Morgan** on "New Jewish philosophy: New Ideas for a New Millennium." Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m. 905-889-2252.

MICHAEL WEX

Author **Michael Wex** comes to Beth David with his new book, *The Frumkiss Family Business*. Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m. Free. All welcome. 416-633-5500.

SHABBAT SERVICE

Join Temple Har Zion for Shabbat. 8 p.m. After the service, **Marilyn Eisenstat** on "China Remembered." Nov. 26. 905-889-2252.

FILM FESTIVAL

Renaissance Film Festival at Temple Sinai. Nov. 26-28. Temple members $95, non-members $115 for four films. Visa or MasterCard. Advance registration. 416-487-3281.

ALBERTO MIZRAHI

Cantor Alberto Mizrahi will be cantor-in-residence at Beth Sholom. Nov. 27, 9 a.m.

HEALING SERVICE

Jewish Healing Program presents a healing service. Nov. 28, 3-4 p.m. Temple Har Zion. Free. 416-638-7800 ext. 6287.

GIFT AND CRAFT SHOW

Kinda Gift and Craft Show, in support of Hospice Thornhill. Nov. 28, 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. North Thornhill Community Centre, 300 Pleasant Ridge Ave.

EDMONTON DAY SCHOOL

Talmud Torah School in Edmonton celebrates its 100th anniversary in May 2012. Visit http://tt100.ca for updates about celebrations, from May 18-20, 2012. 780-481-3377.

JF&CS GROUPS

Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit jfandcs.com. Registration required.

How to achieve a good divorce. Workshop for people thinking of separating or in the beginning stages of separation and divorce. Presented by lawyer and divorce coach/mediator. Nov. 23, 7-9 p.m. Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

Effective parenting. For parents with kids ages 2-11. Nov. 25, 7-9 p.m. Lipa Green Centre.

Dating in midlife. For men and women 40+ who have been single 2 or more years and want to nurture a lasting relationship. Nov. 25, 7-9:30 p.m. Lipa Green Centre.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC: Nov. 18, 1:30 p.m. "Great Jewish Canadian Personalities: J. B. Salzberg." **Adam Fuerstenberg.**

Connecting the generations. Meet a student over catered lunch. Enjoy Jewish heritage tour at the ROM. 416-924-621, ext. 155.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Association of Jewish Seniors annual Chanukah luncheon. Dec. 2, 12 p.m. Shaarei Shomayim. Doors open at 11 a.m. Pre-paid reservation only: $20 members, $25 non-members. **Tammy:** 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Dec. 15, departs 10 a.m. Lunch and Laughter: latkes, etc. Nov. 30, 12 p.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Social circle – needlepoint, etc. Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m. For info about seniors woodworking, call 416-630-6487. Open to members.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Famous Jewish Trials – Julius and Ethel Rosenberg." Nov. 23, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

Wellness lecture: "Fall Prevention" with Bayshore Home Health. Nov. 25, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Free.

Retirement Living Fair. Nov. 24, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Free.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Half The Kingdom challenged us, 20 years ago, to rethink the role of women in Judaism. Now we ask, "What's next?" Nov. 30, 7:15 p.m. Bloor Cinema. Optional screening of movie at 6 p.m.

Nov. 21, 2-4:30 p.m. Mind, Body and Soul seminar series. "Raising and Sustaining Healthy Families." Free. **Natalie**, ext. 4036.

Registration for Prosserman JCC Daycare and Preschool for Sept. 2011 is now open. Ext. 4351.

Nov. 24, 12-1 p.m. crEATivity club – **Susan Walker** performs flamenco and talk about its origin. Professional Retirees Organization will stay on from 1-2 p.m. for program meeting. New participants welcome. **Janet**, ext. 4259.

Friday dinner, Nov. 26, with the Jewish singles group Plenty-o-Gefiltefish. Visit JCC website or meetup.com/plenty-o-gefiltefish.

Line dancing – variety of dance styles. No partner necessary. Fridays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Pay at the door.

Movie Mondays with **Larry Anklewicz**. Nov. 29, *Watermarks*. 1:30 p.m. Doors at 1 p.m. $5.

Family Programs: Shabbat party, preschool dance, Sports With Jay and sing-along with **Deborah Maes**. **Monique**, ext. 4012.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Sundays, 8 a.m., and Thursdays, 7:15 a.m. Complete kosher breakfast after services. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Toronto Jewish Film Society. 2011 subscription season selling out. Eight great films from January to December on selected Sundays at Al Green Theatre. Noted speakers introduce and discuss each film. Joelle: ext. 139 to register.

Renee Barda: Life Begins Again! With **Dorothy Krizmanic**, **Gideon Wilk** and **John Lettieri**. Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $22 regular, $18 group (10 or more). Tickets/info: ext. 0.

Harold Green Jewish Theatre presents *Lenin's Embalmers*. Closes Nov. 21. 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $49-$76. 416-366-7723.

Media Mondays, lectures with film clips. "Surfing the New Waves: Contemporary Foreign-Language Cinema." *Eye Weekly* film critic **Adam Nayman** examines the style and substance of recent art-house exports. Nov. 22, 7-9 p.m. $12 drop in per lecture. Ext. 606.

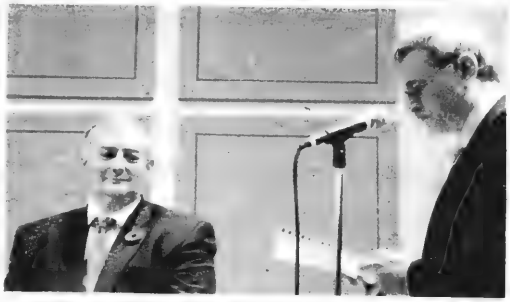
1960s-themed Book Salon and Coffee House. Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m. **Harold Troper** discusses his new book, *The Defining Decade*, with **Dan Mendelsohn Aviv**. With musical performances featuring songs from and inspired by the '60s. Ext. 154.

Book launch, Nov. 29 7 p.m. Jacobs Lounge. **Adam Seelig**'s literary debut, *Every Day in the Morning (slow)*. Ext. 154.

Chanukah cooking workshop. Nov. 30, 7-9 p.m. Join **Elise Burton** to cook dishes perfect for your Chanukah party. Ext. 154.

Dec. 5, 12-2 p.m. Family Chanukah celebration. Latkes, music, games and crafts. Ext. 277.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com



RABBI SMILEY RECEIVES HONORARY DEGREE: Barry Holtz, right, dean of the Jewish Theological Seminary's William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education, presents Rabbi Mark Smiley, director of education at Associated Hebrew Schools, with an honorary doctorate of pedagogy from JTS. Rabbi Smiley was the only Canadian to receive an honorary doctorate. *[JTS and JEA photo]*

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 34

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OBITUARIES
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BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Shirley Levinsky	Oct 23/10	3560 Bathurst St
David Rozen	Oct 23/10	41 Thomson Legge
Freda Weiner	Oct 24/10	2 Buchin Crt
Ben Kanter	Oct 27/10	147 Spring Gate
David Fine	Oct 26/10	133 Gypsy Roseway
Esther Walsh	Oct 27/10	54 Blue Forest Drive
Mania Dattner	Oct 29/10	2 Covington Road
Sonya Kachkina	Oct 31/10	99 Brightsview Drive
Gideon Feldman	Nov 1/10	100 Canyon Avenue
Mary Hain	Nov 2/10	1101 Steeles Ave W
Henia Goldstep	Nov 2/10	11 Townsgate Drive
Leona Hurwitz	Nov 3/10	21 Mayfair Avenue
Ethelda Weinstein	Nov 4/10	21 Mayfair Avenue
Ann Bell	Nov 5/10	3048 Uplands Drive
Allen Cole	Nov 4/10	19 Lower Village Gt
Sandra Johnson	Nov 4/10	250 St. Clair Ave W
Gerald Rose	Nov 5/10	4300 Bathurst St.

HEBREW BASIC

Michael Lustgarten	Oct 14/10	17 Dallington Drive
Margot Needemyer	Oct 15/10	5935 Bathurst St.
Betty Wasserstein	Oct 30/10	1001 Peter Robertson
Ruth Diament	Nov 4/10	1318 Wilton Avenue

The President and Board of Trustees of
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The family of the late
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wishes to express our gratitude to all our family and friends for the support extended to us during our recent loss of a remarkable mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and special Auntie Ruchel.

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On Campus

Iran developing missiles to be fired from space: journalist

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has "among the most difficult jobs in the world," an Israeli journalist said recently – bringing peace to the Middle East and preventing the nuclearization of Iran.

Speaking to a large crowd at York University on Nov. 4, Gil Hoffman, chief political correspondent for the *Jerusalem Post*, discussed "Peace, Politics and Plutonium."

While a small group of protesters congregated outside, the atmosphere inside the university's Founders Assembly Hall remained mostly respectful.

The event was sponsored by a number of campus groups, including Canadian Network for Israel Affairs, B'nai Brith on Campus, Christians United for Israel at York, Hasbara at York, Jewish National Fund, Model N.A.T.O, York Campus Conservatives and York Young Liberals.

> ***'A military strike is never the best option'***

"I'm so happy that so many organizations came together to organize this event," Hoffman said. "The fact that you've got the Liberals and the Conservatives working together… shows that Israel is the kind of issue that unites people from all different backgrounds."

Hoffman, who is from Chicago and now lives in Jerusalem, said he is proud to be both Israeli and American.

"With the [recent United States] election, I made sure to vote.

"Nowadays I think I look at who I decide to vote for in a different way. Right now, I really just vote on the Israel issue. I look at all the names on the ballots, and then I write in Stephen Harper," he joked.

Hoffman said that there's more to Israel than just conflict.

"So much of the focus on Israel is regarding the peace process and security issues. I think it's really important to stress, before I get into those issues that Israel, is a country that shares Canada's liberal values, whether it's women's rights, gay rights, protecting minorities."

Right now, Israelis are especially concerned with preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, Hoffman said.

"Allowing a man [Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad] who denies the Holocaust and wants to make a new one… is not an option for the world. He's very serious when he talks about destroying Israel, and not only Israel but Europe as well.

"He's developing missiles that can be fired from space. He said as soon as he gets long-range capabilities, he's going to share it with his buddies, including the president of Venezuela, which would threaten America as well. So this is being taken very seriously."

Hoffman touched on four possible ways to halt Iran's nuclearization: the political approach, diplomatic approach, economic approach and military approach – "in that order," he said.

"The political approach was tried and failed, that was the election in Iran. The people in Iran deserve to have a democracy, they deserve to be treated better.

"Then when that didn't work," Hoffman said, "the world tried to reach out to Iran.

"Iran has said they want their nuclear power for energy, so Russia said we will take your uranium and enrich it and bring it back to you… in a way that can't be used for weapons. And Iran said no, really proving to the international community that they are aiming [to be] a military threat."

When the first two approaches didn't work, the focus then shifted to an economic approach – sanctions.

"Unfortunately, it took a good six months for sanctions to pass in the UN, but they passed in June," he said. "If given time, Netanyahu believes it can work.

The sanctions are definitely having an effect on the Iranian regime, Hoffman said, but added there is still work to be done.

"The sanctions are working. They are having a significant effect on putting pressure on the Iranian regime – and not on the Iranian people.

"Banks are not transferring money, insurance companies are not insuring Iranian ships docked around the world… planes are not being allowed to refuel in airports around the world, the Chinese have stopped using Iranian oil, the Iranian leadership has had to stop subsidizing food and gas and the Iranian administration has complained that the cost of imports has gone up by 30 per cent.

"It's having a significant impact, but the Israeli government believes that you have to keep tightening the sanctions.

"Unfortunately so far, even though the economic approach is putting pressure on the Iranian government, there are no signs that it's rethinking its nuclear program due to this pressure," Hoffman said.

If the sanctions don't work, that leaves the military approach, which is something no one in the Israeli government wants, Hoffman said.

"A military strike is never the best option… it's a horrible option that no one wants. Not Netanyahu, not anyone in the Israeli government currently. They want the economic approach to work, to bring down the Iranian regime or at least ramp up the pressure on Ahmadinejad to stop the nuclear program.

"I think it won't come to there being any kind of military strike," he added.

Something else Hoffman talked about was the many attempted boycotts of Israeli-made products and businesses.

"Whenever a cellphone goes off, it fills me with pride as an Israeli," he said, as his cellphone vibrated loudly, "because Israelis invented so many things that you use here at York. If anyone wants to boycott Israeli products, then you can't have a cellphone, any laptop computer on this campus… so [you would] go back into prehistoric times."

Vichy regime anti-Semitic, says Nazi fighter

By ELIAS LEVY
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Lawyer, historian, Nazi fighter Serge Klarsfeld recently unveiled an original, unedited, historic French government document annotated in Marshal Philippe Pétain's handwriting, establishing the Law Regarding the Status of Jews in October 1940.

"This indisputable document is formal proof that Vichy was a fiercely anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi regime led by a notorious anti-Semite – Marshal Pétain," Klarsfeld said in an interview from Paris.

Read Elias Levy's interview with Serge Klarsfeld on our website at cjnews.com

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'KOSHER' LABEL IN ADVERTISING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

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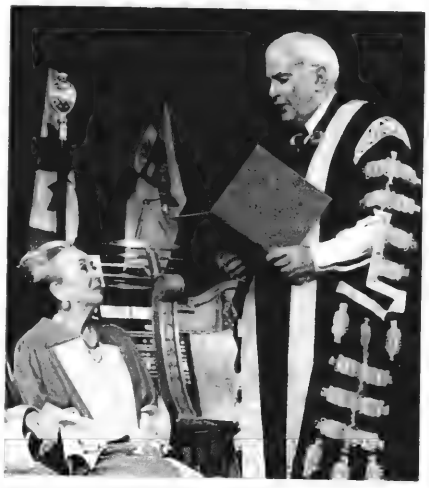
On Campus



HONORARY DEGREE AWARDED: On Nov. 10, the University of Toronto awarded Dorothy Cohen Shoichet an honorary doctor of laws degree in recognition of her business leadership and tireless volunteer efforts, particularly in the areas of education and the arts. Shoichet, a Toronto native, earned a political science and economics degree from the University of Illinois before getting her start in the business world as co-manager of the Oxford Picture Frame Company. While raising three children, Shoichet helped grow the company into Canada's largest manufacturer of picture frame moulding and accessories. Shoichet is a strong advocate of education, and has dedicated much of her life to volunteerism in this field. Her efforts have included serving as director of Dare Arts, a program for at-risk children, and also as both vice-president of the World ORT Union and president of the Canadian Women's ORT, one of the world's largest non-governmental education and training organizations. Her commitment to the arts is also reflected in her volunteerism with the Koffler Centre of the Arts and the Obsidian Theatre. Shoichet is an avid supporter of the University of Toronto, Mount Sinai Hospital and Baycrest. Here, U of T chancellor David Peterson, presents Cohen Shoichet with her degree.

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נאוות יחידה

"שישאר בינינו" משיק היום מדור חדש, שיעסוק בהישגים ישראליים מעוררי נאווה. והיום, לחגוג את ההשקה- שני הישגים שונים זה מזה בתכלית.
זה שיש לישראל אלופי עולם בשחמט ומתימטיקה- מתאים לציפיות מן הגנים היהודיים. זה שמפעם לפעם מצליחה ישראל להשיג פרס נובל במדעים- גם לזה התרגלנו. אבל אליפות עולם באינגוף!!! בסדר, כל ילד ישראלי הולך קצת מכות בהפסקת עשר ואולי גם בשכונה. אבל מזה ועד לאליפות עולם באינגוף!! ועוד אשה!!!!! ולא די בכך למפלס הנאווה- הגר פיינר הגנה על תוארה העולמי בטורונטו, תוך תמיכה בולטת של הקהילה היהודית.
בכתבה איתה ב"שלום טורונטו" מספרת הגר לשמעון זר אביב על אבא אלים, ועל זה שהיא בעצם די שבורה לרסיסים מהחבטות שכל השימפנזות החזקות בעולם חובטות בה, כולל שבר דורש ניתוח בפנים. מה עוד שמעבר לכבוד יש מזה מעט מאוד כסף.
יד על הלב- לדעתי צריך להוציא את האינגוף מחוץ לחוק! ספורט שמאפשר לאנשים לחבוט זה לזה בראש, כשכל חבטה מחשלת עם קבלת מאות תאי עצבים במוח- אסור שיקרה, ולבטח אסור שיזכה בתמיכה כלשהיא. רק לראות את מוחמד עלי , קאסיוס קליי האגדי מדדה בקושי ממחלת הפרקינסון שתקפה אותו בגיל צעיר- והנקודה ברורה. אבל בינתיים- שיא עולמי לישראלית דקיקה.
נאוות היחידה השניה להיום באה מארגון האומות המאוחדות, שמזה שנים מדרג אחת לשנה את כל מדינות העולם לפי איכות החיים שלהן. המדדים כוללים תמותת תינוקות, תוחלת חיים, חינוך ועוד כהנה וכהנה עשרות מדדים שמכונסים למספר סופי. בליגה הזאת הגיעה ישראל למקום ה- 15 המכובד, כשקנדה במקום השמיני, ארה"ב ברביעי, ובראש הרשימה נורבגיה.
אינני מוחה חס ושלום על הישגה המדהים של ישראל, אבל מאוד מעניין אותי איך מדדו המדענים של האו"ם את מפלס המתח, ואיך משוקללת שם נקודת הבטיחות האישית והעובדה שמשאבים כל כך רבים מושקעים כדי למנוע את פעולת הטרור הבאה? למען האמת-כבר זמן רב שמתי לב לעובדה שבעוד שהעיתונים הישראלים מקפידים לפרסם כמה רע בישראל, בכל משאלי דעת הקהל אומרים תושבי ישראל ברוב גדול שהם בעצם שבעי רצון ממצבם האישי. אבל שישאר בינינו.

הנערה שבעטה בקן הצרעות

זהו חלקה השלישי והאחרון של טרילוגית המתח שמשגעת את העולם מזה כשנה. להזקירכם: עיתונאי שודי, סטיג לארסן, כותב שלושה ספרי מתח, ובטרם הם יוצאים לאור הוא נפטר מהתקף לב בגיל חמישים. הספרים עוסקים בעיתונאי חוקר ובנערה מוזרה, האקרית של מחשבים, שביחד מגלים שערוריות חובקות עולם. הסרט האחרון שווה ראיה אם ראיתם את קודמיו- הוא מסכם ושוגר בצורה הרמטית את סיפורי קודמיו. אם לא ראיתם את קודמיו-הם עדיין בבתי הקולנוע, והם יציגו לכם סרטי מתח שלא לפי הז'אנר האמריקאי או הבריטי, הכל כך מוכרים וצפויים.
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On Campus

'We are all in this world together'

By JONATHON LIEDTKE

Guest Voice

At the beginning of October, students from across Canada (myself included) gave up our Thanksgiving weekends – sacrificing seeing friends and family, studying for midterms and our regular campus activities, in other words, a "normal weekend" – for the pursuit of something bigger

We took part in a social justice excursion organized by the Canadian Federation of Jewish Students. It led us to New York City to volunteer, do social justice work and study. From Thursday to Monday, our schedule was packed.

We worked at soup kitchens and participated with Midnight Run (an organization with volunteers from churches, synagogues and schools that provides basic survival items to the homeless), delivering food, blankets and clothing.

We learned about and canvassed for Uri L'Tzedek, an organization that is concerned about the fair and equal treatment of all workers, documented and undocumented, in kosher restaurants. Some kosher restaurants in New York and Brooklyn employ the same business strategy as non-kosher restaurants: paying below minimum wage if they can get away with it.

Uri L'Tzedek believes, as do we, that this strategy does not fit with Torah values or laws defined by the United States (or Canada for that matter). After a rigorous qualifying period, Uri L'Tzedek's seal is affixed to an ethical restaurant alongside its seal of kashrut, to let patrons know that the restaurant's workers are treated fairly. With 60 restaurants across America co-operating, the organization continues to expand.

Each student who went to New York represented a different faculty and program from universities across Canada, but it became quite evident that we had much in common. Aside from the fact we were all Jewish, there was something that resonated with all the students – a drive toward justice and a passion to *do*.

Never were complaints made about the amount of work, the situations that were presented, or the little time for sleep – quite the opposite, as most students seemed to want to do more.

The 10 student leaders had all participated in similar programs before, working within the Jewish community and in the community at large.

The economic downturn and the housing market crisis are not isolated events that leave the Jewish community untouched: we are not immune. Though some members of the public might not believe there is a need for Jews to be helped, I can certainly say that now, more than ever, there is a need. While at face value, Jewish people may appear to be in better financial positions than the general population, this does not mean people are not dependent on the services that Jewish organizations provide (and these services are not restricted entirely to Jewish people, either).

Working with Midnight Run delivering food to the homeless at various locations throughout downtown Manhattan, a night that ended at Penn Station, helped us to see the inconsistencies and cracks in the social fabric.

Posters for Broadway shows lined the walls of these disenfranchised people's home. "*The Lion King*: eight performances a week!"; "Free wi-fi for all"; "Swarovski diamonds and jewels." All seemed oddly out of place when the audience at night for these advertisements is the homeless. When people are using Penn Station as a home, the luxury of "free wi-fi" almost seems like a slap in the face.

Arriving home after a trip like this one, and like many before it, I had the all-too-familiar feeling of emptiness. It's reminiscent of the day after summer camp ends, or moving out of a house, or leaving a job after a number of years. You're left with a sense of "what now?"

"What now?" is exactly the kind of question you want resonating through you after a trip such as this. I found myself pacing my bedroom, with thoughts racing a mile a minute: what project to start, how to go about it and where to begin?

I got right down to it, wrote out a plan and started making phone calls. There was no need for someone to tell me what to do: initiative took hold. Initiative is what these trips breed; it is what the world needs.

We all know there are problems facing our world, both big and small, and they are all manageable. However, pursuing social justice isn't easy. It is not a one-day quest; the world cannot change overnight.

What I have learned now, more than ever, is that the change you can effect is monumental. Even if you make one person's life a bit happier, easier, even less hectic, that is what counts. We are all in this world together, as one team: we need to work together.

Jonathon Liedtke is a student at the University of Windsor. He helped establish Windsor's mayor's youth advisory committee.

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General Assembly

Israel and youth top agenda in New Orleans

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

NEW ORLEANS — Confronting delegitimization of Israel and engaging youth, were two major themes that emerged at last week's annual General Assembly (GA) of Jewish Federations.

Their immediacy became dramatically apparent when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was heckled loudly by five Jewish college students at a plenary Nov. 8, the second day of the three-day event in New Orleans, La.

The consecutive disruptions arose when members of the Young Leadership Institute of Jewish Voices for Peace stood – one at a time and several minutes apart, in different areas of the cavernous room – yelling slogans like "The settlements delegitimize Israel."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses delegates at the GA. *[Frances Kraft photos]*

Netanyahu, addressing more than 3,000 delegates, said he would talk about delegitimizing Israel. "But they really have the wrong address," he countered in an understated aside while he focused on the nuclear threat from Iran.

"If the international community hopes to stop Iran's nuclear program without military action, it will have to convince Iran that it is prepared to take such action," he said.

But the assault on Israel's legitimacy is another danger, Netanyahu added. "We know from our history, that attacks on Jews were often preceded by attempts to delegitimize the Jewish people." Hatred against Jews has been redirected toward the Jewish state, he said.

He commended the Jewish Federations of North America for establishing the Israel Action Network, a new initiative that it launched with the Jewish Council for Public Affairs to combat anti-Israel campaigns.

"A lie that is unchallenged spreads and grows until it assumes the cachet of truth," he warned.

Netanyahu said he would not gamble with the security of the Jewish state. Israel is ready to recognize a Palestinian state as a state for the Palestinian people, he said, "and we expect the Palestinians to recognize Israel as a Jewish state for the Jewish people."

• • •

Other speakers at the meeting's three plenaries included U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden, Israeli opposition leader Tzipi Livni, and Jewish Agency for Israel chair Natan Sharansky.

GA workshops addressed issues ranging from conversion to tightened budgets, from the use of social media to reaching out to marginalized groups.

• • •

New Orleans mayor Mitchell Landrieu, speaking at the same plenary as Netanyahu, told delegates that, like Israel, New Orleans did not have an option. He was referring to Biden's remarks the previous day, when Biden recalled Golda Meir telling him in 1973 that Israelis' "secret weapon" was that they had nowhere else to go.

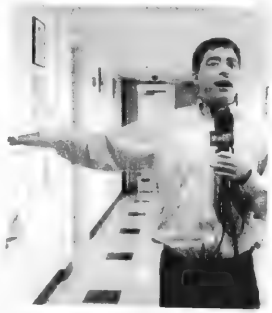
"Perhaps New Orleans can serve as a model for how to heal... so that we can live in peace and harmony," Landrieu said.

Five years after the city was devastated by Hurricane Katrina, it is still recovering.

For the first time in its 79-year history, participants at the GA took part in half-day service projects to help in the rebuilding.

The federations have contributed $28 million and sent thousands of volunteers to take part in hands-on projects.

In St. Bernard Parish, a 71-year-old great-grandmother who is raising four young children met with reporters outside her long, narrow "shotgun house," a style that is common in certain areas of the city. The house had to be gutted because of water damage, and she was able to move back only a few weeks ago.



Bob Berk, head of school of the New Orleans Jewish Day School, shows the height of the water at its worst in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

In Metairie – a New Orleans suburb that is home to four synagogues and a Jewish campus housing a Jewish community centre and a day school – the Jewish community has made much progress toward recovery.

At the time of the hurricane, a Chabad rabbi and his family in Metairie sheltered a vacationing Thornhill student on the top floor of their house until the water subsided.

An Orthodox synagogue, Beth Israel, which was too damaged to reopen, has been housed with a local Reform temple, Gates of Prayer. The Orthodox synagogue is rebuilding adjacent to the temple, and the two congregations are building a joint playground.

The New Orleans Jewish Day School, on the Jewish community campus in Metairie, was closed for a year after the hurricane. It reopened with a significantly smaller student population, but grew 10 per cent this year and now has 51 students. Before Katrina, 90 students attended the school.

The first floor of the building had to be "basically gutted, re-drywalled, powerwashed and all the stuff you do to get rid of fungus," head of school Bob Berk said. Holding his hand almost at shoulder-height to show visitors how far the water rose, Berk said everything below that level had been replaced.

He told of a high school group from New York, N.Y., that travelled to New Orleans to bury what turned out to be "a dump truckful" of damaged prayerbooks in the Orthodox cemetery, according to Jewish custom. Someone found a man with a truck – a Southern Baptist – to help them. He waited for hours for them to finish so he could cover the site with dirt, Berk said.

"The man felt like... here were people trying to do something that is part of their religion, and he was somebody of faith.

"Everyone has these stories," Berk added.

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General Assembly

Jewish peoplehood is a new buzzword, GA told

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Jewish institutions need to figure out how they wish to respond to new ways of thinking among younger adults, Jack Wertheimer told a packed room at the General Assembly of Jewish Federations last week.

Speaking at a workshop titled "Visions for the Jewish Community," which focused on generational differences, the Jewish Theological Seminary professor of American Jewish history said he is not only lamenting the loss of the past but recognizing "important gains."

Among the changes he cited, Wertheimer noted the loss of a "reflexive" identification with Israel, a lack of experience with anti-Semitism, and an acceptance of intermarriage to the extent that "in some sectors of the community to speak negatively about intermarriage is taboo."

His co-panelist Noam Pianko, an assistant professor of Jewish history at the University of Washington, said that centralized institutions are not going to be relevant to young people. "They're looking for individual experiences," he said.

As well, he talked about a "blurring of the boundaries," citing people with non-Jewish names who are "engaged members of the community," and people with typically Jewish-sounding names who aren't sure they are Jewish.

"I don't see this is a negative," he said. "I see a lot of possibilities in that these boundaries aren't there any more... It's certainly the case in Seattle, and I imagine it will be the case in other communities as well."

Pianko said he finds it interesting that Jewish "peoplehood" has become a buzzword. "My working hypothesis is that 'peoplehood' has come to be a synonym for support of the State of Israel... We're trying to hold on to that 'in' and 'out' boundary.

"The more we're focused on boundary maintenance, the more alienating it is for the group you're concerned about," he said.

Jack Wertheimer, at microphone, expresses concern over fragmentation of the Jewish community. At left is co-panelist Noam Pianko, while moderator Joanne Moore of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington is at right. ***[Frances Kraft photo]***

Bringing young leaders into existing leadership structure is only a band-aid solution, Pianko believes.

Instead, he suggested that organizations need to be creative and adaptive "to transform yourself into a new model. You may even alienate some of your leadership, but I think it's necessary to ensure your organization is going to thrive."

More specifically, he mentioned pulling back and relinquishing control, focusing less on boundaries, and building on existing social networks both in the real world and online.

Wertheimer noted that there are young Jews who care enough about Jewish life to become leaders, based on his research, which focuses on trends in American Jewish life since World War II, including a recently released report.

However, he expressed concern that the American Jewish community is fragmented into "smaller and smaller sub-units," and is losing a sense of "pulling for something far larger."

At the same time, he acknowledged that the flip side is "a greater acknowledgement of diverse groups who are given voice. I acknowledge that and I celebrate that."

Pianko said older and younger generations can learn from each other, but that sometimes there are different basic assumptions. He added that he thinks those assumptions have more to do with perspective than generation.

As a professor who teaches about Israel and sees students facing delegitimizers of the Jewish state, he said he believes it's the Jewish community's obligation "to give a more nuanced view of Israel, so [students] are not forced to choose Israel right no matter what, or Israel always wrong.

"We are not helping if we're afraid to acknowledge the challenges Israel faces.... I think it's going to be much more engaging if we see our community as having multiple perspectives, instead of creating communities where certain voices are not permitted to be heard."

Wertheimer said that significant populations of American Jews are "far more conflicted" about Israel government policies than in the past.

"We do need to educate our young people in some of the nuances." At the same time, he added, some "basic Jewish values," like the importance of Israel, are at stake.

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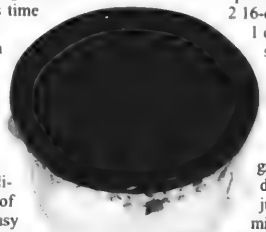
With colder weather coming up, it's time to start thinking in terms of hot, satisfying meals for the family once again – but meals that don't require a lot of ingredients and time to prepare. It's time to think crockpot.



The crockpot is often the most underused appliance in most kitchens. It is so much more versatile than using it just for Shabbat cholent. Why not take advantage of the possibilities that this workhorse of an appliance offers us busy cooks? A few minutes of simple effort in the morning produces a great hot meal at dinner time.

Aside from cholent, I often make my Shabbat chicken soup in it. I put up the soup Thursday evening and when I wake up on Friday morning, my soup is done. I then transfer it to another pot and it's ready to go on the *blech* for Shabbat dinner.

Make your favourite potato kugel or other kugels in the crockpot. The shape may be different (and attractive), but the taste is the same.

If you don't already have a crockpot, make sure to get one with a removable liner. It's easier to clean and more versatile. If you think you'll be out of the house for longer than the maximum time the recipe calls for, use a household timer to start the crockpot at the appropriate time.

MACARONI AND TOMATO CASSEROLE

2 lb. ground beef
1 cup onion, chopped
1 1/2 cups water
1 clove garlic, minced or 1 tsp. garlic powder
1/4 cup chopped green pepper
2 16-oz. cans tomatoes, chopped
1 cup tomato juice
salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp. oregano
2 cups uncooked macaroni

Brown the meat, onion, green pepper and garlic and drain. Combine tomatoes, juice and the drained meat mixture. Stir in the seasonings. Mix well and cook on low for 6-8 hours. Stir in uncooked macaroni and cook 2-3 hours longer. Makes 6 servings.

GARLIC ROAST

3 1/2 pounds boneless chuck roast
1 tbsp. oil
salt and pepper to taste
1 large onion, sliced
3 cloves garlic, peeled
1 cup beef broth

Heat oil in a pan over medium-high heat and cook roast about 10 minutes, turning occasionally, until brown on all sides. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place onion and garlic in the crockpot. Place roast on top and pour broth over roast. Cover and cook on low for 8-10 hours or until meat is tender.

Note: shred the leftovers while still warm, using two forks. Add some barbecue sauce to it and you have another delicious meal.

SPICY CHILI

Another meal that you can make from the roast leftovers.

2 cups shredded garlic beef roast, thawed if frozen
1 cup hot or medium salsa
1 to 2 tsp.chili powder
1 15-oz. can pinto or kidney beans, rinsed and drained
4 medium green onions, sliced

Mix all ingredients in a saucepan and heat to boiling. Cover and simmer about 10 minutes or until hot, or cook in microwave until hot. Serves 2.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH CASSEROLE

5 lb. butternut squash or pumpkin
4 large baking apples
1/2 cup margarine
1 cup packed brown sugar
2 tbsp. flour
2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. cinnamon

Cut squash in half, remove seeds and fibres. Pare and cut into 1/2-in. pieces. Pare and core apples and cut into 1/2-in. slices. Combine the melted margarine, brown sugar, flour, salt and cinnamon. Layer one half of the squash in the bottom of the crockpot, top with one-half of the apple slices and one-half of the sugar mixture. Repeat layers. Cover and cook on auto for 5 hours, low 6-7 hours or high 3-1/2 hours. Serves 6.

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Take your latkes south

By RANDY FINGRUT
Special to The CJN

Ever since Jews arrived in Mexico from Spain during the Inquisition, they blended in well to the Mexican way of life. With over 50,000 Jewish Mexicans at present, daily and holiday cooking has become a mix of European and Mexican cuisines: chicken soup with matzah balls speckled with green poblano chilli peppers or jalapeños; meat stews with salsa on the side; European tortes made with Mexican vanilla and chocolate; and delicious pies, served with berries sweetened with raw Mexican brown sugar, and flavoured with lime juice.

Mexican cooking is known for intense flavours, colourful presentation, unique spicing, and seasonings. Tomato and chilli pepper, along with garlic and onion are very popular flavourings in Mexican cuisine and are easily melded into many traditional Jewish recipes. You will find these ingredients are a foundation in most main dishes.

Create a fun Chanukah fiesta of your own with these appetizing Mexican inspired latkes. These latkes are very delicious on their own, and are even more festive served up with all the delightful accompaniments associated with Mexican recipes.

MEXICAN STYLE LATKES

2 lb. (about 6-8 large) potatoes, cleaned and unpeeled
1 tsp. salt
2 eggs, beaten
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1/4 cup flour
2 tsp. chili powder
2 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 cup fresh coriander, finely chopped (optional)
canola oil for frying

Grate potatoes in food processor or with hand grater, rinse grated potatoes in colander and squeeze out water. Move potatoes to large bowl and add salt, eggs, onion, flour, spices, baking powder and coriander. Mix well until combined. In a large heavy pan, heat about 1/4 in. of oil. Drop about 1/4 cup of latke mixture into hot oil, no more than 4 or 5 at a time. Flatten each latke with a spatula, and fry for 4-5 minutes until golden brown and crispy on the bottom. Carefully turn over latkes and fry another 4-5 minutes. Continue with the remainder of the mixture, add more oil only if needed. To avoid latkes becoming too oily, do not turn latkes more than once. Drain on paper towels. To keep latkes warm, place on a cookie sheet in a 200 degree oven.

ENCHILATKES

Mexican Enchiladas and latkes intermingle to create a delicious holiday treat.

Enchilada Sauce – recipe follows
1/2 cup Cheddar Cheese, Monterey Jack Cheese or mixture of both
fresh cilantro, chopped
lettuce
sour cream

Enchilada Sauce
1 tbsp. canola oil
3 tbsp. finely chopped onion
1 tbsp. flour
1/2 tsp. ground cumin
1/4 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. salt, or to taste
1 1/2 cups tomato sauce

Heat oil and add onion, cook until soft. Add flour and spices and cook for 1-2 minutes. Add tomato sauce and cook until mixture thickens, stirring occasionally, about 6-8 minutes.

To serve Enchilatkes:

Dip Mexican latkes in enchilada sauce, sprinkle with cheese, and lettuce. Garnish with fresh coriander and sour cream.

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Health & Lifestyles

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Toronto hospital honours 81-year-old doctor

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

At 81 years old, Dr. Douglas Wilansky, a full-time physician at Etobicoke General Hospital, says he may be slowing down a bit.

He now jogs only two or three miles, three or four times a week.

The founding chief of the hospital's department of internal medicine and of nuclear medicine, Wilansky was recently honoured at a dinner where it was announced that the name of the department has been changed to the Dr. Douglas Wilansky Nuclear Medicine Service.

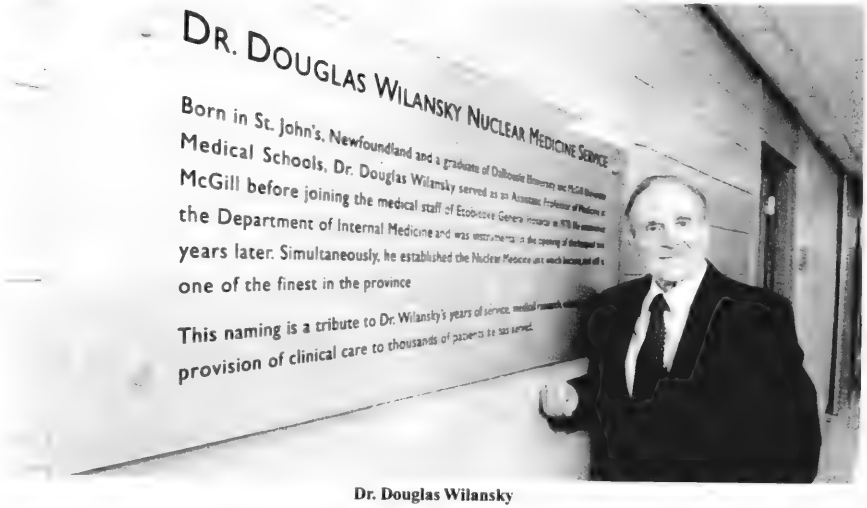
Dr. Eli Bienenstock, president of the EGH professional staff association, said in a statement that he is "delighted that this honour was given to my mentor and colleague. This tribute is our hospital's way to say thank you for the many years of education, research, dedication and the provision of outstanding medical service and care to thousands of patients in our community."

Wilansky said that he feels good about the honour, because it strengthens nuclear medicine at the hospital.

"Nuclear imaging, which studies functions, is one of the divisions of diagnostic imaging. [We use nuclear medicine, for example] to determine the cause of chest pain. Is it due to heart trouble, or to rheumatism of the chest wall? It's not always clear, and the best way to determine it is with nuclear medicine."

Born in St. John's, Nfld., Wilansky, who has been married for 60 years and has two children, graduated from medical school at Dalhousie University. Before joining EGH, he was on staff at the Jewish General and Queen Elizabeth hospitals in Montreal, and was assistant professor of medicine at McGill University.

While in Montreal, he was the recipient of a grant at the JGH to study pre-diabetes. He and a colleague showed that the temporary and judicious use of certain blood-sugar-lowering medication could deter the onset of diabetes, which provided a model for intensive study in this area during the past decade.


DR. DOUGLAS WILANSKY NUCLEAR MEDICINE SERVICE
Born in St. John's, Newfoundland and a graduate of Dalhousie University and McGill University
Medical Schools, Dr. Douglas Wilansky served as an Associate Professor of Medicine at
McGill before joining the medical staff of Etobicoke General Hospital in 1970. He established
the Department of Internal Medicine and was instrumental in the opening of Etobicoke
years later. Simultaneously, he established the Nuclear Medicine unit which became one of
one of the finest in the province
This naming is a tribute to Dr. Wilansky's years of service, medical research, education
provision of clinical care to thousands of patients he has served.

Dr. Douglas Wilansky

Since coming to Toronto in 1970, he has served on the board of the Toronto Diabetes Association, and on a panel on early diabetes and its prevention with the late Dr. Charles Best, the co-discoverer of insulin.

He was also founding chair of the education committee of Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem Synagogue in Montreal, and together with his wife, worked to promote Jewish education and helped to formulate the early curriculum of the Shalom Hartman Institute, a pluralistic research and leadership centre at the forefront of Jewish thought and education in Israel and the Diaspora. He has been vice-chair of Canadian Friends of Shalom Hartman Institute since 2007.

Wilansky said that since he has been "blessed with fitness, and his brain keeps chugging along," he has no plans to retire. "I am taking on less work, however, so I have more time for my personal life."

He keeps fit through running, and by maintaining "a moderately strict eating habit. I liberate myself from time to time, though, and have a scoop of ice cream."

TZEDKAH PROJECT: A joint program was recently held between Beth Sholom Hebrew School and Beth Tzedec Congregational School. Grade 6 and 7 students are seen here with some of the Kinderkits packed for donation to Ve'ahavta which was the tzedakah aspect of a Global Day of Jewish Learning. Kinderkits are a backpack with basic school supplies – pencil case, pencils, pens, erasers, notebooks and a ruler which are then distributed to children in Toronto and around the world who do not have access or cannot afford these supplies. They cost $18 a kit. The students in the picture are, from left, Emily Froman, Joey Caplan, Jamee Nepon, Ethan Leider, Jordan Tepper, Tomer Narvey, Leah Kaminker, Cleo Fruitman, Laura Phillips.

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Latino singer Amanda Martinez strikes the right chords

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Toronto chanteuse Amanda Martinez is living her dream and doing it to the mesmerizing and infectious beat of Latin American jazz, Brazilian bossa nova and Mexican and Afro-Cuban rhythms.

"I feel very lucky," said Martinez, the first hostess of *Cafe Latino*, Jazz.FM's popular Saturday afternoon radio program dedicated to Latin music. "I'm really enjoying myself."

Having released two albums, *Sola* and *Amor*, and a sizzling single, *Suenos Posibles*, in the past four years, she may well be en route to stardom, not only in Canada but in the United States, too.

Amanda Martinez
[Joanne Klimaszewski photo]

For as long as she can remember, she has aspired to be a professional singer.

"I always had music in me," said Martinez, 39, who as a little girl put on faux performances for her dolls in her bedroom and who as a child and teenager studied piano at the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Her yearning to be a singer notwithstanding, Martinez was given to understand by her pragmatic parents that music might not be a practical choice in terms of earning a livelihood one day.

Being level-headed, she shelved her musical dreams and studied science at the University of Western Ontario, specializing in biology, and took a master's degree in international business, working for a bank in sales and marketing.

"I was searching for security," she explained.

For most people, financial stability usually comes before anything else, but for Martinez, there was more to life than just bringing home a regular pay cheque.

In an allusion to her job at the bank, which lasted less than a year, she said, "I can't say I enjoyed it. I was stressed out. I felt the world closing in on me. I couldn't bear the thought of not trying to follow my dream. I knew, in my heart of hearts, I shouldn't be doing this."

One day, during a lunch break in the concourse of the office building in which she toiled, Martinez stopped to listen to Amy Sky, a Toronto-based performer.

She was instantly smitten.

"She helped me realize I wanted to be up there on the stage, like her."

Martinez asked Sky for advice, and Sky gave Martinez the name of her singing coach. Seriously committed to changing her vocation, Martinez hired Sky's coach and went into reflective mode. "I took time off to figure out what to do," she recalled.

Then, in a courageous leap of faith, she resigned, ditching corporate Canada and doffing her power outfits, and proceeded to pursue her childhood dream.

"I couldn't ignore my calling. I jumped right into it. I was confident I was doing the right thing. My parents were very worried. Now they're my biggest fans and come to most of my concerts."

In 2001, Martinez landed her first gig, in a jazz club in midtown Toronto. To make ends meet while she completed her apprenticeship, she also worked for a local cable-TV provider.

For the next few years, she performed in a variety of venues in Toronto, from the Sassafraz restaurant and the Rex Hotel to Harbourfront and the Lula Lounge.

She sang mostly in Spanish, a language she learned as a child and perfected as an adult.

Her strong, tender voice, registering a range of emotions from passion and joy to plaintiveness and reflection, touched people.

Not one to depend on a single source of income, she auditioned for and got acting roles at CBC, Global, City TV and the Disney Channel.

In 2005, she was hired to host *Cafe Latino* after sending Jazz.FM a demo tape – "a pretend show" – that impressed the powers-that-be.

She left in 2008, handing the baton to the current hostess, Laura Fernandez.

"I was getting too comfortable. I wanted to put all my energy into my singing career and didn't want to be tied down. But I loved *Cafe Latino*, and still miss it."

While hosting *Cafe Latino*, she recorded her first album, the template for her second album, released three years later. The songs, written mainly by Martinez about relationships, love and the joys of motherhood, were primarily in Spanish, with a sprinkling of Portuguese and English numbers.

Since then, Martinez, accompanied by her band, has blossomed as a performer.

She has sung at folk and jazz festivals throughout Canada, appeared at clubs and concert halls in New York City and popped up at pay-the-bills corporate events here and in Mexico.

Last summer, as part of the World Cup festivities in South Africa, she sang her new, uplifting song, *Suenos Posibles* (*Dreams Realized*), at three concerts over two days in Johannesburg and Soweto. She was invited to South Africa by the International Federation of Association Football, known as FIFA.

It was an overwhelming experience for Martinez.

She was cheered on by her greatest fans – her mother, Hilary, a native of South Africa and a school teacher; her father, Gustavo, a convert to Judaism and engineer who was born and raised in Mexico and arrived in Canada in 1956; her sister, Michelle, an occupational therapist, and her husband, Drew Birston, a composer, bassist in her band and the father of her two-year-old boy, Leo.

Currently working on her next album, Martinez is now focused on polishing her skills as a musician so she can accompany herself on piano and guitar in the not-too-distant future.

Although she has been quite successful, Martinez hopes to do even better in the future. She believes time is on her side. "I do feel I have an audience that is very receptive to my music."

She added, "I feel there is a lot further I can go. I hope to do more touring in the United States and Latin America, break into the European market and start working with a record label, which could take my career to a new level."

Judging by the body of her work so far, it may just be a matter of time before Martinez hits the big time.

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International

Israel & the Jewish World

What exactly does Obama expect from Netanyahu?

By ALUF BENN
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

OPINION

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu returned from his journey to the United States with an American dictate: freeze settlements for three months, during which time speedy negotiations will be held to determine the future border between Israel and Palestine.

To soften the impression that this would be seen as giving in to U.S. pressure and to make it easier to gain cabinet approval for the freeze, the dictate was padded with political and security goodies, which can be summed up as such: stealth military aircraft in exchange for an end to Netanyahu's evasive tactics.

The prime minister rejected the offer when it was made before the U.S. midterm elections, but now he understands that the game is up and he has to fall in line. He has displayed similar patterns of behaviour in the past when confronted with specific demands by the Obama administration.

Initially, he'd say "no" and explain that he had political difficulties, but when the Americans insisted, he'd succumb. This was the case when he accepted the "two state solution," the 10-month settlement freeze, the suspension of construction in east Jerusalem, and easing the siege on the Gaza Strip.

But now the challenge before Netanyahu is much more daunting. The F-35 fighter jets will land at the Tel Nof and Hatzerim bases in a few years, and the American proposal will make his life much more complicated.

Assuming Israel approves the proposal and the Palestinians agree to resume talks, what happens on the 91st day, after the latest settlement freeze comes to an end? Will Netanyahu submit a detailed proposal on the future borders? And what will the Americans do if the prime minister and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas do not reach an agreement in three months? Will U.S. President Barack Obama then try to impose his own map? And if the two stick to their refusal, how will the administration respond?

The second major question the deal raises pertains to Iran. At last Sunday's cabinet meeting, Netanyahu said that during every one of his meetings in the United States he raised "first and foremost the need to stop the Iranian nuclear project." The jet fighters the United States has promised Netanyahu are not meant to protect Israel from the Palestinians, but to bolster Israeli deterrence capabilities vis-a-vis Iran. According to intelligence assessments, however, Iran will have a nuclear weapon long before the F-35s become operational in Israel.

Did Netanyahu signal to the U.S. administration that he would avoid an attack on Iran in return for advanced fighters and the defence agreement he requested? It's hard to believe the Americans offered to provide the Israel Air Force with such advanced weapons in exchange for just a three-month settlement freeze. It's more likely that they offered to strengthen Israeli deterrence capabilities in order to prevent a war in the region.

Alternatively, does Netanyahu believe that with a settlement freeze, a resumption of negotiations and the improvement that will ensue in Israel's international standing, he will be able to strike Iran and the "world" will avoid condemnations and sanctions, while it waits for signs of Israeli generosity toward the Palestinians in the West Bank?

The third question, which is more immediate, has to do with the integrity of the coalition. To date, Netanyahu was able to obtain cabinet approval for all U.S. dictates The right-wing ministers in his coalition were not enthusiastic and did not go out of their way to sell the decisions to the public, but neither did they oppose the prime minister publicly. Now the situation is different. Shas announced that it will abstain and Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman declared that "we will not agree to even a single day of freeze."

If Lieberman votes in favour or abstains, and it does not matter what his excuse will be, he will be called a pushover. So it appears that for the first time, Netanyahu will face a divided vote on an important political issue.

But this is precisely what the Americans want: they want Netanyahu to change the composition of his coalition, bring in the Kadima party in place of the right-wing factions and replace Lieberman with Kadima leader Tzipi Livni.

That way the world will see that he's serious about negotiations with the Palestinians. Netanyahu has opted to date to maintain his alliance with the right, fearing that Lieberman would steal voters away from him and that Livni would try to undermine him and push him out of office. But as the 91st day approaches, it may be that he has no choice.

Netanyahu proposes settlement freeze

Continued from page 1

both in the immediate term and vis-a-vis the threats that we will face in the coming decade," Netanyahu said in remarks broadcast by Israeli media.

The deal includes a U.S. undertaking not to request a further extension of the freeze, and to veto any attempt by the Palestinians to win UN recognition of their state unilaterally.

The Obama administration would also ask Congress to approve a $3-billion sale of warplanes to Israel and, should there be peace with the Palestinians, guarantee its wider security needs. These would supplement the 20 F-35s Israel already plans to buy for $2.75 billion drawn from annual grants it gets from Washington.

An Israeli political source said the security cabinet vote was expected later this week and that seven ministers – Netanyahu among them – were likely to back the U.S. proposal, against six who would vote against and two who would abstain.

The forum includes representatives of major coalition partners, from the centre-left Labor party of Defence Minister Ehud Barak and Netanyahu's rightist Likud to the far-right Yisrael Beiteinu party of Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman.

In private, Palestinian officials have expressed anger over U.S. incentives to get Israel to prolong the partial moratorium on settlement building, saying it effectively constituted bribing Israel to fulfil basic international obligations.

A spokesperson for Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said there had been no formal word regarding a renewed freeze on housing starts in the West Bank, which, along with adjacent east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, Israel occupied in the 1967 Six Day War.

"An official Palestinian commitment will come only after President Abbas hears officially from the American administration what is going on between them and the Israelis," Nabil Abu Rdainah told Reuters.

The Palestinians said the original moratorium was too limited in scope, as it did not include public buildings or settler projects already under way. They have also demanded that any new freeze include Jewish districts in east Jerusalem.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton shared the U.S. proposal at a meeting in New York last week, Netanyahu said.

Israeli officials said Netanyahu, who faces a tough political sell within his own coalition on the settlement issue, had pushed Clinton for the broad understandings.

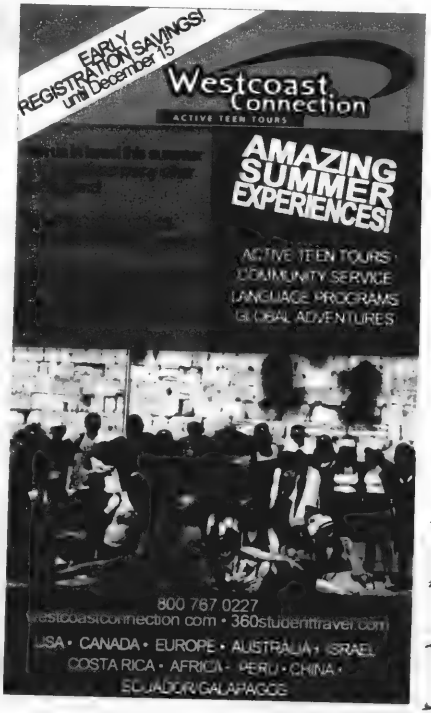
Arab League unlikely to endorse proposal

Meanwhile an Arab League official said Monday that a possible three-month-long temporary freeze on settlement construction in the West Bank would be unlikely to be enough to prompt Palestinian and Arab support for Mideast peace talks.

"If the news is true about there being a settlement freeze that excludes Jerusalem and that takes the criticism off Israel, I cannot imagine that would be acceptable to the Palestinian side or the Arab side," said Hesham Youssef, an official with the office of the secretary general of the Arab League.

He said the Arab League is waiting to see what Israel and the United States are going to offer the Palestinians before making any decisions, though. The Arab League is also mulling over alternative options to direct Palestinian-Israeli talks, one of which may include seeking United Nations recognition of a Palestinian state.

The Arab nations have made clear that, from their vantage point, talks cannot take place while Israel continues to build settlements in the West Bank, a swath of land that would be the cornerstone of any future independent Palestinian state.



17 arrested in $42.5-million fraud at Claims Conference

By URIEL HEILMAN
JTA

NEW YORK — The U.S. Attorney's Office in New York has arrested 17 people for participating in a $42.5-million fraud at the Claims Conference.

Those arrested include former and current employees of the Claims Conference, which distributes more than $400 million per year from the German government to victims of Nazism. The alleged ringleader oversaw the two funds from which the tens of millions of dollars were allegedly fraudulently obtained.

In a news conference on Nov. 9, Claims Conference officials stressed that no Holocaust victims were deprived of any funds because of the crime. Manhattan district attorney Preet Bharara praised the Claims Conference for contacting the authorities as soon as the seriousness of the fraud became apparent and for co-operating with the FBI throughout its investigation.

"If ever there was a cause that you would hope and expect would be immune from base greed and criminal fraud, it would be the Claims Conference, which every day assists thousands of poor and elderly victims of Nazi persecution," Bharara said. "Sadly, those victims were themselves victimized. Without the extraordinary co-operation of the Claims Conference in ferreting out this alleged scheme to defraud them, it never would have been exposed."

Claims Conference officials first noticed about a year ago that several claimants had falsified information to receive payments from the Hardship Fund, an account established by the German government to give one-time payments of approximately $3,600 to those who fled the Nazis as they moved east through Germany.

The officials were tipped off when multiple claimants used the same language and details in forms in which they documented evidence of victimization by the Nazis. That prompted a wide internal investigation that turned up thousands of additional fraudulent claims. The alleged fraud, which dates back to the mid-1990s, remained hidden so long because Claims Conference staffers at various levels conspired to hide and manage the false claims.

In all, 4,957 one-time payments totaling $18 million were obtained from the Hardship Fund through the alleged fraud. Another $24.5 million went to 658 fraudulent pension claims drawing from the Article 2 fund through which the German government gives pension payments of roughly $411 per month to needy Nazi victims who spent significant time in a concentration camp, in a Jewish ghetto in hiding or living under a false identity to avoid the Nazis.

Alleged ringleader Semyon Domnitser oversaw the two funds for the Claims Conference until he was fired in February. Domnitser could not be reached by JTA for comment for this story.

The other 16 people involved with the fraud all reside in Brooklyn and have been charged with mail fraud and conspiracy to commit mail fraud. Eleven were arrested on Tuesday morning last week. Charges against five others, four of whom pleaded guilty, were unsealed the same day. The charges carry possible sentences of up to 20 years in prison and fines of up to $250,000.

Since its founding shortly after the Holocaust, the Claims Conference has processed more than 600,000 individual claims with total payments exceeding $4.3 billion. The money came from the German government following negotiations with Claims Conference officials and Jewish leaders. The Claims Conference continues to negotiate with the German government for the expansion and continuation of various restitution programs.

In addition to processing restitution payments from the German government to Nazi victims, the Claims Conference is the trustee of money from the sale of heirless Jewish properties in the former East Germany that had been seized by the Nazis and are now being restituted to the Jewish community. It uses the money from the sale of those properties to fund institutions that aid survivors and Holocaust education programs, distributing approximately $135 million per year.

About four months after the fraud was discovered, Claims Conference officials went public with the news. In July, the agency announced the discovery of at least $7 million in allegedly fraudulent payments and said it had dismissed three employees in New York. Of those charged last week, six worked for the Claims Conference and 11 did not.

Claims Conference officials stressed that the fraud represents a minimal amount of the annual payouts to survivors through the Hardship and Article 2 funds.

"The stealing of $40 million is disgusting," Gregory Schneider, the executive vice-president of the Claims Conference, told JTA. "But it's less than one per cent of funds distributed under those programs.

"No amount of fraud will be tolerated," he said. "We identified it, documented it, investigated and brought it to the FBI."

In recent months, the Claims Conference said, it has taken steps to strengthen anti-fraud safeguards, overhauling procedures and shifting some claims processing away from New York. The Claims Conference also said it retained K2 Global Consulting, an international firm, to review its procedures and make recommendations.

JTA intern Uri Fintzy contributed to this story.

PERES HONOURS BEN-GURION: Israeli President Shimon Peres spoke at 38th annual memorial ceremony for Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, last Sunday, referring to him as "the greatest of leaders in Israel's modern history." The ceremony was held at Sde Boker, where Ben-Gurion lived in the later part of his life and where he was buried. ***[Moshe Milner/GPO photo]***

Improving quality of life

Continued from page 1

Together, they will turn health-care discoveries made in the lab into products and services to help people who are affected by brain diseases and disorders," the province said in a statement.

More than one million Ontarians currently suffer from neurological disorders, and according to the province, some 2.6 million will be affected by a neurological condition in their lifetime.

"We're turning our best research and ideas into new products and services that will create good jobs and improve the quality of life for Ontario families. We're supporting this work to help export our discoveries to the world," McGuinty said.

The institute is part of Ontario's Open Ontario Plan, which seeks to export local expertise worldwide for economic gain.

According to the province, two-way trade between Ontario and Israel is worth about $1.1 billion annually. The Jewish population of Ontario is estimated at around 200,000 people.

Israel Briefs

Sharon moved to ranch

Ariel Sharon was returned to a Tel Aviv hospital after spending a weekend at his ranch for the first time since he fell into a coma in January 2006. The former Israeli prime minister spent the weekend at the ranch in the Negev desert after being moved there last Friday. Since shortly after suffering a massive stroke when he was prime minister, Sharon has remained in a Tel Aviv hospital. The weekend trial was deemed a success, and he's expected to be returned to the ranch in coming weekends to test the possibility of moving him home permanently.

Training crash kills two

An Israeli pilot and navigator were killed when their fighter jet crashed during a training flight in southern Israel. The two-seater F-16I fighter jet, nicknamed Soufa, or storm, crashed last Wednesday night near the Ramon Crater. The bodies were found the following afternoon, several hours after the crash, after an extensive search. Human error is suspected in the accident. Four planes took part in the exercise on the Israeli Air Force's newest plane. Until the exact cause of the crash is found, training on the planes has been halted, the military said. In September 2009, an Israel Air Force F-16A fighter plane crashed during a training flight, killing pilot Assaf Ramon, son of Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon, who died in the crash of the U.S. space shuttle Columbia in 2003.

Israel called ecology leader

Israel is poised to be a leader in developing solar energy and other renewable energy sources, an American leader in the energy field said while visiting the Jewish state. In addition, "There are real opportunities for U.S.-style venture capital investment in Israel," Michael Eckhart, president of the American Council on Renewable Energy, said during a visit to Israel with a delegation of leading American energy specialists.

"Israel's world-class expertise in solar power, biofuels and electric vehicles can be a catalyst for a global shift to low carbon and secure energy systems," said Marilyn Brown, the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize co-recipient, who was on the trip. The delegation was visiting Israel to discuss best practices in the fields of renewable energy and reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

Abbas slams settlements

Mahmoud Abbas told thousands of Palestinians gathered for a Yasser Arafat memorial that the "the Palestinian state will arise when it is cleared of settlements." The Palestinian Authority president also told the crowd in Ramallah marking the sixth anniversary of his predecessor's death that he wouldn't sign a peace deal unless it included the release of all Palestinian prisoners, *Ynet* reported. Memorial participants were bused to Ramallah from all over the West Bank. In Gaza, Hamas officials broke up an Arafat memorial consisting of two dozen people screening a film about him.

Egypt nabs terror cell

Egypt arrested a terror cell planning an attack on Israeli tourists in Sinai, the Ma'an Palestinian news agency reported. Some 25 members of the cell were arrested Nov. 11 by Egyptian security forces, according to the agency. Several of those arrested admitted to being part of a terror group. Also Nov. 11, *Time* magazine reported that Egypt provided information to Israel that allowed the Shin Bet security agency to assassinate Palestinian terrorist Mohammed Namnam in Gaza City last week.

Gates rejects military pressure

U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates pushed back against Israeli demands that the United States amp up the threat of military action against Iran. "We are prepared to do what is necessary, but at this point, we continue to believe that the political-economic approach that we are taking is in fact having an impact in Iran," Gates told reporters last week in Australia, where he was on an official visit. Gates was reacting to reports that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had made the demand of U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden, whom he met on the sidelines of the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly last week in New Orleans.

–files from JTA

8,000 more Falash Mora coming to Israel

JTA

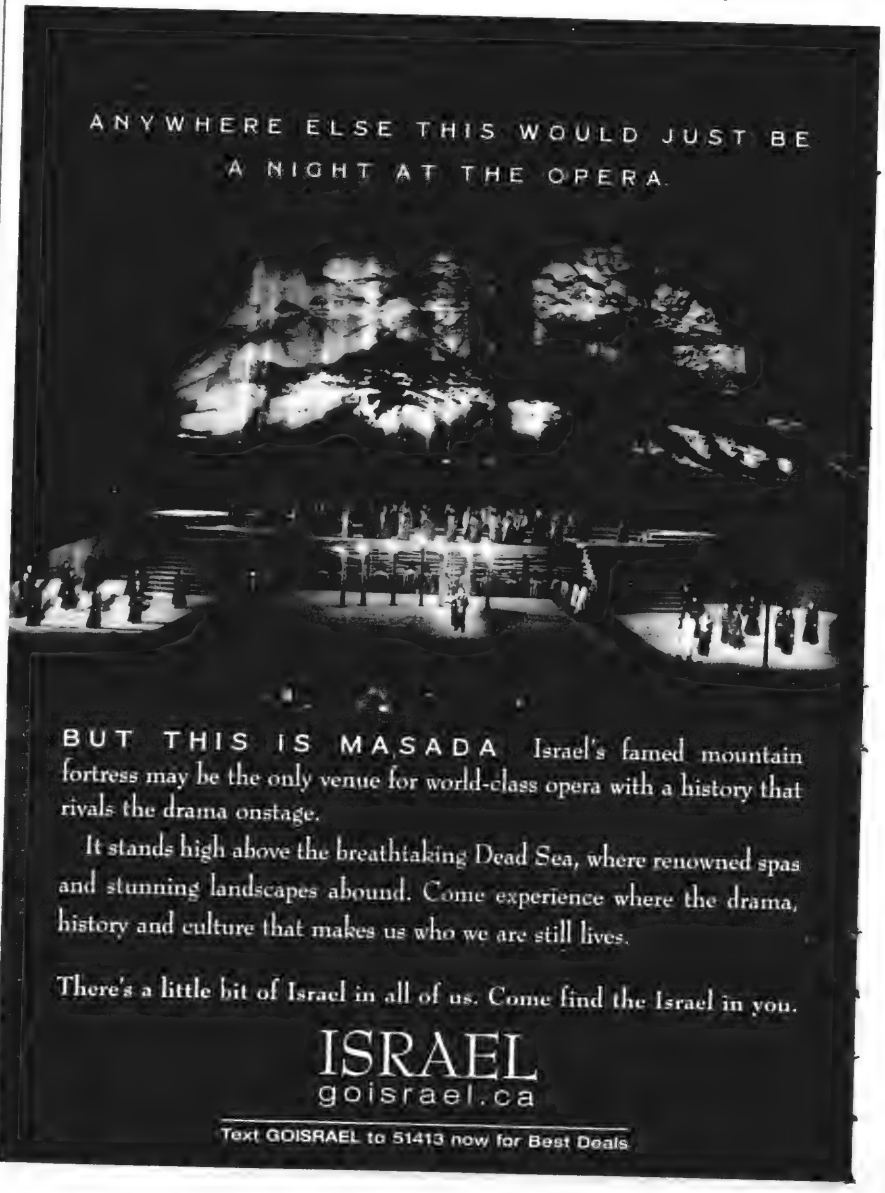
JERUSALEM — Israel's cabinet approved a plan to bring about 8,000 more Ethiopians to Israel over the next four years.

The cabinet's approval came as aid groups involved with Ethiopian aliyah reached an agreement under which mass Ethiopian aliyah will end once these 8,000 Ethiopians are brought to the Jewish state. The would-be immigrants are considered so-called Falash Mora – Ethiopians who claim family links to descendants of Ethiopian Jews who converted to Christianity generations ago. They must embrace Judaism as a condition of their aliyah.

"From my perspective, this closes a cycle because during my first term as prime minister, I brought approximately 5,000 Falash Mora to Israel," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told his cabinet on Sunday. "Today we are discussing an agreed-upon arrangement with all of the relevant bodies, and there are many, so that we might finally resolve this painful and complicated problem."

The Ethiopians currently awaiting aliyah live in the Ethiopian city of Gondar, where they receive aid services from the North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry and health services from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Under the deal reached by the aid groups, the Jewish Agency will take over many of the aid operations, which will cease once the 8,000 people are brought to Israel.

The Ethiopians will be brought at the rate of approximately 200 per month over the course of four years.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Army converts dragged into conversion wars

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

TEL AVIV — For years, army conversions were seen by many as a convenient solution for resolving at least part of the "Who is a Jew?" question that hangs like a cloud over the lives of tens of thousands of Israelis.

In the Israel Defence Forces, under the guidance of army rabbis, some 5,000 young soldiers in the last decade have undergone a conversion process seen as rigorous but welcoming. That process stands in contrast to the experiences described by many of those seeking civilian conversions run by the haredi Orthodox-dominated Chief Rabbinate.

Now the issue has come to a head with a decision by the Chief Rabbinate not to continue to stand behind IDF conversions until a panel of its rabbis can scrutinize the process.

Furthermore, the Chief Rabbinate broadened the panel's task to re-examine Israel's conversion process across the board. That has left thousands of converts, most of them immigrants from the former Soviet Union, wondering where they stand.

"I am all for high standards for conversion, and I'm also for clear standards for conversion once a person converts under the Chief Rabbinate, but it's outrageous to throw into question their sincerity or their Jewishness," said Seth Farber, an American-born Orthodox rabbi who is the director of Itim, the Jewish Life Information Center, an organization that helps Jews navigate the bureaucracy of the Chief Rabbinate.

The Chief Rabbinate did not answer requests for a comment on the issue.

It was a lawsuit filed by Rabbi Farber's organization that inadvertently prompted the latest crisis in Israel's conversion wars. In the case, currently being heard by the Supreme Court, Itim is suing the Chief Rabbinate and the rabbis of four cities who have refused to recognize army conversions.

During a hearing in September, the state attorney said there was a procedural problem with recognizing the conversions – a snag that elements in the haredi Orthodox community have seized upon to turn the battle into an ideological one. Rabbi Farber and other more liberal Orthodox rabbis argue.

They point to the full-page ads in two haredi newspapers taken out by the rabbinic leadership of the large Lithuanian haredi community as an example of the pressure being put on Sephardi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar, who oversees the issue of conversion, to withdraw his sanction of IDF conversions. The ads rail against what the rabbis call fictitious conversions and say that any conversions done without converts taking on the "yoke of mitzvahs" are to be considered invalid.

Israel Eichler, a former Knesset member from the haredi United Torah Judaism party and currently the editor of a religious newspaper, said he had no specific opinion on army conversions. But he suggested that if soldiers' observance was in doubt, there could be a problem.

"A person who converts and does not fulfil the mitzvahs is not a Jew," he said.

Meanwhile, a bill has been submitted to the Knesset that, if passed, would cement the IDF conversions as valid according to halachah, or Jewish law.

But Rabbi Yakov Ruza, the rabbi of the Tel Aviv suburb of Bat Yam and a member of the rabbinical council – the equivalent of the Chief Rabbinate's high court – said those who have converted in the past through the IDF should not be concerned that their conversions could be revoked.

Rabbi Ruza was appointed as one of the rabbis on the new investigative panel but has stepped down, citing technical reasons.

Taking aim at critics of the Chief Rabbinate, however, he suggested that the whole episode is being overplayed.

"There are certain sources that are battling the Rabbinate to try to make it look like an extremist institution," he said. "They take certain incidents and make them appear to be questioning the status quo, which they are not."

An estimated 350,000 to 400,000 Israeli citizens are not Jewish according to Jewish law – immigrants or children of Russian-speaking immigrants who were granted citizenship under the Law of Return, which allows those with a Jewish grandparent to become Israeli even if they are not Jewish according to Jewish law.

Most of those who have converted through the army fit that category.

Among them is a young woman who preferred to be identified as Shira (not her real name). She immigrated to Israel alone 10 years ago as a teenager from a small town outside of Moscow. Her father is Jewish, her mother is not.

Shira always felt herself to be Jewish and knew one day she would formally convert, an opportunity she welcomed while serving in the air force.

Rabbi Seth Farber

"They do it so well in army. They focus on all the beautiful things in Judaism like human relations and values," she said. "They know dealing with new immigrants. There's no brainwashing but a focus on the important things, the right things."

Shira is distraught at the idea that army conversions might be in peril.

"We are talking about young Zionists who have come to serve in the army," she said. "It's not easy, but they want to serve the country and feel connected to who they are."

Rabbi Chaim Iram, who serves as director of conversion preparation for the Institute for Jewish Studies, the organization that co-ordinates IDF conversion courses, dismissed suspicions that army conversions are anything but legitimate.

"I invite anyone to come see our course, the materials we use, and the seriousness and devotion of our students, and then we can talk about criticism," he said. "According to any and all parameters – both knowledge and practice – we are doing top-level work.

"We need to tell all of our converts that they are Jews, period, that this is a procedural problem that cannot be made into a problem of principle. But yes, welcome to Israel. There is politics, yes. That is a problem."

Rabbi Amar's panel, which is in disarray with three of the five appointed rabbis quitting, has been given four months to make a recommendation on the conversions. Rabbi Farber notes that is exactly when a freeze on discussion of a controversial conversion bill proposed by Knesset member David Rotem is set to expire.

Rabbi Farber suggested that the Chief Rabbinate is preparing to use the panel as leverage to win approval for Rotem's bill. The measure has many opponents, among them non-Orthodox Diaspora Jewish organizations that fear it would give too much power to the Orthodox-dominated Chief Rabbinate on conversion issues, formally shutting out the Conservative and Reform movements.

Gilad Kariv of the Israel Religious Action Center, the Reform movement's lobbying arm, said it had been naive to think army conversions could be isolated from the overall atmosphere regarding conversions in Israel.

"We claimed for years that the wall between the army and civil society was a fake wall," he said. "In the end, unless something is done to address the irrational, immoral and un-Jewish approach of the ultra-Orthodox establishment, it will have a serious and severe effect on the conversions in the army."

Italian Jewry head raps Vatican in its own newspaper

JTA

ROME — Writing in the Vatican's official newspaper, the head of Italy's Jewish community criticized Vatican policy, but called for strengthened Catholic-Jewish ties.

Renzo Gattegna, president of the umbrella Union of Italian Jewish Communities wrote in an opinion piece published Nov. 10 that as a step toward "continuing with the initiatives dedicated to reciprocal understanding and friendship," it would be "useful, necessary and certainly appreciated" for the Vatican to openly and forcefully renounce "any manifestation of intent aimed at the conversion of the Jews."

This, he said, should be accompanied by the elimination of a recently reinstated Good Friday prayer that seems to call for such conversion attempts.

The removal of the prayer, he wrote, "would be a strong and significant signal of the acceptance of a relationship based on equal dignity and reciprocal respect."

Gattegna's article, a rarity from a Jewish leader in the official Vatican daily *L'Osservatore Romano*, was highlighted on the front page. It was framed as the latest response to a recent miniseries on state-run Italian television that portrayed controversial World War II Pope Pius XII as working hard to save Jewish lives.

The series has rekindled lively debate in the media over Pius' role during the Holocaust. Critics accuse Pius of having ignored Jewish suffering, while the Vatican and his supporters, who have put Pius on the path to sainthood, maintain that he worked behind the scenes.

Gattegna said the sainthood process was purely an internal Vatican process in which Jews don't want to intervene, but he criticized the television series as "hagiographic" and "full of inaccuracies."

He also renewed calls for scholars to be allowed to complete in-depth research in the Vatican archives on Pius' reign in order to clarify the facts.

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Iranian refugee lives dream as bespoke tailor

By HAILEY EISEN
Special to The CJN

"When you've hit the bottom and have nothing left, you begin to look at life from a different perspective," said Isaac Ely, an Iranian-born father of three young children. "You can either blame everyone else and retreat into depression, or you can start to climb back up, without fear holding you back."

This self-made businessman and talented bespoke (custom-made) tailor chose to take the second option when he arrived in Toronto in 1986 with nothing.

Two years earlier, he and his cousin, Mike Haie, now a successful restaurateur, had escaped from post-revolution Iran with a few hundred dollars sewn into their undergarments and a dream of reaching America, where they could live freely as young, Jewish men.

Today, Ely creates stunning bespoke suits, pants and shirts for some of Canada's most accomplished men, including Toronto Maple Leaf Tomas Kaberle and Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney. He designs signature, hand-sewn suits ranging in price from $3,000 to $32,000 for CEOs, bankers, professional athletes and entrepreneurs.

But this success didn't happen overnight. Though he was born into the shmatte business and worked every summer in his father's bazaar in Iran, Ely had to take any job he could when he arrived in Toronto, just to make ends meet. He got his start in the late 1980s, working as a street vendor, selling women's belts and sunglasses.

Perhaps it is his tumultuous past that helped make Ely the success he is today. "You have to take risks in life or you will never know what's on the other side," he likes to advise his wife and children.

With an attitude like this, it's hard to believe that this genuinely happy man has seen such darkness.

At 14, Ely wasn't able to truly comprehend the danger he faced as he met the smugglers his older brother, living in New York, had paid to help facilitate his escape. With life becoming unsafe for the Jewish people in Iran, and young men being picked up off the streets and forced to enlist in the war against Iraq, escape was Ely's only option.

"My parents dropped us off with these two Iranian smugglers, and when they told us to start running, we ran," recalled Ely, now 41. It took hours on foot and on horseback to cross the border into Turkey. There, instead of the freedom they had been promised, they came face to face with Turkish soldiers who threw them into prison. "Once inside, they started beating us," Ely recalled. "We didn't speak the same language and had no idea what was going on."

Isaac Ely

After two horrible days in jail, the two young men were driven to the Iranian border and released. "We were dropped off in the middle of nowhere and told that if we came back into Turkey we'd be killed," said Ely. "We had no choice but to go back into Iran in search of another means of escape."

They walked through the night in the pitch black, teeth chattering and bodies shaking from hunger and cold. "I knew we were facing death, but my mind wouldn't let me give up," Ely said. "I had a purpose and I couldn't stop thinking about what my mother would do if I were dead."

Finally, the boys reunited with the smugglers and were taken to the Turkish border town of Van, where police advised them to go to the United Nations in Istanbul. After weeks of waiting, surviving on little food and water, Ely and his cousin were finally granted asylum in Amsterdam, where a Jewish organization helped them find housing and schooling.

"During this time, I had no contact with my parents because they had been thrown into jail in Iran as punishment for my escape," he said. Though he was eager to make it to the United States to find his brother, Ely's application for entry was rejected. Then someone suggested Canada. After two years in Holland, the boys boarded a plane for Toronto. With the help of immigration lawyer Mendel Green and Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, the two Iranian-Jewish teenagers landed on Canadian soil on July 22, 1986.

Ely smiled as he looked back on those first years of life in Toronto. Though he was living in a tiny basement apartment in an unfamiliar city, he was happy to be alive and free, and appreciative of the opportunities he had been granted.

"That's Isaac for you," said his wife, Mina, sitting inside Amore Trattoria in Toronto's Yonge and Eglinton neighbourhood. "He's always smiling – that's the first thing I noticed about him when we met more than 10 years ago."

This cozy, busy Italian eatery was one of Ely and his cousin's first business ventures. Though the restaurant thrived, Ely's heart remained in the clothing business, so after he was married he sold his shares.

In the early years of their marriage, Ely and his wife were extremely busy. Mina, who was born in Russia, was running a high-end women's shoe store in Forest Hill Village, while Ely was transitioning from his discount clothing store, Best Deals, to a highly fashionable men's concept store, Form.

Asked how he copes with stress when faced with an important order from a high-profile client, he smiled his charming, signature smile, and replied: "Stress is something we create; so, if you don't create stress, then there is no stress."

Inside the stylish showroom and atelier on Champagne Drive in the Dufferin and Finch area, where Isaac Ely Bespoke is housed today, Ely showed off the luxurious fabrics he imports from Italy, France and Switzerland and the dozens of shirt collar and cuff samples that he uses, to demonstrate the endless choices available to his clientele.

When he transitioned from selling men's clothing off the rack to designing and creating made-to-measure garments, he fulfilled a lifelong dream. "I was tired of selling clothing that didn't fit properly," he said. "I wanted to make suits that felt comfortable, looked great and made people feel confident and proud."

Today, he's doing just that.

"I go to Isaac about once every 18 months with an order," says one of Ely's oldest bespoke customers, Errol Wolff. A partner in the accounting firm Segal LLP, Wolff loves the way Ely's suits fit.

"For me the value comes in never having to take it back to be altered," he said. "When you walk out of Isaac's shop after a final fitting, you know it's perfect."

Wolff also likes having a talented and obliging tailor on hand. "Recently, I saw a Pal Zileri suit in Hazelton Lanes that I loved, but it was outrageous in price and wouldn't have fit properly," he recalled. "So, I went to Isaac with the idea and now he's making me something similar."

Ely has a flare for reading his clientele and designing clothing that suits their style and build. "It's really about understanding the human body," he said.

Unlike those of many tailors, Ely's suits and shirts are all designed and hand-sewn under one roof. He has a team of highly skilled people who work with him to create these works of art. "He makes beautiful, classic garments and is driven by vision and passion," Mina said of her husband. "He never lets a customer leave until they are completely thrilled."

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

ANDREA MARTIN HOSTS 'SONGS AND CELEBRATION' FUNDRAISER FOR JEWISH THEATRE COMPANY

Andrea Martin is hosting Songs and Celebration – An Evening of Songs from Jewish Composers, presented next Monday as a fundraiser by the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company. The evening showcases more than a dozen entertainers, including **Bruce Dow**, **Adam Brazier**, **Lisa Horner**, **Paula Wolfson**, **Gabi Epstein**, **Stephanie Roth** and 12-year-old singing sensation **Lily Librach**.

Tickets $118 and $154. St. Lawrence Centre, Jane Mallett Theatre, 27 Front St. E. Monday, Nov. 22, 7:30 p.m. 416-366-7723, www.stlc.com

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Lantos in Conversation: The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company presents award-winning film producer **Robert Lantos** in its Conversations On The Green series. Lantos will show clips from his latest film, *Barney's Version*, which is due for theatrical release in late December. St. Lawrence Centre, Jane Mallett Theatre, 27 Front St. E. Monday, Nov. 29, 7:30 p.m. $37. 416-366-7723, www.stlc.ca. Future dates in the series feature lawyer-author **Edward Greenspan** (Dec. 6), theatre producer **David Mirvish** (April 11) and fashion journalist **Jeanne Beker** (May 16).

Robert Lantos

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Literary Events

• **Harold (Hesh) Troper** discusses his new book *The Defining Decade* at a 1960s-themed Book Salon and Coffee House, with musical performances by **Marcia Beck** and **Annie Gilbert**. Co-presented by the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre and the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 154, www.mnjcc.org

• New Star Books and the Miles Nadal JCC host the launch of **Adam Seelig**'s new book *Every Day in the Morning (slow)*. Miles Nadal JCC, Jacobs Lounge, Monday, Nov. 29, 7 p.m.

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Theatre Events

• *Kosher Lutherans*, the comedy by **William Missouri Downs**, focuses on a Jewish couple who pose as Lutherans in order to adopt a young woman's out-of-wedlock baby. But how far are they willing to go to have a family? Produced by Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre, the play runs Nov. 10 to 21. Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. www.teatrontheatre.com

• *Lenin's Embalmers*, the dark comedy by **Vern Thiessen** presented by the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company, continues to Nov. 21 at the Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC. $49 to $76. www.hgjewishtheatre.com, 416-366-7723.

• The Civic Light-Opera Company presents *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, the musical version of the classic story by **L. Frank Baum**. The company first staged the musical in 2000 in celebration of the centennial of the novel's original publication. It closely follows the original Baum story with a musical score by **James P. Doyle** and book by Toronto writer-director **Joe Cascone**. $25. Fairview Library Theatre, 35 Fairview Mall Dr. Dec 1 to 19. 416-755-1717, www.civiclightoperacompany.com

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Arts in Brief

• *Eye Weekly*'s film critic **Adam Nayman** examines the style and substance of recent art-house exports from Romania, Taiwan, Iran, Spain, Argentina and other countries. His "Media Monday" lecture with film clips is titled "Surfing the New Waves: Contemporary Foreign-Language Cinema." Miles Nadal JCC, Nov. 22, 7 to 9 p.m. $12 drop in per lecture. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Miles Nadal JCC Active Seniors presents the latest instalment of its series, Great Jewish Canadian Personalities. **Adam Fuerstenberg** talks about the life and times of **J. B. Salsberg**. Thursday, Nov. 18, 1:30 p.m. Refreshments.

Andrea Martin

• **The Sarah Sommer Chai Folk Ensemble**, the Winnipeg-based group that is North America's largest and oldest Israeli folk troupe, has released a new CD called *Wanderings*. The ensemble consists of 40 dancers, singers and musicians and was founded in 1964. The CD may be purchased from its website, www.chai.mb.ca.

• Planet Music – Lecture on World Music for the armchair traveller. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, Nov. 18, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Drop in for $18. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

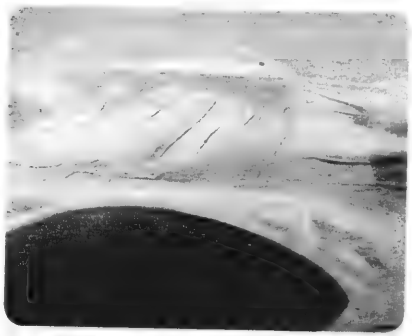
• Chai Tea and a Movie screens the 2009 Slovakian film *Broken Promise* by director **Jiri Chlumsky**, about a Jewish boy who has to make some risky decisions in order to survive World War II. $15. SilverCity Richmond Hill, 8725 Yonge St. at Hwy. 7. Sunday, Nov. 21, tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. www.tjff.com.

Artist interprets 'the glorious sites' of two worlds

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special at The CJN

Contrasting Worlds, an exhibition by award-winning painter Lena Shugar, was inspired by her recent travels to Alaska and Israel.

"Capturing the immortal spirit of Israel's landscape was challenging," Shugar said. "The interpretation of this subject was a journey of exploration of thoughts and realization of the reassurance of its permanence."



***Alaska, Igloo* by Lena Shugar**

Alaska, she said, has enriched the world with its dramatic diversity. "The icebergs appear to possess the prehistoric mystery of splendour while standing guard over this beautiful, pristine world."

Using texture, form and subject, some of Shugar's artworks are expressed abstractly with vibrant and intense colours.

Her mystical paintings, in watercolour, acrylic, oil and mixed media, can be found in numerous private and corporate collections as well as on donation cards and magazine covers.

"My artistic exploration takes me on a journey of both the cerebral and the intuitive sides of my nature," she said.

"It has been my privilege to witness the glorious sights in Alaska and Israel and to paint [them] in my own humble way."

Shugar was born in Poland and moved to Canada with her family in 1951, after fleeing to Russia during World War II.

Her first major exhibition was in Ramat Gan, Israel, in 1990.

Closer to home, she has been critically acclaimed, and in 2001, she received the Award of Excellence at the Lindsay Art Gallery in Lindsay, Ont.

***Masada, Cloaked in Light and Shadow as if in Prayer* by Lena Shugar.**

Contrasting Worlds runs at the Leonardo Galleries, 133 Avenue Rd., from Nov. 25 to Dec. 10. Call 416-924-7296 or visit www.lenashugar.com

Book has proved to be therapeutic to author

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

It was a day that would change her life forever.

Ten years ago, in a ceremony in New York City, Kati Marton, an American journalist and author, accepted Hungary's highest civilian award on her father's behalf. Later that evening, the Hungarian foreign minister gave her a large manila envelope for her father containing material on him compiled by Hungary's Communist-era secret police, AVO.

Kati Marton

Endre Marton, Kati's urbane and cosmopolitan dad, was one of the last independent journalists reporting from Hungary when it was under the sway of Stalinist-style communism.

Working for the Associated Press, he filed stories about political suppression that irked the authorities. His wife, Ilona, was a pest, too, being a reporter for United Press International. Their body of work would earn them the George Polk Award, one of journalism's highest honours.

In 1955, he and Ilona were separately imprisoned on trumped-up charges of espionage. Being pro-western democrats whose friends included British and American journalists and diplomats, they had been under surveillance for years. The hard-line communist regime considered them "sworn enemies."

Kati Marton, who was six years old when she witnessed their respective arrests, was placed in the care of strangers, traumatized by these events. In 1957, after the Soviet army crushed the grassroots Hungarian revolution, she and her family immigrated to the United States.

In their new homeland, Endre Marton was AP's chief correspondent in the U.S. State Department. His wife worked as a French teacher.

Her parents, having survived the Holocaust with fake identity papers, rarely spoke about their experiences. Nor did they ever tell their two daughters, who had been baptized as Catholics, that they were in fact Jewish.

Endre Marton, stigmatized as a Jew in prewar Hungary despite his ardent assimilationist beliefs, regarded his past as a heavy burden. As a result, he left that envelope untouched on his desk.

After his death in 2005, his younger daughter, Kati Marton, opened the envelope, hoping to alleviate her trauma.

The emotionally wrenching contents documented her parents' ordeal and the betrayals inside their family circle, whetting Marton's curiosity. It led her to AVO's archives in Budapest and prompted her to write *Enemies of the People: My Family's Journey to America*, which was published by Simon and Schuster in a hardback edition in 2009 and republished in paperback earlier this year.

Marton, who was in Toronto last month on a brief publicity tour, said there was a disconnect between her parents' studied silence about their ordeal under Nazism and communism and her need to know about their pain and humiliation.

"My parents were burdened by too much history," explained Marton, whose second husband, Peter Jennings, was a prominent TV broadcaster and whose current spouse, Richard Holbrooke, is U.S. special envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan. "I had the opposite reaction. I did not have enough history.These forces collided."

Marton, a former ABC television foreign correspondent who has written seven books, found out she was of Jewish descent in 1980 while writing a biography of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of Hungarian Jews during the Holocaust. Someone told her that her maternal grandparents, Adolf and Anna Neumann, had been murdered in Auschwitz.

The disclosure came as a relief to Marton. "A void was filled," she writes. "I was happy to be in possession of the truth." By now a lapsed Catholic, Marton was proud of her Jewish heritage.

But when she called her father from Budapest with the news, he was cold, his secret having been revealed and his control of his "narrative" having been usurped. "We were not Jewish," he declared. "We were Hungarian. Absolutely and totally assimilated."

The revelation, she noted, strained their relationship for the next 25 years.

Jennings, the father of her two grown children, reacted quite differently. While on assignment in Israel, he bought her a ring with a Jewish motif.

Endre Marton had "complicated feelings" about being Jewish, his life choices having been shaped by anti-Semitism.

"Like so many middle-class Jews in Hungary, he was utterly secular and believed that religion was a thing of the 19th century," explained Marton, a non-practising Jew today. "He and my mother were caught flat-footed by anti-Semitism. It was a shock to their system. As patriotic Hungarians, they thought they would be exempt from anti-Semitism."

They were, of course, incredibly naive. Hungary, after all, was the first western nation in the 20th century to impose an official numerus clausus on its Jewish citizens.

Marton, whose book has been translated into three languages and has been bought by film producers, is of two minds about her late parents.

During her childhood, she adored and looked up to them. But after the rift drew them apart, she no longer considered them demigods.

"They would have hated my book," she said. "All their secrets were revealed. They were not paragons of perfection, and neither am I. But they were remarkable people."

In retrospect, she said, *Enemies of the People* has had a therapeutic effect on her. For years after her parents were arrested, she carried the weight of emotional scars. "I can hardly imagine a more traumatic event," she said. "But this book has gone a long way to ease the trauma and has helped me assimilate the pain."

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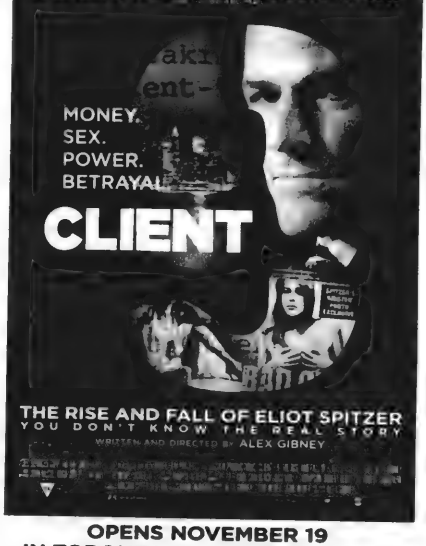

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Cantor Deborah Staiman releases her debut CD

BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Mosaic, Cantor Deborah Staiman's first CD, is an eclectic collection of classical and Jewish sacred music that reflects significant milestones in her life. She pursued a career in opera before she became a cantor.

"I wanted to pull together the many pieces of my musical life journey," she says. "This is music from my soul."

Staiman will be performing sacred selections from the CD, along with musical theatre gems from Irving Berlin, Kurt Weill, Stephen Sondheim and others, at the launch on Nov. 28.

The Toronto-born cantor says she was hooked on opera from the age of 12, when she began singing in the children's chorus of the Canadian Opera Company. After graduating with a music degree from the University of Toronto, she studied opera at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

The investiture of the world's first female cantor, Barbara Ostfeld-Horowitz, took place in 1975, she recalls. "I was shocked. I had sung in many synagogue choirs, but who ever heard of a woman cantor?

"There were no women cantors to serve as role models even when I was in university. [At the time] the thought of becoming a cantor never crossed my mind."

After continuing her opera studies in Rome, Staiman moved to New York, where she taught voice. There she became very involved with her synagogue, she recounts. "I found myself drawn to cantorial music."

She eventually went back to school to become a cantor. In 1991, she received her master's of sacred music from Hebrew Union College/ Jewish Institute of Religion in New York and became a member of the American Conference of Cantors. She has since served in congregations in New Jersey and Florida.

Cantor Deborah Staiman's CD *Mosaic*

She returned to Toronto in 2002 to live closer to her family. Here she officiates at weddings, baby-namings and other Jewish life-cycle events, and she has established her own private practice as a vocal coach and singing teacher.

Staiman says she thought of various names for her CD, a compilation of diverse musical works. "When I came up with *Mosaic*, I felt good about it, because *Mosaic* means putting pieces together."

She says the word "mosaic" also has a second meaning, which connotes institutions and writings with a connection to Moses.

"I thought that was fortuitous… 'Mosaic' relates to Jewishness, and 11 out of the 16 songs on the CD are Jewish."

The CD also features arias and art songs that reflect Staiman's operatic career, she says.

The selection of Jewish music includes a couple of pieces with texts from the Song of Songs; *Harvest*, a musical setting to a poem by Hungarian Jewish partisan Hannah Senesh; a Yiddish classic, *Oy Mame Bin Ich Farlibt* (*Oh Mama Am I in Love*); such Shabbat liturgical pieces as a Sephardi *Kiddush*, *Yism'Chu*, *Sholom Aleichem* and *Avinu Malkeinu*, the prayer sung only on the High Holidays.

Staiman chants a traditional piece of a cappella chazzanut set to the *Shema* of the Shabbat Musaf service, while she chooses more contemporary renditions of *Yism'Chu* and *Sholom Aleichem*.

Cantors are always recording liturgical music, she says. "We have an incredibly vast and rich musical tradition. Much of it is fine music that deserves to be heard outside the synagogue."

Mosaic will be launched on Nov. 28 at the Annex Live, 296 Brunswick Ave., in Toronto, from 2:30 to 5 p.m. Call 416-483-9532 or visit jewishlifecycles.ca.

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A film about hubris, power and sex

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The abrupt resignation of Eliot Spitzer as governor of New York state in March 2008 came as a surprise and shock to many observers.

Touted as a candidate to become the first Jewish president of the United States, he was smart, savvy and superbly connected.

To his everlasting regret, he could not control his emotions, and – as he puts it in Alex Gibney's riveting two-hour documentary, *Client 9: The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer* – he "caved in to temptations."

Spitzer, who as New York's attorney general challenged powerful interests on Wall Street and busted prostitution rings in Manhattan, resigned in the wake of a sex scandal that destroyed his career as an up-and-coming politician.

A supposedly happily married man with a beautiful and accomplished wife, he was forced to step down after it was discovered he had frequented high-price call girls.

Not once, but many times.

Gibney's documentary, which was premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and is due to open here on Friday, Nov. 19, leaves the impression that Spitzer's downfall was a function of dirty politics.

Spitzer, a dogged and determined figure who seemed to be guided by steadfast progressive principles and a combative style, made enemies easily.

He angered and alienated a string of Wall Street stalwarts, including the former president of the New York Stock Exchange and the chief executive officer of American International Group, a conglomerate bailed out by the Obama administration during the recession.

Spitzer's zeal for reform, his habit of forcing bankers and CEOs to do the right thing, prompted his adversaries to bring him down, Gibney suggests.

Eliot Spitzer and his wife on the day he resigned as governor of New York state.

A member of the so-called "lucky sperm club," he was born into fortuitous circumstances. Spitzer's father, Bernard, was a rich real estate developer. He, Spitzer, was blessed with brains.

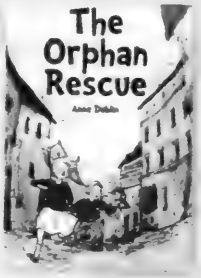
Destined to go far as a politician, Spitzer ruined it all by cavorting with escorts at $1,000 a pop and carving out a double life for himself.

One of his "dates,"Ashley Dupre, appears on screen, refusing to acknowledge herself as a hooker.

Despite his fall from grace, Spitzer has since bounced back as a *CNN* commentator, but it's doubtful whether he will be able to resurrect his political career.

Client 9: The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer is a well-told tale of hubris, power and sex.

Books can provide a break for the kids, too



JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

"Books are the quietest and most constant of friends," Charles W. Eliot, a former president of Harvard University, once said. Those of us in a household full of children, yearning for some peace and quiet, might take this sage advice and give out books for Chanukah gifts. While educational and entertaining for the children, they also provide some welcome relief from the television and video game chatter.

***The Orphan Rescue* by Anne Dublin, Second Story Press**

Geared towards children between seven and 10, this is the exciting story of a young girl in pre-World War II Poland whose courage saves her little brother from a dangerous factory where he has been sent to work. It is inspired by a story from the author's own family history.

Miriam, 12, and her younger brother, David, live with their grandparents, having lost their parents to illness and poverty. They live together in one room behind their grandfather's shop, and often there isn't enough food for all of them.

Miriam is shocked when her grandparents decide to send David to an orphanage. When she discovers that David is being forced to work in a factory, she decides to rescue him.

Illustrated throughout, *The Orphan Rescue* is an accessible, entertaining story for young readers that manages to touch on some serious topics including poverty, child labour and the history of Jews in pre-Holocaust Europe.

***Anne Frank, the Anne Frank House Authorized Graphic Biography* by Sid Jacobson and Ernie Colon, Hill and Wang Novel Graphic**

I'm surprised no one did this before that I'm aware of. This is the story of Anne Frank told in graphic-novel form.

Drawing on the expertise and authority of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the authors have created the first authorized and exhaustive graphic biography of Anne Frank.

It is a complete account, a chronological retelling of Anne Frank's life, from Anne's parents' wedding, to their going into hiding and subsequent capture and Anne's tragic death in Bergen-Belsen. It also mentions the publication of the diary and the production of the Broadway play in 1955. The story is tastefully illustrated and dramatized, and contains a helpful list of further reading for anyone wanting to learn more. For teenagers.

***Annexed, A Novel* by Sharon Dogar, Houghton Mifflin**

Speaking of Anne Frank, English author Sharon Dogar has an interesting take on the well-known story.

In *Annexed*, Dogar imagines life in hiding with Anne from Peter van Pels' point of view. Peter was the teenager whose family shared the attic hideout with Anne Franks' and was frequently mentioned in her diary.

Through Peter's eyes, readers see another version of those two years spent in the attic. Readers will see another view of Anne, her sister Margot, her family and the others who hid with them.

The book continues on after the discovery of the hideout – to the death camps, the march to Mauthausen and the terrible fates of all the annex's occupants.

Annexed also contains a list of books for further reading. For ages 12 and up.

***Hanukkah*, Accord Publishing**

Nothing says Chanukah more than – well – *Hanukkah*. This is for parents who wish to teach their children about the important traditions associated with the holiday – however you choose to spell it.

Young children will love the animated windows, which feature flickering menorahs, spinning dreidels and flipping latkes. Vividly depicted illustrations paired with the full-colour AniMotion technology windows bring the holiday to life. For young children.

***A Chanukah Noel*, written by Sharon Jennings, illustrations by Gillian Newland, Second Story Press**

Christmas at Chanukah? This unique tale, based on a true story, is about Charlotte, a young Jewish girl who moves to a small town in France. As Christmas draws near, Charlotte is amazed to see the town transform itself. Charlotte longs to have a Christmas too, and in a magical moment learns how to bring the spirit of both holidays together. Wonderfully illustrated throughout. For ages 5 to 9.

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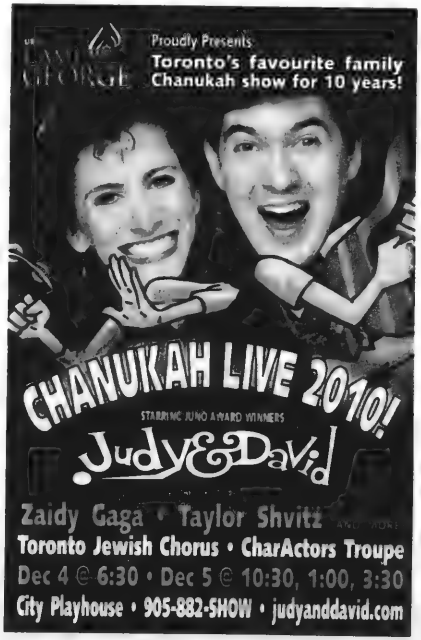
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Vasily Grossman collection contains powerful Holocaust essay

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Vasily Grossman was a Russian/Jewish writer most known for his novel *Life and Fate*. It was banned by the Communists, smuggled out of the Soviet Union and published in the West in 1980.

But before that, Grossman was a correspondent for the Red Army during World War II, writing first-hand accounts of some of the greatest battles of the Eastern Front, including the battle of Stalingrad. Attached to the unit that liberated Treblinka, Grossman was one of the first journalists to write about the Holocaust.

Vasily Grossman

The Road (NYRB Classics) is a new collection of Grossman's short fiction and essays, most of which have never been published in English before. The pieces run from his early 1930s stories to his last story, *In Kislovodsk*, a moving story about a Soviet doctor asked by the occupying Nazis to facilitate the murder of Soviet PoWs. It was published just after he died in 1964.

Included in this collection are two important works: the short story *The Old Teacher*, which is among the first works of fiction about the Holocaust, and the powerful essay *The Hell of Treblinka*, one of the first published accounts of a Nazi death camp.

The Old Teacher, published in 1943, is a short story about the massacre of a small Ukrainian town's Jews.

While at times Grossman's prose can veer toward exaggeration and Soviet propaganda, his strength lies in his characters and descriptive detail.

The Old Teacher begins with an idyllic setting in a countryside peasant village as Boris Isaakovitch, the 82-year-old title character, sits outside in the sun with a book by Chekhov on his lap. "He was breathing in the smell of onions and sunflower-seed oil and enjoying the warmth of the sun-warmed stone."

But beneath this idyllic setting lies a sinister foreboding. It is June 1942, and the advancing German army is steps away from their town. Stories of the disappearance of Jews in the other occupied towns prey heavily on the minds of the town's Jewish population.

"They're going to need people like us – surely you can see that they're going to need doctors and teachers," the town doctor, Weintraub, optimistically tells Boris when he asks to be given a suicide dosage.

Grossman describes the oncoming Nazi menace with a horror-novel-like atmosphere. "The Nazis drew everything dark up to the surface, just as a black spell in an old tale calls up the spirits of evil. That night the little town lay stifling, gripped by something foul and dark. Something vile had awoken; stirred by the Nazis' arrival, it was now reaching towards them."

The fate of the town's Jews is inevitable. Yet Grossman is able to inject a spark of human decency into this horror with the scene of a young girl shielding the teacher's eyes from the carnage of the mass grave site.

Little human decency exists in *The Hell of Treblinka*, published in November 1944, just a few months after the camp's liberation. This essay is a vivid and imaginative description of the Nazi death camp.

He begins with a detached, matter-of-fact geographic description. "Here on the branch line to Siedlce, stands the remote station of Treblinka," and then slowly pulls you into the stark horror of the camp.

"Nothing in this camp was adapted for life," he writes. "Everything was adapted for death."

He describes the assembly line "conveyer belt executioner's block" setup of the camp, comparing it to a slaughter house; from the train station where an orchestra played to greet the new arrivals to the square where they left their suitcases and were processed, to "the road of no return," the path where they walked to the gas chambers disguised as showers.

He imagines what it would have been like in the square, where men were separated from their wives, mothers and children: "Love– maternal, conjugal or filial love – told people that they were seeing one another for the last time. Handshakes, kisses, blessings, tears, brief hurried words into which people put all their love, all their pain, all their tenderness, all their despair."

At times though, when he tries to describe the thoughts of those in the gas chamber, his imagination fails him:

"What are the pictures now passing before people's glassy, dying eyes? Pictures of childhood? Of the happy days of peace? Of the last terrible journey?... No, what happed in that chamber cannot be imagined."

The Hell of Treblinka is an extraordinary essay, and it's well worth buying the book. With little in the way of sources, Grossman relied on his observations and interviews with inmates. It was used at the Nuremberg trials as evidence. This is the first time the essay has been published in English in full.

Grossman died in September 1964, on the eve of the 23rd anniversary of the massacre of the Jews of Berdichev in which his mother died. At the time he was working on the novel *Everything Flows*, a scathing criticism of totalitarianism that wasn't published in Russia until 1989.

The Road, which also contains essays and journalism, is translated by Robert and Elizabeth Chandler with Olfa Mukovnikova. It is a fitting testament to a writer whom Martin Amis calls the "Tolstoy of the USSR."

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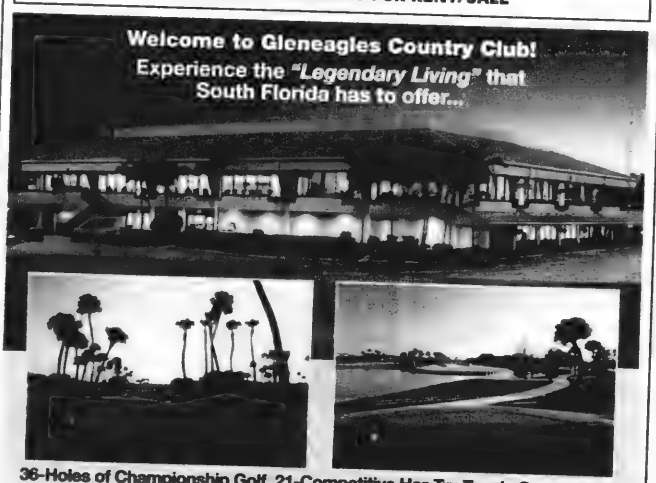

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Genes practically determined fencer's sporting career

By URI TALSHIR
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JERUSALEM — Sometimes, when the babysitter blows you off and the day care teacher is sick, you have no choice but to take your child to work. So it was, often, for young Maor Hatuel, who from the age of two got a peek at his father Haim's profession. There were no documents, printers or chairs in this office, but instead, fighters in strange outfits passionately trying to stab each other.

Recalling his time in the crib watching his father in the Acre fencing club, Hatuel said with a laugh, "He was my babysitter."

The 24-year old told *Ha'aretz* prior to the recently concluded World Championships in Paris, that from that point on he knew that some day he would be a fencer, too. Although his father said he could only start in third grade, he pushed to begin a year earlier.

The Hatuel fencing genes did not bypass Maor. Like his successful aunt Lydia and his talented sister Delilah, he quickly took to his foil. He won a silver medal in the European Youth Championships at age 19 and was on track for the Olympics but sidelined his fencing career when he was accepted into the elite Israel Air Force pilots' training course. Six months later he was bounced from the course and landed back in fencing.

"The long hiatus knocked me off balance but helped me mentally," said Hatuel. "I withstood a lot of pressure." After dealing with air force officers, he says it was easier to take in his father as a coach, though sometimes this new relationship generates ambivalent feelings. "When I do well it motivates me, but failures discourage me," he said. "Understand that I go everyday to train in the same place as my aunt, uncle and two sisters did, and I'm still trying to distinguish myself, to rise above the family successes and present something different."

Maor is particularly close to Delilah, 30. When she tore her ACL, a ligament in her knee, and her place at the 2008 Beijing Olympics was in jeopardy, Maor took leave of his work as a fencing coach and a salesman at Yes, dropped his aptitude test studies and relocated to the Wingate Institute for three weeks to help her with intensive rehab.

"I supported her for the Olympics and almost collapsed," he recalled. "I didn't get excited at all about my competitions, and it was hard for her to watch me participate in them. I lean on her for support and she understands me better than anyone else."

After years of struggling, Hatuel finally seems to be fulfilling his potential. He defeated the world champion at a meet in Paris, reached the top 16 in the latest European Championship and joined the Olympic squad. In order to continue receiving his monthly stipend he will have to do equally well at the World Championships.

As always, his father will be accompanying him. "Even if my opponent is better, taller or faster, and even if I'm trailing with a few seconds left, when I turn my head and see my father, it's everything," he said. "He's a Superman figure for me who can do it all. Thanks to him, I manage to stay concentrated even in the toughest situations."

Hatuel finished eighth at the world championships after being eliminated by Gerek Meinhardt of the United States.

It seems Hatuel is honing another less well-known talent – singing in the shower. "Every morning after practicing with my father, I give a performance in the country club shower. The others know who I am and love my singing," he said. "Sometimes the audience makes special requests."

Between practice and competitions, Hatuel is studying computer science and biology at the University of Haifa, but beyond a career in engineering or research he said he aspires toward politics. "I want to make an impact so that the next generation will grow up in a place where sports is a way of life."

Iranian athlete disciplined for appearing with Israeli

Compiled by CJN Staff

An Iranian weightlifter and the head of Iran's weightlifting team have been banned from all weightlifting activities for life after appearing on a platform with Israeli champion Sergio Britva while *Hatikvah* was being played.

The government of Iran made the announcement after Hossein Khodadadi appeared on the medal platform beside Britva, who won a gold medal at the World Masters Weightlifting Championship in Poland.

Khodadadi refused to shake hands with the Israeli after he mounted the podium. Britva and the bronze medalist from Germany did shake hands. Khodadadi then stood with his head bowed while the Israeli national anthem was played

Jalal Yahya-Zadeh, head of Iran's physical education for youth committee announced the bans and added: "The fact that an Iranian weightlifting veteran has competed against an Israeli during the worldwide competitions and has stood beside him during the distribution of medal is unjustifiable.

"Unfortunately, those who supposedly had the primary responsibility in this regard did not see any problem in this matter, however did not see it fit to be distributed within the public, which itself is an obvious mistake on their end."

Video of the incident can be seen at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lDecG6BWncA&feature=player_embedded.

FOREST HILL 50

Forest Hill Hockey Association (FHHA) marked its 50th anniversary with the 50 for 50 program – hockey scholarships were donated to 50 disadvantaged children in the GTA. Sports broadcaster and former NHL defenceman Jim McKenny, left, hosted the recent 50th anniversary celebration, which featured guest speaker, Paul Rosen, far right, goalie of the 2006 Olympic gold medal-winning National Sledge Hockey Team. Seen centre left is FHHA president, Hersh Forman, and to his right is David Krieger, chair of the 50 for 50 campaign.

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Chanukah party to feature concert by Jaffa Road

Jaffa Road

By HOLLY GINSLER
Special to The CJN

HAMILTON — Temple Anshe Sholom, Hamilton's Reform synagogue, and its religious school are presenting the Juno-award-nominated band Jaffa Road as part of its annual Chanukah fundraiser this year.

Jaffa Road is a Toronto-based world music group that plays an eclectic combination of music, including Jewish, classical Arabic and Indian, modern jazz, electronic, rock, pop, and dub.

According to Anshe Shalom's cantor and educator, Rebecca Moses, "it's impossible not to want to dance while you're listening. I think adults will appreciate the eclectic sound and the beauty of this unusual music, and kids will find the rhythms infectious."

Before the concert, there will also be a "Nuts and Bolts of Chanukah" party and a chance to put together gift bags for Hamilton's Out of the Cold program.

Sunplace, Jaffa Road's debut CD, was nominated for a 2010 Juno award for world music album of the year. Tracks have been played on many regional and national programs on CBC Radio, and it has earned the No. 1 spot on the CIUT world music chart.

Their song *L.Y.G.* recently won grand prize as well as a Lennon Award in the John Lennon Songwriting Contest. At the 2010 Toronto Independent Music Awards, they were named best world music artist.

Their multilingual lead singer is Aviva Chernick. She is accompanied by Aaron Lightstone, who plays the oud, as well as bassist Chris Gartner, saxophonist and flutist Sundar Viswanathan and percussionist Jeff Wilson.

Refreshments at the Chanukah party will include homemade latkes and sufganiyot. Children will be able to create their own chanukiyot out of nuts and dreidels out of bolts. There will also be the opportunity for children to make kippot out of their choice of several materials.

"It's a simple pattern," says Moses, "but this way they can make something truly unique."

Hamilton's Out of the Cold program provides hot meals six nights a week from nine locations and three breakfast meals at the Wesley Centre, a drop-in centre for homeless and at-risk people. The service is for families and individuals in need and runs from November to March. The gift bags made at the Chanukah party will contain shampoo, conditioner, lotion, soap, deodorant, toothpaste and toothbrushes, as well as warm new socks and a hat.

The Nuts and Bolts of Chanukah party will be held Nov. 28 at 1 p.m. at the temple, and the one-hour concert will begin at 2:30.

ASIAN LATKES

4 lg. potatoes
1/4 c coarsely chopped cashews
1/4 c flour
2 tbls wasabi powder (green powder found in Asian section of supermarket tastes similar to horseradish)
2 eggs, beaten
vegetable oil

Gingered Sour Cream: Stir together 1/2 c sour cream & 2 tbsp. fresh chopped ginger or 1 tbsp powdered ginger

Peel and grate potatoes. Place in colander & set over large bowl, squeeze out as much liquid as possible. Stir together with nuts, flour, wasabi & eggs

Heat 1 tbsp oil in lg skillet over medium-high heat. Drop batter into silver dollar size patties & fry until golden brown on both sides, adding more oil & adjusting heat as needed. Serve with gingered sour cream.

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REMEMBERING OUR YESTERDAYS

By BILL GLADSTONE

UNION KOSHER DELICATESSEN

Bella Bernholtz stands in the doorway of the Union Kosher Delicatessen, at 797 Dundas St. W. in Toronto, about 1923. She and her husband, David Bernholtz, acquired the deli as the result of a bad debt and operated it for about a year. The Bernholtzes' main business, Union Kosher Sausage, became better known as Chicago 58 and had a factory on Lippincott Street from roughly 1923 to 2005, when it moved to Woodbridge, Ont.

Geldof lost his mom at 7

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

When Sir Bob Geldof was seven years old, his mother died. I know this because he was the keynote speaker at Ve'ahavta's Starry Nights 2010 event on Nov. 7, and he said so.

His father was a salesman and travelled all week, and his two sisters filled their time with studying and were rarely home. Bob was mostly home by himself until he didn't come home much at all. He said it was just too hard entering a place where the lights were off.

URBAN WRITER

He read a lot, classics such as Dickens, and sharpened his mind. Sometimes he would go out and help street people and prostitutes, and others who didn't have a place to go to.

One woman he remembers well was Mary, who slept on the doorstep of a man who lived nearby. The man would come home at the end of the day, step over Mary and say goodnight. Geldof was pissed off, thinking how rude he was being, so cavalier about Mary and treating her as if she was a waste of space.

Later on in life, he thought to himself that most of us – "including me," he said – would never let Mary sleep on their doorsteps. "We would be too worried about the value of our houses."

And Geldof realized that the man really was a good person.

Geldof said it's irrational to hate someone, to think of them as being "less than" us, because of the colour of their skin, the texture of their hair, or how they talk or look.

"It is intellectually wrong," he stated.

He said it made him very angry that blacks in South Africa were treated the way they were under apartheid, so he started a movement with a fellow bloke to fight racism – "and hopefully get shagged," he joked.

That's where it all started for Geldof.

I meet a lot of people who work at the local level doing tikun olam, many who are very impressive. But once in a while I meet a Sir Bob Geldof, who operates on the world stage and fights to eradicate such things as national debts and achieves his goals.

I feel humanitarian envy. I am in awe as a trader might be at hearing Warren Buffet.

Listen to this: shortly after Geldof was able to convince western nations to forgive the foreign debt of a handful of African countries, 42 million children who previously had received no education whatsoever were able to go to school. Today, he says, some of the world's highest marks in science and math come from places such as Ghana.

Africa may be the Dark Continent, but it doesn't have to be, as Geldof convinced all of us at Starry Nights: He said numbers equal dollars and dollars equal political sway.

He also told us about the Live Aid benefits he put on in dozens of different countries that ultimately raised $150 million. The money has been used to hire doctors and nurses and make life better for a lot of people.

I wish there were more leaders of his calibre. Truthfully, a guy like Geldof sets the bar for humanitarianism, and while we understand that few people can ever equal his achievements, by using him as a role model, we can achieve our own particular brand of greatness.

Work hard to achieve your goal and help the world while you can. Geldof lost his mom when he was seven.

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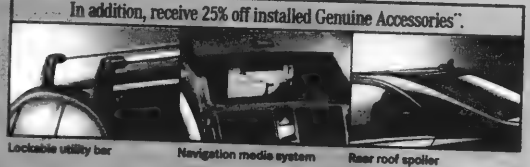

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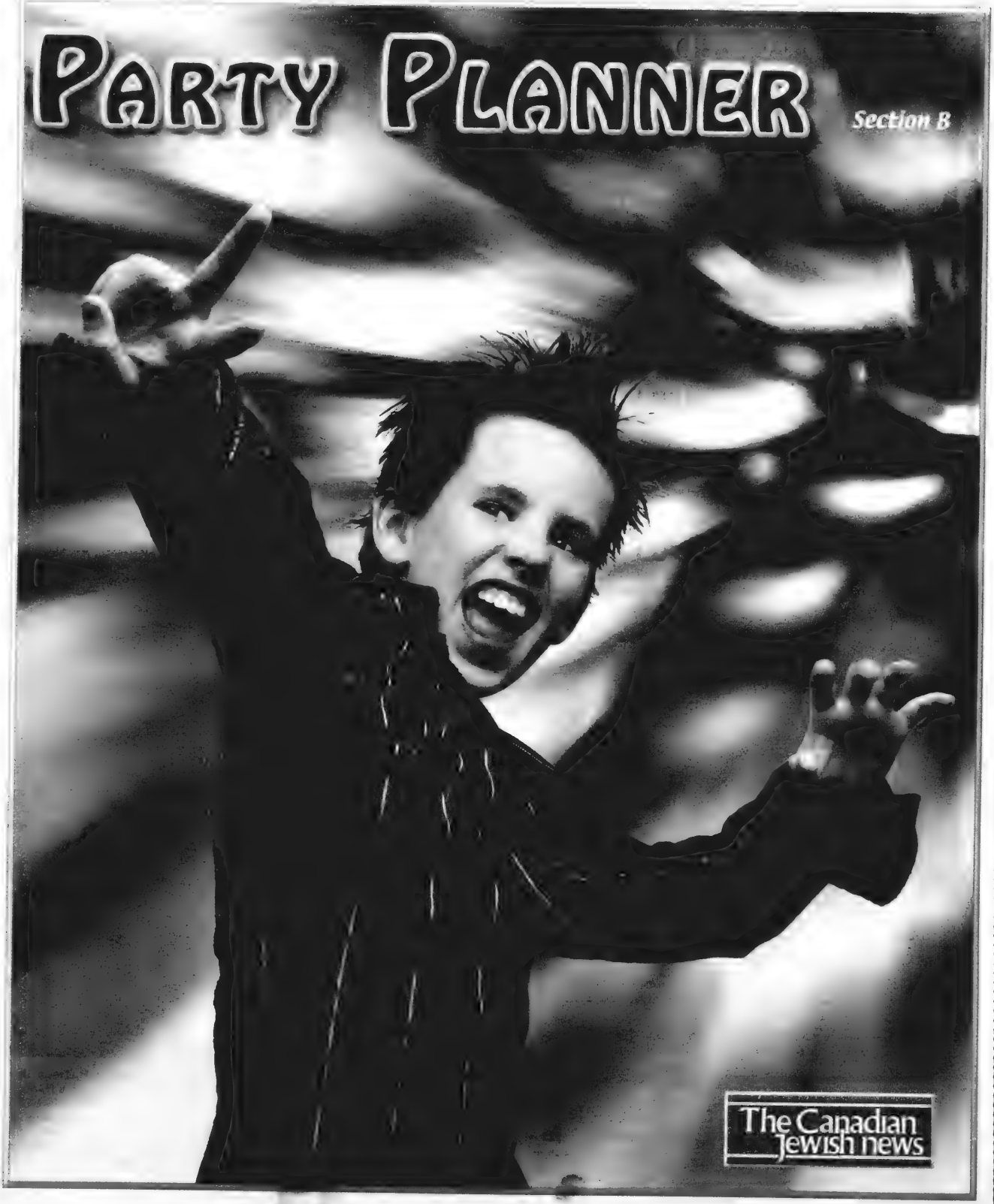
PARTY PLANNER

Section B



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Magen Boys create unique experience

By MARNI BRINDER BYK
Special to The CJN

Identical twin brothers Page and Jian Magen have been planning parties since high school and now have one of the most respected and admired entertainment companies in the Greater Toronto Area.

"We are a one-of-a-kind creative production company, and we provide one-of-a-kind experiences," says Page. Magen Boys High Energy Entertainment plans and executes a wide range of events, including weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, film festival soirees, charity fundraisers, corporate events and more.

Jian and Page are dedicated to working in the Jewish community and most recently worked on the sold-out UJA Federation of Greater Toronto event featuring comedic actor Jeff Garlin, and they organized a flash mob for UJA in downtown Toronto.

They've also worked with the Jewish National Fund, where Jian is the co-chair of JNFuture, and Mount Sinai Hospital with Leadership Sinai, where Page helped organize its Live From South Beach event, in which guests were entertained by James Brown Band members and the event raised $350,000 for the hospital.

Page says it's important that while the Magen Boys keep providing the best in entertainment that they continue to make an impact in the Jewish community.

Although Magen Boys serve clients from all over the country, they stress that every event they're involved with, big or small, requires the greatest attention to detail, with the promise that an evening will be completely unique and unforgettable.

Page Magen, left, Justin Bieber and Lionel Ritchie.

Page likes to think that the company is "reinventing the wheel every single week" and prides himself on "never doing the same event twice."

Creative and innovative themes are an integral part of a Magen Boys event. Page believes they can follow through on any theme, so the possibilities are as vast as their clients' imaginations.

Recently, they planned a "Boo Mitzvah" for a Halloween themed bat mitzvah.

Parents Corey and Shari Koffman had this to say about their daughter Ellie's Boo Mitzvah: "Shari and I can never thank you and the Magen Boys dancers enough. You made our 'Boo Mitzvah' such a personalized family event and put Ellie on a pedestal all night. The reason you are where you are in life is because you and Jian 'get it,' and your so-called competition chases their tail."

Page believes the details are what make an event special.

For a hockey-themed event, they had Andy Frost, voice of the Toronto Maple Leafs, announce the bar mitzvah boy. They also had the dance floor covered to look like an ice rink, while all the staff wore jerseys, and they produced a video montage that had NHL players Alexander Ovechkin and Sidney Crosby wishing the bar mitzvah boy mazel tov.

For a "Bieber Fever" event, they had Justin Bieber himself do the same for a very lucky bat mitzvah girl.

Page stresses that not every event needs to be about a specific or complicated theme. If the guest of honour loves the colour pink, the Magen Boys can have all their performers dressed in pink, and can create special lighting to produce the proper ambiance for an intimate party.

For weddings, Page says the Magen Boys' South Beach Orchestra is now the No. 1 band in the city. With the best musicians and a diverse group of vocalists, including Alana Bridgewater, who played the Killer Queen in *We Will Rock You*, the band is current and fresh and is the ultimate party band.

Page Magen believes it is "our job to create something so special for [clients] so people leave saying 'Those guys never cease to amaze me.'"

For more information, visit www.magenboys.com, call 905-513-6464, e-mail info@magenboys.com.

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Looking manly this season

By LAUREN KRAMER
Special to The CJN

Looking good is about way more than esthetics – it's about performance, says Jon Strauss, CEO of Star's Men's Shop (416-650-1404, www.starsmenshops.com). "When you look great, you feel great and you do great," he says. "There are great new looks for men, which means this is a fantastic time to come shopping for new clothes."

If you've been smirking your way through episodes of *Mad Men*, you'll be interested to know the show has had appeal to the fashion industry as well. "The new look is slim, taken off from *Mad Men*," says Saul Korman, owner of Korrys Clothiers on Danforth Avenue (416-463-1115, www.korrys.com). That means flat-front, pleat-less trousers, tapered pants and a line of slim shirts, many worn untucked.

"The new, modern fit is tighter and shorter in everything," agrees Strauss. "Suits and dress shirts are more tapered and shorter cut, and ties are narrower, creating a great, new, fresh look to dressing."

The good news is that black never goes out of fashion, and together with its variants – charcoal and grey – these colours are always appropriate choices for parties. That doesn't mean you can't add colourful accents, in shirts, ties or scarves, though. "Choose purple, shades of blue, browns or reds for accent colours," suggests Strauss.

"Checked and striped patterns, as well as paisleys, were strong patterns in the summer and continue to be strong in the winter," adds Michael Korman, Saul's son.

> *You can always wear a black blazer*

Earth tones are also popular, he says. "Choose tones like olive, grey, brown and charcoal for casual wear – but brown for shoes. Brown is the new black when it comes to shoes because it can go with everything. You can wear it with earth tones, with navy, with black or grey, or with a pants suit. It's the new colour in shoes."

If you're going to update your wardrobe, there are a few essentials you'll need this season. First on the list is a good, black blazer. "It's a staple," says Michael Korman. "Choose cotton or wool, but rest assured you can use it all year round, dressing it casually with corduroy pants or with cottons and linens in summer. It's really for every occasion – except maybe a wedding."

Another staple is the sports jacket, perfect for wearing with jeans or with the new, popular, five-pocket-style pants. "Sports jackets are more tapered now, narrower with shorter cuts," says Strauss. "Look for check patterns in charcoal, black or blue as they are really big right now."

Beneath the sports jacket, you'll want a good sports shirt, preferably something with a collar, and possibly buttons down the front. "A shirt with a collar will sit properly under a jacket or a sweater," says Michael Korman.

"There are lots of great items in sports shirts available right now," adds Strauss. "Look around for shirts with embroidery in the cuffs and around the collar, so that when you pull up the cuffs, you can see the embroidery underneath. They look good with a sports jacket and a casual, dressy pant."

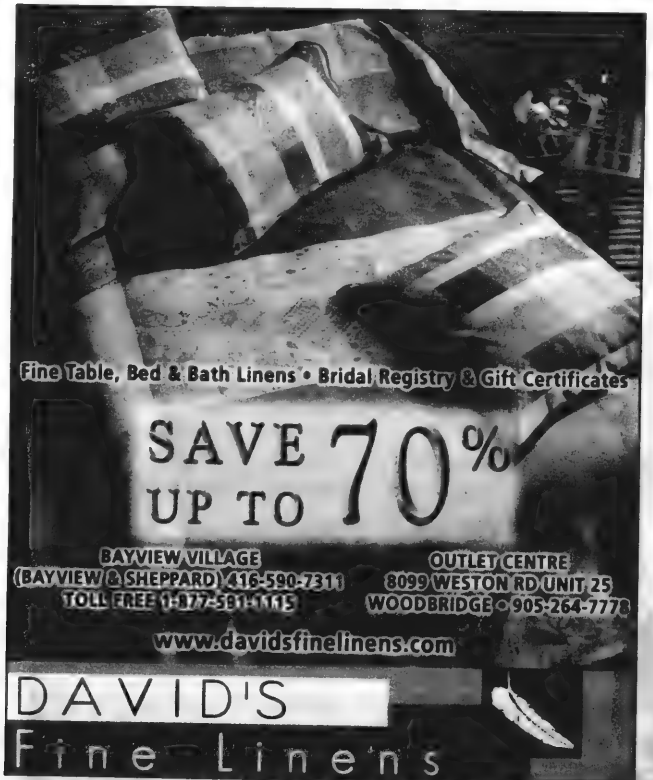
Pants should be flat front, both Korman and Strauss agree. Korries carries a style called the five-pocket dress pant in wool and cotton. "It's dressy-casual and looks great," Michael Korman says.

If you're in the market for a new coat, versatility should be your key word. Choose one in nylon or microfibre, and rather than restricting it to work-wear, remember that the three-quarter-length coat looks good over casual clothes, too.

Finally, if you're feeling uncertain about your look, head to an established clothier with a couple of hours to spare and keep trying on items until you find the right combination. A good salesperson who really knows fashion is an invaluable resource at a time like this.

"We have really well-educated sales representatives who want to make a connection with customers and get them some great clothes," says Strauss. "We'll take the time to ask you questions about your needs, and make sure we have the right fit for you."

Other men's fashion retailers advertising in this supplement aer: Beatties, 416-481-4459; Crawford Boys, 416-782-8137.



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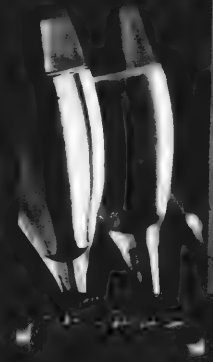

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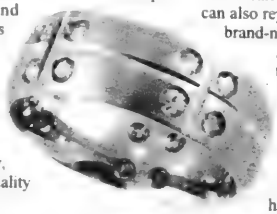
Finding the perfect gift is fun again

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

Whoever said, "it's better to give than to receive" must have known that if you know the right places to shop, it really is almost more fun to buy a gift than receive one. Whether it's pre-owned high-end watches and jewelry at Van Rijk Jewellers or head-turning Judaica at Israel's, finding the perfect gift is fun again.



Van Rijk Jewellers (416-440-0123, http://vanrijk.com), on Eglinton East, near Yonge Street, is the uptown spot to buy, sell or trade – in total confidentiality – almost anything that glitters.

If you're buying jewelry, says co-owner Barbara Chatz, nothing beats preowned. "It's huge!" she says – a fabulous alternative to the "what everybody else is wearing" blahs. "A lot of them are one-of-a-kind pieces, antique, filigree, old cuts of diamonds."

Pre-owned doesn't necessarily mean old or even used. Van Rijk carries a wonderful selection of loose diamonds that can be mounted in a brand-new setting. "We have a designer on the premises that will design it for them," says Chatz. "We do manufacturing also. We could make anything."

For a special anniversary, Van Rijk's designer can take an old piece of jewelry, like an engagement ring, and make it new again, either by adding stones or changing the setting entirely.

Inherited jewelry or loose stones can be used creatively to pass on a meaningful legacy: separating a three-stone ring to create three new rings, or re-mounting an old earring as a necklace pendant. Van Rijk can also repair broken or damaged pieces to brand-new condition.

Any event is an opportunity to add beauty with jewelry. "Diamond studs are great for a bat mitzvah gift."

Or consider a watch. Van Rijk Jewellers offers name-brand quality at preowned prices. "We have the largest selection of high-grade watches in Toronto," Chatz says. Van Rijk is well-known for its range of Rolex, Cartier, Patek Philippe and others. "It would take a whole page if I were to list them all."

Indeed, while Van Rijk's website offers a sneak preview, it would be impossible to showcase every single item; besides, it's more fun to come in person. Free customer parking is available behind the store, and walking through the door is "a totally different experience," says Chatz, who's run the business with her husband, Alec Van Rijk, and their daughter, in the same location for 25 years.

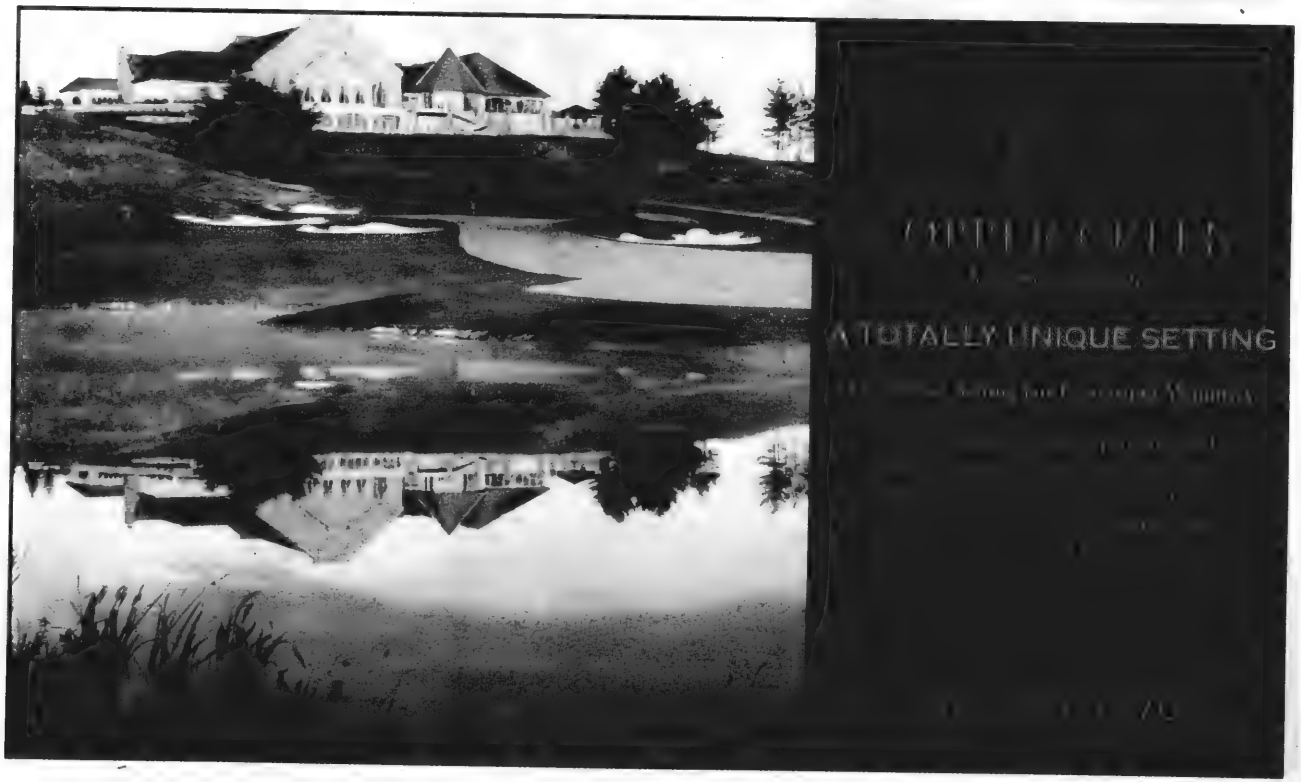
"There's nothing like this anywhere in Toronto. It's a treasure chest of such unique pieces. We have everything here that anybody would be looking for in jewelry."

Just down the street at Israel's The Judaica Centre's Eglinton location, or farther uptown in Thornhill (Eglinton, 416-256-1010; Thornhill, 905-881-1010; http://www.israelsjudaica.com), you're sure to find something new and interesting this season.

With Chanukah around the corner, there's always fun stuff for the kids. Forget chocolate coins – this year, they're going to love munching chocolate "bills" – Israeli 20, 50, 100 and 200 shekel notes. They're made in Israel, says Susie Kaplan, and they're delicious, too. "They're very good milk chocolate."

A menorah makes a great gift for almost any occasion, she says, and there are so many to choose from. "Funky menorahs in the shape of high heels; mah-jong menorahs." From a menorah in the form of a sculpted metal Chassid playing a rainbow xylophone to a traditional silver menorah, a menorah will grace any Jewish home year-round, and there's truly one for every price range.

Continued on page B8



A *Yad* is a treasured keepsake

Continued from page B7

And don't forget high-quality Israeli candles. "We could get cheaper candles from China," says Kaplan, but the store has long supported the Israeli economy and Israeli artisans at the same time.

Bat mitzvah coming up? Look for new items from Israeli artist Michal Golan. Her necklaces, keychains and mezuzahs combine colourful, modern designs with Swarowski crystals and gemstones for genuine glitter.

For a special bar mitzvah, a *yad*, a unique and artistic Torah pointer that a boy will carry with him to the bimah on his special day, becomes a treasured keepsake after the big day.

The Gary Rosenthal collection offers truly special wedding gifts, bringing the modern look of copper and fused glass to Judaica such as mezuzahs (a new-baby mezuzah includes a special parents' prayer), "tree of life" candleholders, a challah knife and more. A wedding keepsake glass, in one of several colours, can also be preserved for the couple after the wedding in a display-quality lucite block.

Consider making any gift better by adding the recipient's name. "If it's sterling silver, we can engrave it," says Sarah Zeldman-Novak. What else is engraveable? "Almost everything!" she says. Siddurim and machzorim can usually be gold-stamped with the name and bar or bat mitzvah date. Tzedakah boxes, and many other items can have a brass plate added with a name and date.

Many people also don't realize that, along with personalized kippot and benschers, Israel's can help a couple choose and create their own ketubah, Zeldman-Novak says. In-store, they choose from the many wonderful designs and themes, and then "either the artist customizes it or we have a local calligrapher who customizes it."

At Israel's, there are so many choices, it's hard to know what to pick – and that's when gift cards come in handy. Israel's also offers a point system: purchases in either store add up and can be redeemed against your own future purchases – a little gift to yourself, just for stopping by. "We also give away free gift cards with certain purchases," says Kaplan – yet another reason why shopping at Israel's is fun for everyone.

Other gift retailers advertising in this supplement are: Gold Step Jewellers Ltd., 905-882-1606.

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Spa treatment, new hairstyle among joys of life

By LAUREN KRAMER
Special to The CJN

As winter begins to set in, it's hard to resist the comfort of some personal pampering. A good spa treatment, a new hairstyle – these are among the joys of life that can chase the rain and snow from our consciousness and leave us feeling rejuvenated and beautiful.

The Stillwater Spa at the Park Hyatt Hotel in Toronto (416-926-2389, www.parktoronto.hyatt.com) offers a number of tantalizing treatments. In the Uptown Downtown Massage, two therapists tackle your body simultaneously, while the 90-minute Essential Milk and Honey Wrap will take you straight to the land of milk and honey – without the jetlag!

"This is the ultimate indulgence," says Orsolya Soos, the spa's public relations and marketing manager. "It's comprised of a total body, golden sea-salt exfoliation, a warm rose mud wrap and a 45-minute Swedish massage, and guests are provided with a head and neck treatment while the mud wrap absorbs. This treatment not only relaxes one's mind and body, but provides total body nourishment and hydration."

Muted, seasonal colours are always popular this time of year, says Soos. "Go for plum, cranberry and taupe tones in your makeup and nail polish," she suggests. Those colours find their way into the ingredient list of some treatments as well.

The Bora Bora Body Restore features an anti-oxidant beet-sugar scrub, a Polynesian red algae compress massage and hydrating pearl moisture. The Moroccan Rhassoul Wrap features a head-to-toe rhassoul-clay wrap, blending detoxifying black-soap exfoliation and tangerine blossom essence. "Both treatments provide an overall body treatment designed to nourish, rejuvenate and refresh your body and mind, perfect for heading into the winter," she explains.

The cold months can take a harsh toll on exposed skin, particularly on the face. The right facial can make all the difference, Soos says. "Our City Restoration Facial infuses skin with super-concentrated antioxidant vitamins and dramatically improves skin negatively impacted by the stressors of city living. Our Hungarian Mineral Facial nourishes and purifies skin with the mineral-rich waters, and unique deep cleansing and exfoliating techniques of Hungary. Both facials are ideal during this time of year to prepare for the harsh, drying winter ahead."

Need any more motivation? During the month of November, Stillwater Spa is offering complimentary manicures with the purchase of a body treatment.

If your hair is driving you wild, it may be time for a change. The good news is that easy-styling and low-maintenance hairstyles are taking front stage right now. "It's all about texture, volume and waves," says Jean-Paul Colombo, artistic director at Hair After on Finch Ave. East (416-221-6658, www.hairafter.ca). "Retro-inspired hairstyles are popular, and we're bringing back the '60s, '70s and '80s with fuller, airier looks."

Colombo says clients don't want to spend huge swaths of time on their hair any more. "They want loose waves and hair that moves – styles that look effortlessly done. Ponytails are coming back, and lots of loose braiding," he continues. "The result is very natural looking."

[Photo courtesy of Stillwater Spa]

Rentals can enhance a party

By EVA COHEN
Special to The CJN

For those planning an upcoming event or simchah, whether it be a wedding, a bar or bat mitzvah, or a small get-together with friends and family, there are companies that can help to make the occasion extra special.

Toronto is home to Canada's oldest and largest party rental firm, Chair-man Mills. The company opened in 1911, led by William J. Mills (416-391-0400). He became known as "Mills... the Chair-man" for providing chairs and tables to private homes, clubs and organizations.

Since then, the company has grown to having a full-service showroom that includes, among other things, kosher options for dishes.

"Kosher is very big for us, and we have done many Jewish events," said Mary Crothers, president and owner of Chair-man Mills. "We began with just one basic white option for dishes, and now we can offer four patterns for kosher. It's a very important part of our business and one we enjoy doing."

Chair-man Mills is a full service company, and it's partnered with Regal Tent Toronto. This allows a customer to go into the showroom and choose anything from a full outdoor event with tents and tables, to picking a set of glasses to rent of a particular colour in order to add a little flair to what you already own.

For those looking to host a party featuring what's currently in style, Crothers says that right now, "what's old is new."

"A lot of old elegance is back: cut glassware and crystal with bold flatware, but often used with contemporary furniture such as our Mirage chair, which is clear," said Crothers.

On top of tablecloth colours and patterns, many people also like to have Jewish designs, and for this, the company Jewish Entertainment & Party Rentals (JEP) began party rentals this past year (416-661-4108)

"There was a need in the city for a company that could offer Jewish content," said JEP's owner, Rabbi Yonah Vilenkin. "There are a lot of other themes out there for parties, like Disney, and we wanted to offer Jewish options."

The company is based in Toronto, but will do kosher catering and concessions for parties and events outside the GTA.

A popular rental from JEP are its inflatable rides, which come in a variety of options, including the Star of David and Mount Sinai, as well as a dreidel and a menorah for the upcoming holiday of Chanukah.

JEP also offers crafts such as Jewish ceramics and shofar making, and fun carnival games for children.

For more information on these companies, visit www.chairmanmills.com and www.jeprentals.com.

Other rental companies advertising in this supplement are: Around the Table, 416-630-6704; Giant Screen Systems, 416-784-4454.

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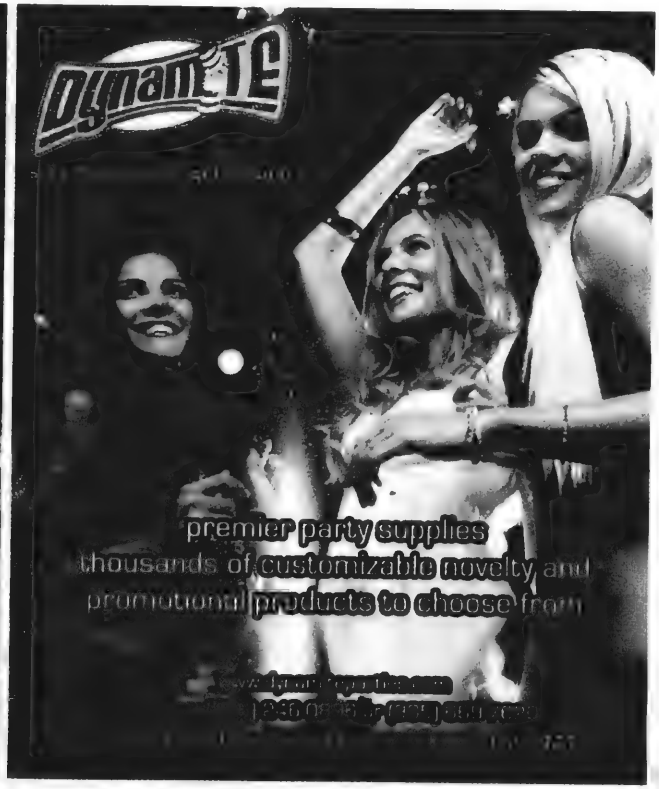

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Hard Rock Cafe offers more than a rock 'n' roll party

By MARNI BRINDER BYK
Special to The CJN

Located in the heart of downtown Toronto at 279 Yonge St. at Yonge-Dundas Square, The Hard Rock Cafe Toronto is the perfect venue for your next event. This location offers both the Hard Rock Cafe and the Hard Rock Lounge, which are on two separate levels and can be used for any type of celebration. The Lounge, located on the second floor, can be used for private functions and offers a full audio-visual system and the ability to host DJs, 3-5 piece bands, interactive karaoke bands, dancers, etc. The entire venue is versatile enough to fit a small intimate gathering of 50 people or a 350-person standing reception.

When booking an event at the Hard Rock Cafe the rooms come with their own distinctive décor: music. Guitars and music memorabilia fill the Hard Rock Cafe, and the venue also provides a red carpet entrance to make every guest feel like a rock star.

Sales and marketing manager, Marcelo DeOliveira, says that it is "a venue with a theme already built into it."

For the last 32 years the Hard Rock Cafe has been displaying rock 'n' roll memorabilia for its patrons to admire, and in the last four years or so has been catering to boys and girls looking for a rock 'n' roll-themed bar or bat mitzvah. Kids who love music can appreciate the history and priceless items displayed throughout the Hard Rock Cafe. Prominently displayed are Bob Dylan's guitar and Madonna's corset, and the memorabilia ranges from classic rock to today's pop and top 40 megastars.

Standing or seated, buffet or plated, the Hard Rock Cafe offers a wide range of items for their clients to choose from and assists clients in building their very own and unique menu. Some popular menu items for the kids include soft pretzels, mini pizzas, and twisted mac and cheese, while the adults enjoy beef teriyaki, seaweed salad, seared vegetarian dim sum, and grilled beef tenderloin. A candy station and/or a create- your-own sundae station keeps party kids energized and dancing all night long. Depending on the number of children and adult guests, the Hard Rock Cafe offers clients the option of having one buffet for the children and the option of having a separate buffet or plated service for the adults.

In regard to planning an event at the Hard Rock Café, DeOliveira stresses that they are a full-service venue and can assist anyone in planning their event. "We are in contact with our clients from the very first phone call e-mail until after the event to ensure they have all the support they need from us. We always ask our clients to be a guest at their own event and let us look after all the details." The Hard Rock Cafe staff starts the planning process from the day you book, and DeOliveira is there until the last guest leaves.

On Sunday, May 30, 2010, parents' Laurie and Mark celebrated their son Arthur's bar mitzvah at the Hard Rock Cafe and shared their thoughts with DeOliveira: "Your experience and professionalism throughout the party preparation was apparent, right from our initial contact with you to the settling of our final invoice. You were able to allay any fears or concerns quickly, actually making the entire process fun. After meeting you, I made the decision not to hire a 'party planner' as it was immediately apparent that you could easily handle all the details that often hamper this type of event. The room fit our needs exactly and looked wonderful."

Hard Rock Cafe Toronto
- [X] Non-Kosher
- [X] Over 300 person capacity
- [X] Wheelchair accessible

For more information or to book your event visit www.hardrock.com/toronto or contact sales and marketing manager Marcelo DeOliveira at 416-362-3636 or marcelo_deoliveira@hardrock.com.

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Everyone remembers a good party

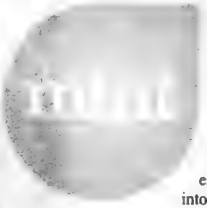
By LAUREN KRAMER
Special to The CJN

A good party lives long in the memory of those who attended it – often far longer than the recollection of party food or fashion. Once the religious and spiritual component of an event has occurred, the celebration itself takes the stage. How that celebration transpires makes the difference between a fantastic party and one that's easily forgettable.

There are tons of options when it comes to entertainment. Just ask Jordan Fogle, owner of Mint Events in Toronto (416-923-6468, http://mint-events.ca/). The 15-year veteran of event management, entertainment and production has done some over-the-top events in his career, including bringing professional skateboarder Tony Hawk, along with his 60-foot half-pipe skateboarding ramp, from Los Angeles for a bar-mitzvah party.

"We look at ourselves as event architects, because we bring creativity to the table," Fogle says. "We work with clients to create a vision but we'll help add to it or create it from scratch, if necessary. We're fun, innovative, creative and we love a good challenge." Mint Events provides interactive MCs and DJs, specialty bands, dancers, entertainers and top-of-the-line lighting, video, audio and staging equipment. Cost-wise, Fogle says he tends to work backward with clients' budgets.

Good parties touch everyone in the room



"We've done events from 20 people up to 2,000 guests, brought in celebrity performers and helped structure themes like South Beach or Willy Wonka candy land," he says. A popular theme right now is the nightclub, and Fogle's catering company, Brassaii, has been used as the event venue several times. "Brassaii is like a supper club, so we'll bring out the nightclub atmosphere there through video applications, lighting and furniture," he explains.

It can be challenging for parents organizing a bar or bat mitzvah celebration to make everyone happy at the party – kids and adults. That's where Fogle steps in. "We can capture the essence of what the kids want, as well as the classiness that the parents are looking for. You have to recognize that you have two parties in the same room at the same time," he cautions. "We deal with the bar – not the mitzvah," he adds jokingly. "We'll bring your party to the forefront."

One of the newest entertainment companies in town is Bounce Entertainment (416-671-2677, www.bouncedj.com), which opened in January under the leadership of Aaron Schacter and Daniel Rosenberg.

"Our goal is to touch every person in the room at least once in the evening, to make relationships at the party," says Schacter. "We pride ourselves on being the only company with female MCs, and providing high-energy dancers, MCs and DJs who get out there on the dance floor, interact and make sure everyone is having fun."

Schacter has worked in the industry for 15 years, and the marketing graduate from York University says he's willing to work with clients large and small, whatever their budget. "If you want the most crazy, outrageous, epic party, you should be calling us," he says. "We literally transform empty spaces into magical evenings."

Bounce Entertainment supports the Canadian Cancer Society; Movember initiatives, which raises funds and awareness for men's health issues; the miracle treat day for Make-a-Wish foundation with Dairy Queen; Brain Injury Association of Canada; Na'amat, and many other charities. They offer a free school event when schools use their services for the first time.

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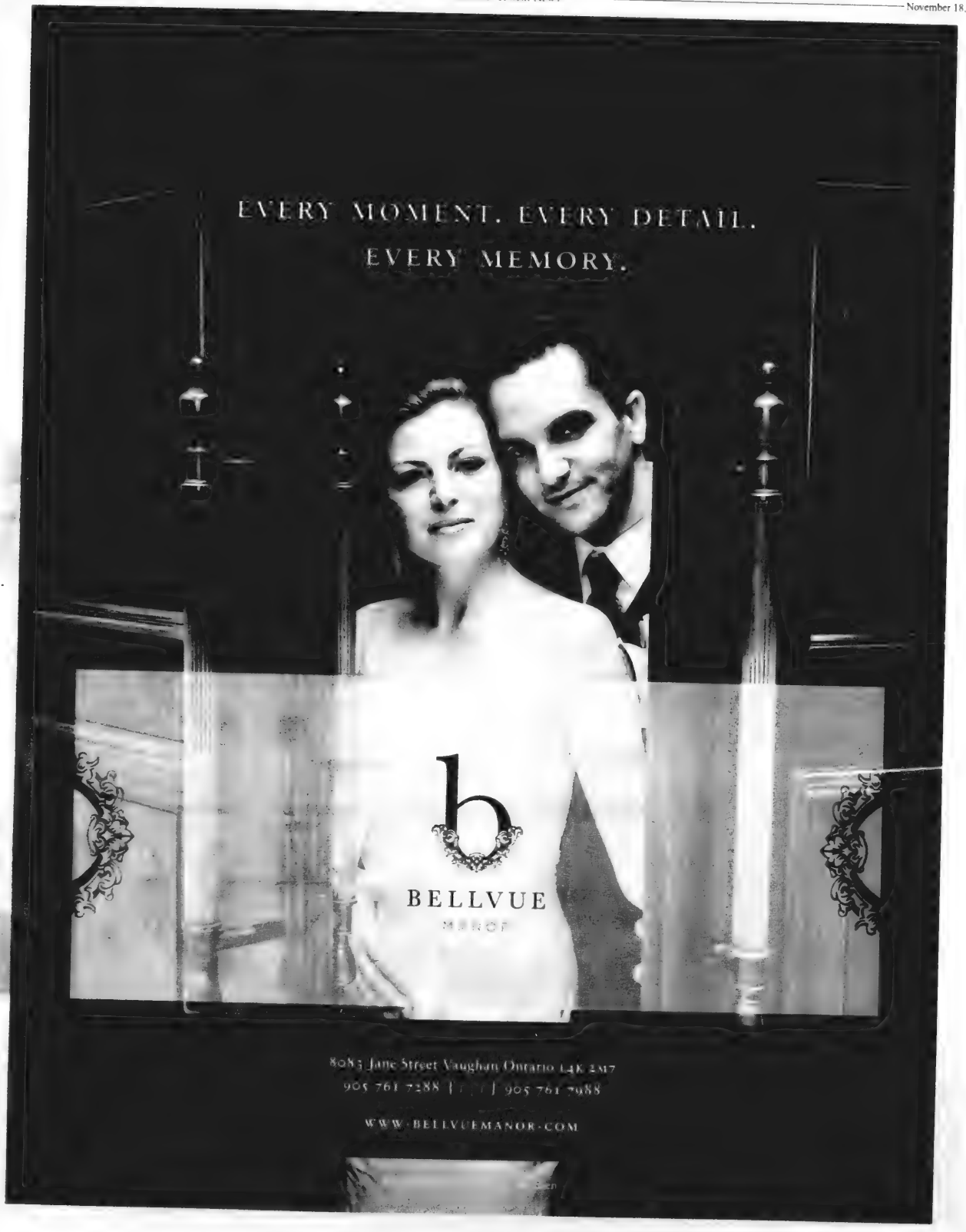
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Getting into the groove of a good band

By STEPHEN SWEET
Special to The CJN

Good tunes can make a simchah a night to remember. Mike Freedman and One More Time are in the business of doing that, no matter what the size of the event.

For Freedman, who works with both the Mike Freedman Band (416-371-6278) and Stir Crazy, doing a gig is a real adrenaline boost.

"Live performance is exciting," Freedman said. "You get to see immediate feedback from your audience, and feel the rush of people's energy when you play something they really like."

Freedman, a guitarist, runs a music recording studio where he composes and records music for film and TV, as well as his own CDs.

"It's very exciting to be able to put people in a certain frame of mind or affect their emotions through music," Freedman said.

His work is quite varied, doing everything from Latin and jazz guitar instrumentals – he is soon releasing a CD entitled *Latin Textures* – to top 40 hits.

"I really enjoy Latin and guitar players, like Santana, but I love all sounds of music," Freedman said.

Whether working at a wedding, a corporate event, or any other function, Freedman believes the tunes lead the way.

"I think music is the cornerstone of any event," Freedman said. "It's always the underlying tone.

"If people like the music, they usually don't say anything, because they're having a good time."

Freedman loves the special touch that playing live music can bring.

'The tunes lead the way'

"It's a way more personal and unique experience," Freedman said. "People really appreciate when they can hear musicians performing songs as good as or better than the recorded song."

And while Freedman enjoys the different sound, One More Time (416-484-1044) prides itself on making the song sound just like you remember it.

"When we play the song, it will sound like the original artist, because that's what we're trying to do," said One More Time's Shelley Miller.

They're equipped to do so, since like their typical audience, they're baby boomers.

"It's our focus and our specialty, because we really relate to the music personally," said Miller, whose band gets a lot of work doing 50th and 60th birthday parties.

"We cater to the older crowd with our volume, our presentation, and having lots of lyrics that they can sing along to."

Though the band does play younger events and covers current artists, the bulk of their set list comes from the 1970s and 1980s, with some rock from the 1950s and 1960s thrown in as well.

"Most of what we play is danceable," Miller said. "There's a lot of great music from back then, but we play stuff that people can get up and dance to."

Having lived through those eras themselves, the members of One More Time understands the importance of the music they play.

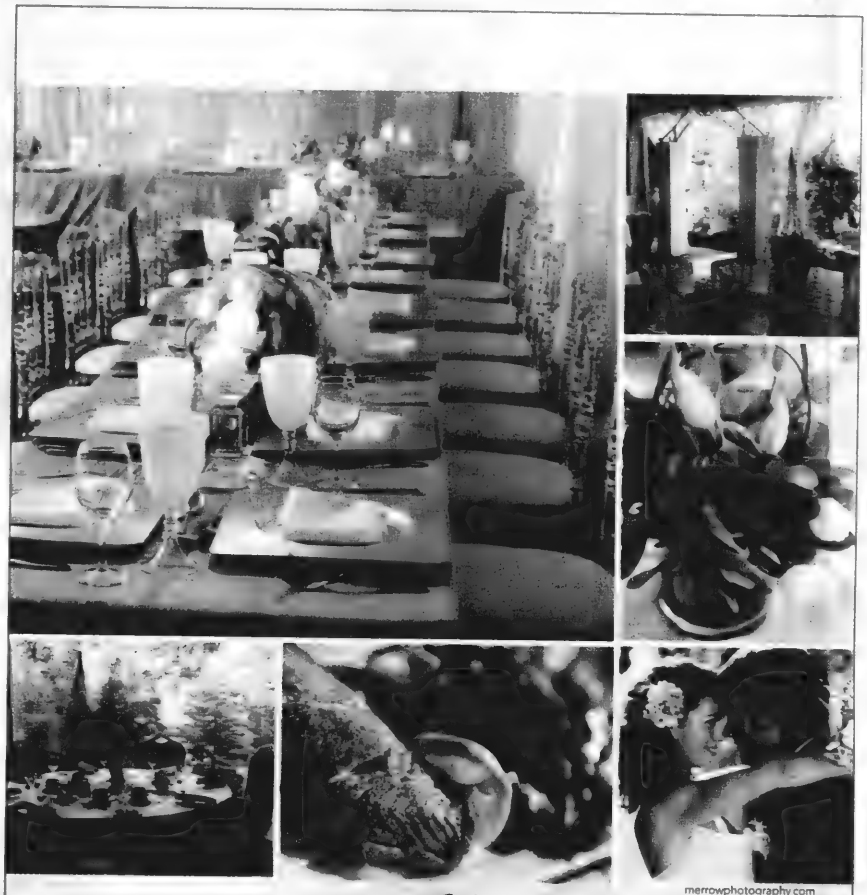
"We're probably the first generation in North America to grow up with popular music, even if our parents weren't from here," Miller said.

"It began with the Beatles in the 1960s, and just grew from there."

One More Time can range anywhere from five to 10 members, depending on what people are looking for. To find them online, visit www.onemoretime.ca.

Mike Freedman and his bands can be found and booked through his website at www.mikefreedman.com.

Other bands advertising in this supplement are: Fern Lindzon Musical Entertainment, 416-225-6977; Hu-Tsa-Tsa, 416-651-7521; The Kenny Simon Hourglass Band, 416-638-2549; Nasty Habits, 416-451-5177; Joe Star band 905-881-1378.



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To commemorate our 50th anniversary, mention this Canadian Jewish News ad to take advantage of our golden anniversary advantages.

Party favours can be enjoyed long after the party

By JENNIFER LIBMAN
Special to The CJN

After the location is booked, the DJ is confirmed and the menu is arranged, bar and bat mitzvah planners need to purchase party favours. Incredible Novelties (905-881-9900), founded nine years ago by Saul Sacks and Dan Jankelow, both former DJs, can help.

"We are a one stop shop for all prizes and giveaways" says Sacks. "People come to us with their ideas and we can bring them to life while staying within their budget."

"Because we are former DJs we know the party scene," says Sacks. "We are able to tell clients what they need, and the amount, so we can prevent them from purchasing too much. We also gauge kids' reactions to our products, so we can recommend the most popular items."

Clients can come to Incredible Novelties with a party theme in mind, and are then shown the types of favours available. A customized package is created and the novelties are delivered to the venue on the day of the party. "This creates a truly stress-free experience because they don't need to think about it again."

A new program being offered by Incredible Novelties is the bulk buy program, in which two or more people planning events can purchase their novelties together to ensure they are getting the best deals. "There's three easy steps" says Sacks. "Book an appointment; come with your partner and tour our warehouse; save, save, save."

Incredible Novelties is a trendsetter in the party favour industry, and offers prizes and giveaways that represent the latest trends, he says.

"We like to keep things fresh, so kids are getting something new at every party," says Sacks.

Incredible Novelties is the Canadian distributor of the World's Largest Gummy Bear, which weighs five pounds and is the equivalent of 1,800 standard size gummy bears, and the world's longest Gummy Worm, which is three feet long. "Kids are absolutely loving these!"

For a unique addition to traditional party favours, party planners may be interested in Charm It, a customized costume jewelry company founded by Paula Shrott (416-258-9985).

Shrott began making costume jewelry as a hobby about six years ago, and from that passion Charm It was born. "My kids were going to bar and bat mitzvahs and I could tell that people were looking for a different activity during cocktail hours," says Shrott. "Charm It captivates kids and gives them a keepsake they can enjoy for a long time."

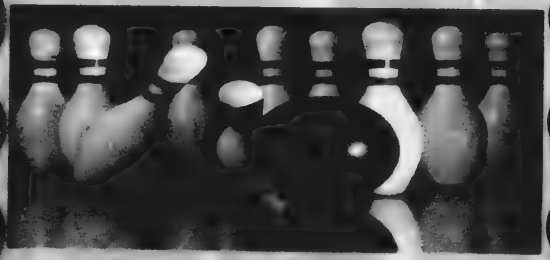
Shrott designs and creates most of the jewelry before the party. At the event guests can select whatever charm they choose to finish off the piece of jewelry. "There are tons of choices," says Shrott.

"Girls can choose Tiffany style bracelet charms, and for the boys we offer sports necklaces with charms like sports logos or music notes."

Since the intricate work, such as beading, is done ahead of time, Shrott is able to accommodate any size group. Party planners can contact her ahead of time to pre-order as many bracelets and necklaces as you want.

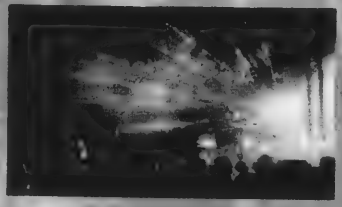
Shrott can also design custom Charm It jewelry that can be given as bar or bat mitzvah, or bridal party gifts. "I create unique products, so anything you give away will be one-of- a-kind" says Shrott. "I often will be working at one party and see people wearing Charm It products that they got at the last event they attended."

Here at Playtime Bowl we appreciate the importance of a bar or bat mitzvah in a family's life. That is why we can offer you your very own upscale 16 lane bowling suite with party room, bar and dance floor; perfect for friends and families to come and celebrate!



Along with our oversized, cutting edge video screens and cosmic lights, your party can be as unique as the child being honoured. Our extensive catering menu allows you to have the creative control over what you would like to serve your guests. Kosher food is available as well as other custom attributes such as decorations and party favours.

Playtime Bowl



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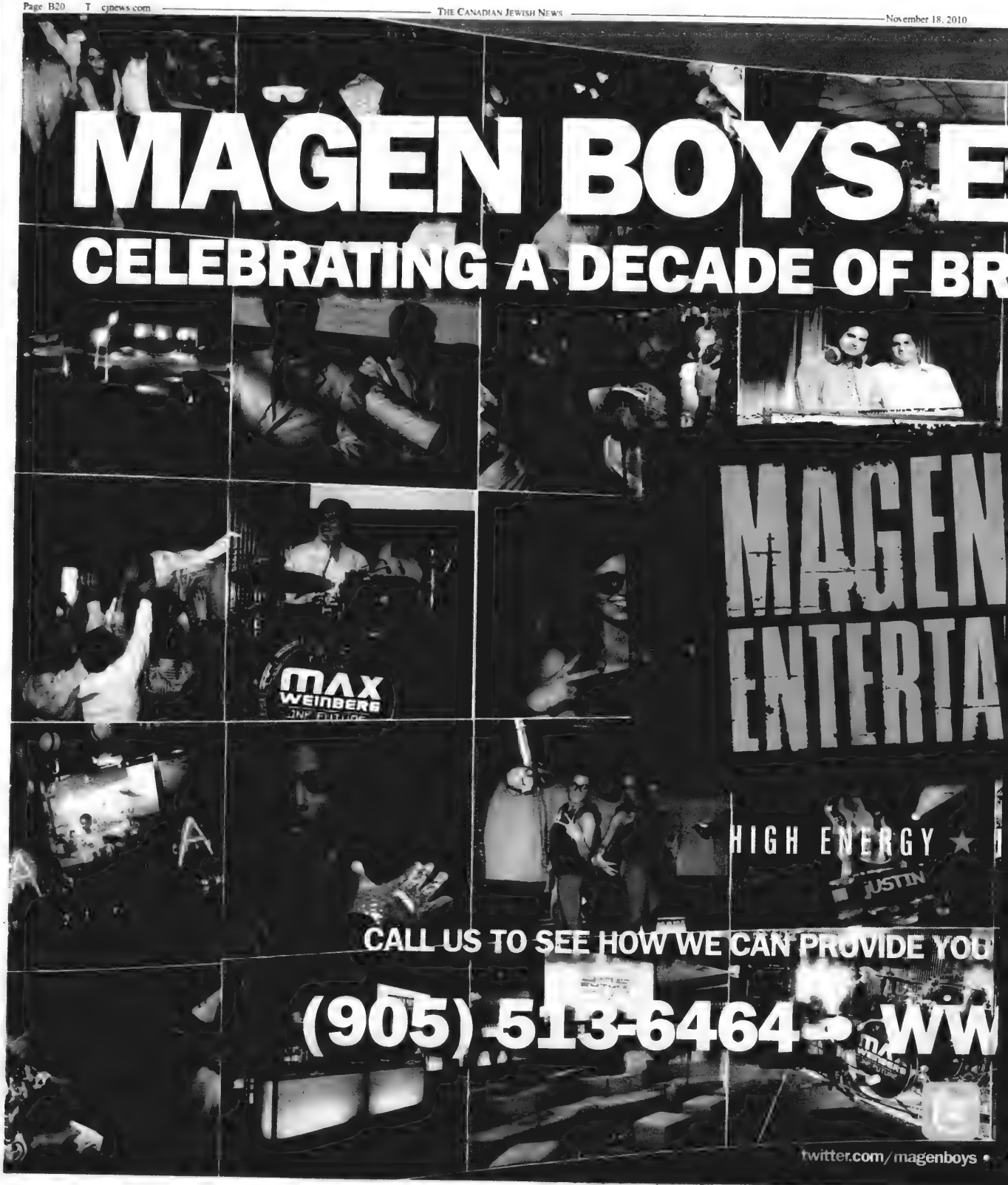
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Stunning parkland in midtown Toronto

By MARNI BRINDER BYK
Special to The CJN

The logo for On the Park Events & Conference Centre boasts that it is "A Legend Restored. A Tradition Reborn." Located on the site of the former Inn on the Park, On the Park is located in midtown Toronto at 1095 Leslie St. at Eglinton Avenue E. On the Park overlooks 600 acres of stunning parkland and has been completely renovated and re-opened in September 2008.

ON THE PARK EVENTS & CONFERENCE CENTRE

- [X] **Non-Kosher**
- [X] **Over 300 person capacity**
- [X] **Wheelchair accessible**

"We've hosted many important business and political events and memorable social occasions," says general manager John Neretlis. "We attract people not only from our immediate communities, but from throughout the GTA."

As a complete event venue, On the Park provides multi-functional rooms, excellent, well trained and professional service staff, customizable menus by an excellent culinary team, and event specialists to plan your perfect event.

On the Park can accommodate parties ranging from 10 to 1,000 guests in seven distinctive and versatile rooms ready for most any event or celebration. The elegant Centennial Ballroom has welcomed many celebrated, large-scale events, while the Centennial Foyer, adjacent to the Ballroom, is the perfect venue for cocktail receptions and family gatherings.

On the Park's Harvest Room provides a panoramic view of the city with its floor-to-ceiling windows, and the Seasons Room is a versatile space that can be used as a boardroom, VIP cocktail reception or even a celebratory family dinner. The Trillium Room can host an intimate dinner, cocktail reception or a ceremony, and the Oak Room is a mid-sized, multi-functional meeting space, ideally suited for presentations, seminars and training. The Niagara Room is a great space for board meetings or for use as a "break-out" room, and coming soon is the Terrace Lounge, an outdoor ceremonial area that will open next year.

On The Park's executive chef can customize a menu for every occasion to meet the needs of any party planner, and can provide an elegant and delicious plated dinner for up to 800 people. When planning an event, On the Park provides you with the advice and guidance of an on-site event specialist who can assist with every aspect of planning. This includes security, specialty linens, decorators, DJs, bands, musicians, limo service, valet service, and florists. Wedding specialists at On the Park help you cover every event detail and On The Park wedding packages include dinner and wine tastings, complimentary parking and coat check, cocktail reception with open bar and passed hors d'oeuvres, 3, 4, or 5 course customized dinner menus, "Midnight" Sweet Table and more.

Whether you are planning a corporate event or a personal celebration, On The Park offers a wide range of services customized to meet the needs of your unique event. "Our staff members

have the expertise and ability to turn dreams into reality, creating unforgettable events," says John Neretlis. "We are able to customize our wide range of services to meet any unique needs of each guest." To book your event, contact Kim at 416-380-3451, kim@eventsonthepark.ca or Erin at 416-380-3452, erin@eventsonthepark.ca.

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PARTY PLANNER

Take a bite out of these three eateries

By STEPHEN SWEET
Special to The CJN

Riz's lemon chicken

When it's time to head out to eat, there's no shortage of options.

Whether it's just the family or a group of people, decisions have to be made about where to go.

The restaurateurs of Riz, Asian Legend and Toni Bulloni are trying to make it a no-brainer.

"We started in the Yorkville area in 1995," said Toni Bulloni's Martin Wygodny. "A year ago, we decided to try our hand at bringing that menu to Thornhill."

Located on Bathurst Street near Steeles Avenue, Toni Bulloni (905-889-4141) does fresh pasta and meat dishes made to order. It's an Italian eatery with a twist.

"It's not a traditional Italian restaurant. You won't find the typical things you would find in a restaurant in Woodbridge or on St. Clair West, but we certainly embody the critical elements of an Italian restaurant," Wygodny said.

One of those important factors, as a customer put it, is the love in the food.

"Our chefs love and take pride in what they do," said Wygodny, who believes that you won't find a lasagna anywhere as good as the one his staff makes on weekends.

"If you don't have a chef who's passionate about what he's putting on his plate, you may as well go to a drive-thru."

And while they're packing the food with flavour, they'll make some changes to ensure that everyone can have a bite.

"Everything is seasoned accordingly when you order, so we can accommodate special requests based on dietary restrictions," Wygodny said.

If you've got a big crowd, you can fit them in at Toni Bulloni.

"We can accommodate up to 85 people in a private function in the restaurant," Wygodny said. "We can also do groups of a dozen or more at a time, depending on the seating arrangement."

A restaurant that prides itself on being all-encompassing and accommodating is Riz (416-487-8388), located on Bayview Avenue near Eglinton Avenue.

"We have a very extensive selection for people who are celiac," said Terry Wei. "We still give the taste and flavour of the item, but we also give the option of it being gluten-free."

And avoiding gluten doesn't mean cutting out most of the options, either.

"Ninety five per cent of the regular menu has a gluten-free version," Wei said.

Riz, which covers most of East Asia on its menu, does so while maintaining a personal touch.

"We think it is important to cater to every individual's needs, so they can feel confident that we can do anything for them," Wei said.

"Our restaurant sort of has its niche, because we can cater on short notice to people with all sorts of allergies."

"We're able to take in groups without advance notice," Wei said. "We have a room that can fit 18 people, which can seat anything from business meetings to birthday parties for those with allergies."

If a strictly Chinese restaurant is what you're looking for, then Asian Legend (416-221-9797), which has six locations (including North York, Thornhill, and Toronto), might just fit the bill.

"We opened the first one in 1988 as a family business, but since then, it's just gotten bigger and bigger," said Asian Legend's Ruby Fu.

The restaurant covers both northern and southern Chinese food on its menu.

"Northern Chinese cooking is heavy in flavour, and more flour-based," Fu said. "Southern Chinese food is often lighter."

Asian Legend, which has become popular for its Peking duck and dim sum, does not look like your standard Chinese restaurant.

"Our restaurant's décor is different than that of other Chinese restaurants," Fu said. "Ours is a fusion of modern and traditional style."

They have a good setup for parties and corporate lunches, too. "We have separate party rooms that can seat anywhere from 10 to 20 patrons at most of our locations," Fu said.

TONI BULLONI
- [X] Non-Kosher
- [X] Up to 100 person capacity
- [X] Wheelchair accessible

RIZ
- [X] Non-Kosher
- [X] Under 100 person capacity
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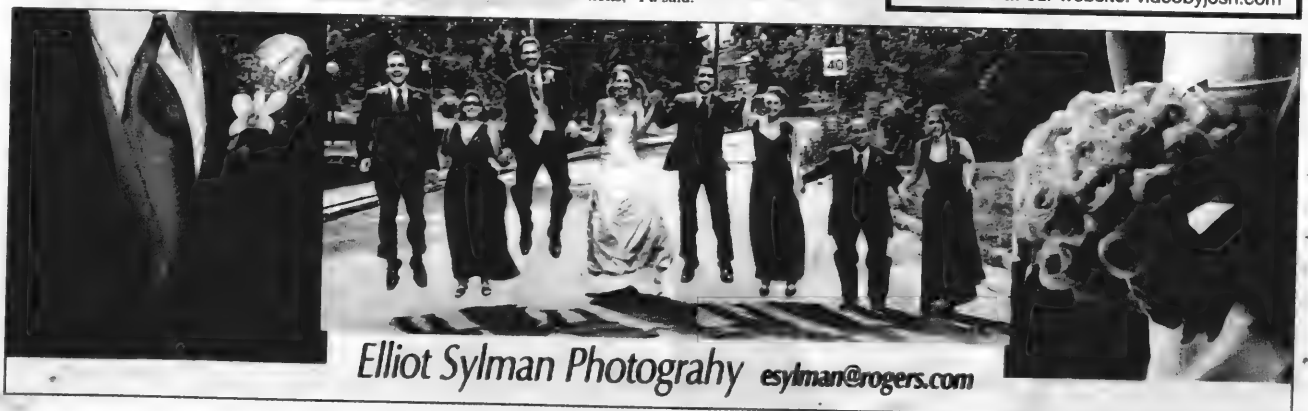

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Consultants take the worry out of party planning

By JENNIFER LIBMAN
Special to The CJN

Planning the perfect simchah is not easy, and after all that work, most people want to sit back and enjoy their special night without worrying about the last minute details. Fortunately, hiring an event co-ordinator can take the stress off the host.

2 Steps Ahead Events (416-949-9433) founded by Vivian Ringwald-Levine, is one service that can help with your party planning. The company offers customized packages to suit the needs of any host. Whether it be parents interested in a mitzvah package for their child's bar or bat mitzvah, or individualized wedding packages, 2 Steps Ahead Events ensures that every simchah goes flawlessly and is a night to remember for everyone.

According to Ringwald-Levine, one the most important parts of planning a party is making sure that the host's personality shines through. "This is what turns an average event into an elegant and memorable one," she says. "If it's a wedding I like to showcase how the couple met, or tell the guests something unique about them as a couple. It helps create an intimate feel and makes all the guests feel included."

Ringwald-Levine believes that her success as an event planner is due to her ability to foresee an issue before it occurs. "A lot of my work is preventative," she explains. "I'm always thinking ahead. I make sure the small details like place settings and special dietary meals are taken care of so all you need to do is show up and look fabulous."

[Jen Arron photo for 2 Steps Ahead]

2 Steps Ahead Events donates 10 per cent of its rate for the event to a charity of the host's choice. "Although they are throwing a lavish party many people still want to give back to the community" says Ringwald-Levine.

Sarah Cherry and Marsha Baker (905-771-1121) are two other party consultants who specialize in wedding and bar and bat mitzvah planning. Cherry and Baker have been working together to plan simchahs for over 19 years and they are experts in their field. "We've seen it all, and we've solved every problem," says Baker.

The pair remembers one wedding when the couple forgot to bring their ketubah. "We just switched around the schedule so that the cocktail hour took place before the ceremony and no one even noticed anything was wrong" says Cherry. "That's what makes us stand out. We don't dwell on problems – we find a solution. The most important thing is making sure the host is happy."

Cherry and Baker explain that one of the benefits of working with them to plan your simchah is that between them both, your event is always on their mind. "One of us is always here," says Baker. "We know how frustrating it is to not be able to reach someone when you have a question. That never happens to us."

Cherry and Baker can help with every step of the event planning, such as accompanying the host to the florist and helping choose a dinner menu. "We provide more than a service to our clients. We become their friends. Actually, their family" says Cherry.

Other consultants advertising in this supplement are: Risa Gold & Associates, 905-886-1233; Judy Stein Consulting & Associates, 905-764-2728.

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Food makes the Jewish world go 'round

By STEPHEN SWEET
Special to The CJN

No matter what the Jewish gathering is, it's always about the food

And in order to get the good food, you need the right caterer

Regina's and Mona Pasternak, Food and Event Maven, are ready to cater your event, whatever it may be.

"We're a new dairy and vegetarian catering company in Toronto," said Pasternak, who began her solo work in September. "We carry a lot of gluten-free and dairy-free products."

Along with the event planning portion, which can be done in conjunction with the catering, the food is a big thing for Pasternak.

"Food always makes people feel good," Pasternak said. "When I entertain, the food is always the biggest part of it. I like to make sure everyone is satisfied and feels good.

"Essentially, I'm showing them what I am like through the food that I've made."

The same care is taken with all of her catered items, giving off a very warm, inviting feeling.

"Our menu was developed with a little bit of me in everything," Pasternak said. "Everything we use is fresh and natural."

Preparing food to be its best is important in leaving a lasting positive memory, Pasternak believes.

"People eat with their eyes," she said. "When they walk into a room and it's beautiful, they remember that. If the food is good, they'll remember that, too."

Mona Pasternak and chef John Segreto

Pasternak, who is putting her creations out for sale in the retail marketplace under the label Monalicious, understands the need for perfection on a limited budget. "Functions are very expensive, and with more of a pinch these days, you want to get the bang for your buck," Pasternak said.

Mona Pasternak Food and Event Maven
[X] Non- Kosher

"When people are spending a lot of money, I want to make sure that I give them my heart and soul into the work, and that they get exactly what they ordered."

Regina's has been in the catering business for nearly 50 years, and they've found the status quo has been the best way to go.

"We really haven't changed anything lately, because things have worked for us," said Regina's owner Debbie Green, niece of the original creator.

After buying the company 10 years ago to keep it in the family, Green hasn't made many changes, choosing to keep the popular items on the menu.

They do, however, offer some alterations that you don't see.

Regina's
[X] Non- Kosher

"We can do things that aren't on the menu," Green said. "We can alter things for special diets, like salt-reduced products and avoiding allergies."

Orders can be worked out either at the location on Sheppard Avenue West, by phoning, or through e-mail, although the latter is usually done later in the process.

"It's convenient in the sense that after people phone, they can check the menu items on our website and not have to be on the phone for an hour," Green said.

Whether it's a small order (the minimum is six) or a large one, the same careful process is taken every time.

"Everything in our store is handmade and overseen by several people before it's good to go," Green said. "In the case of larger orders, we break them down so that this can happen.

"It has to be good, because our name is on it."

Not only does Green want there to be quality, but she wants to stuff her customers, too.

"We try to send more than they can eat," Green said. "We'd rather they have too much, rather than not enough."

Regina's is located at 844 Sheppard Ave. West, at the corner of Sheppard and Wilmington avenues. They can be reached by phone by calling 416-636-1044 or online at www.reginasfinefoods.com.

Mona Pasternak, Food and Event Maven, is at 363 Canarctic Drive in Toronto, near York University. You can either call her at 416-665-MONA(6662) or go to www.monapasternak.com.

Other non-kosher caterers advertising in this supplement are: Lesley's Party Sandwiches & Catering, 905-660-0551; Shopsy's, 905-474-9333.

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Venues offer unique, beautiful settings

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

If historical, upgraded buildings with 40 acres of trees and landscaped gardens in the city sounds like the perfect setting for your simchah, look no further than the Estates of Sunnybrook (416-487-3841, www.estatesofsunnybrook.com).

Located on the grounds of Sunnybrook Hospital, Estates of Sunnybrook is made up of Vaughan Estate, McLean House and Coach House, built in 1928. Groups from six to 200 can be accommodated. There are 17 meeting and ballroom spaces, with free parking for 220 cars.

Revenues generated from the Estates are donated to research efforts at the hospital.

With working fireplaces, large windows with beautiful views and private outdoor spaces included with some of the rooms, the Estates has great photo backdrops inside and out.

"When you drive in here it's a very fairytale type setting. You escape when you come in here," said Darren Bryant, director of sales and marketing for the Estates.

The Estates underwent a renovation over the summer, with the furniture, washrooms and floors getting replaced. The buildings have carved wooden ceilings and other unique architectural details.

The food is all prepared onsite, with kosher options available. "We have buffet style and we also do plated meals. We have carving stations, we can have different themed stations, chef attended stations. For our plated meals we have fish and seafood, meat and poultry [and] vegetarian options." The separate buildings and extensive property means that multiple events can be held at once without compromising privacy, Bryant said.

"We are extremely unique," he stressed. "The grounds alone, the landscaping, the gardens, you can't compete with this anywhere in the city." Maple Downs Golf and Country Club (905-832-0880; www.mapledowns.com) is located in the Oak Ridges Moraine in Maple, north of Toronto.

Established in 1954, the club underwent a renovation in 2002 that included a 35,000 square foot clubhouse expansion. It boasts an 18-hole golf course, which is on *SCOREGolf*'s list of the top 100 golf courses in Canada; tennis courts and a swimming pool.

"It is a true family club," said Paul Doucet, the club's general manager.

The majority of the club's events are hosted by members, but the club does hold weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, and other events for non-members as well.

"We have a full-time dedicated catering coordinator that handles... general inquiries," Doucet said. According to Doucet, Maple Downs, which offers free parking and can accommodate 10 to 250 guests, is an ideal place to host an event because of the high level of service from the club's staff. "[There is] great service from our staff on a daily basis," he said.

"[They have the] etiquette that is demanded at a high level catered function."

The Bayview Golf and Country Club (905-889-4833; www.bayviewclub.com) is located in a quiet Thornhill neighbourhood, and is also on *SCOREGolf*'s list of Canada's best golf courses. "Bayview is... a premiere family sports facility featuring golf, swimming, tennis, curling and fitness, as well as a social aspect," said Rocco Mior, food and beverage manager for the club.

"It's very community oriented."

The club offers complimentary parking and can comfortably accommodate up to 250 people. It often hosts weddings, corporate team building sessions, and everything in between.

A major draw of the club, Mior said, is that it has something for everyone.

"The fact that we appeal to a variety of ethnic groups within the community is a promising feature for the club. I think it was sort of founded on that notion, the idea of ethnicities that came together under one umbrella to enjoy the game of golf, and then expanded its facilities accordingly and to incorporate that family values feel."

Other non-kosher venues are: Granite Club, 416-449-8713; Hotel DuFort, 1-800-565-6333; Loot Lounge/Factory, 416-787-5668; Park Hyatt, 416-925-1234; Pickle Barrel, 416-493-4333; Toni Bulloni, 416-968-3434; Funé, 416-599-3868; Yamato, 416-927-0077; The Warehouse Event Venue, 416-496-2112.

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Trade shows promote party products and services

By JENNIFER LIBMAN
Special to The CJN

Rick Levine takes the fear out of planning a wedding, bar mitzvah or corporate event. For the past 17 years, he and party consultant Lynn Cohen have co-produced two interactive trade shows a year to showcase a wide array of party and event services in the GTA (905-881-6400).

"We started these shows as a way to promote the marvellous products and services available in our community," says Levine. "We let people know where to find the highest quality entertainment so they can throw the best event. It helps people make the right decisions for their next simchah."

The trade shows take place each year in the fall and winter in local banquet halls and synagogues. The shows are staged as mock events, where the public is invited to hear the music, taste the food and meet the people in the industry who want to be part of their next simchah.

"There are no obligations," says Levine. "We invite people out to have a good time, and walk away with new ideas and lots of samples. People literally feel like they are attending a wedding or bar mitzvah."

Vendors at the trade show include DJs and bands, among them the Rick Levine Band and Metro Big Band. Also present are photographers, videographers, florists, and people selling invitations, party favours and other novelty items.

Vendors can contact Levine if they want to be part of the trade show. "Vendors want to be part of our show because we promote everyone equally" says Levine. "All you need is to be is innovative, interesting and attractively priced. We don't limit any type of service. Additionally, we do amazing outreach and always draw huge crowds to our events. It is really a winning situation for everyone. The public is exposed to entertainment options, and vendors have the chance to show off their services."

The next show will be on Jan. 19, 2011, at Beth Tikvah synagogue at Bayview and Finch avenues. Nearly 50 vendors have already confirmed their attendance. At this show, attendees can expect to see some new vendors, including Marble Slab ice cream. "We capitalize on what's popular today" says Levine. "Everybody loves ice cream, so why not have this be part of your party?"

Another vendor that will be present at the next trade show is a company called Sparkulz, which specializes in sparkle temporary tattoos for both children and adults. "Fun stuff like this helps put people in the right mindset for a party" says Levine.

After attending the trade show, people can refer to Levine's website, www.torontopartyguide.com, for a complete directory of all the services available. "When you combine the convenience of our website with the live show that we produce twice a year, people can really count on planning a fabulous simchah," he say.

[Photo courtesy of www.torontopartyguide.com]

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The Israeli Source offers Judaica at a discount

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

If you're planning a simchah or you need some Judaica gift items, you may want to visit The Israeli Source (905-482-2025), a 3,000-square-foot store at 60 Doncaster Ave. in Thornhill (www.isrealisource.com).

"We are a hybrid wholesale/retail outlet," explains owner Chuck Elnekave.

"We give the consumer the opportunity to shop for all their Jewish needs, other than food, at highly discounted prices. They can save from 20 up to 80 per cent on their purchases."

Shoppers can choose from a large selection of Jewish books in Hebrew and English, cookbooks, Judaica giftware, Jewish novelty items, Shabbat candlesticks and holiday items such as chanukiyot and Chanukah candles.

You'll also find religious articles such as tallits, kippot and mezuzot.

The Israeli Source offers a choice of housewares, including kitchen gadgets that are colour-coded to facilitate kashrut.

Elnekave says The Israeli Source is the place to go to for simchahs. "We help people doing bar and bat mitzvahs and weddings get what they need for their celebrations, like ketubahs, benchers, kippahs, and other simchah favours. We take care of the personalization of these items at a substantial discount."

Many of the items sold are hand-made in Israel.

"I'm interested in finding unique things that you don't see everywhere," he says. "We try to get as much as we can from Israel directly. We meet up with artists making unique things."

However, he stresses that The Israeli Source tries to cater to every budget, so some of the Judaica items available are mass-produced outside of Israel.

The store is also a place to find unusual Jewish items, says Elnekave. "We're the only store in Canada that carries the tartan of the Scottish Jewish Clan."

He explains that a Scottish-born rabbi had a tartan registered with Scottish authorities to commemorate the Jewish community's long presence in Scotland.

"It's a novelty item. People buy it for the fun of it, but for many expatriot Scottish Jews, the tartan is something they're very proud of."

He carries a tartan tallit, kippot, kilts, golf balls and mouse pads. "The kilt is not a best-seller. It takes a certain kind of man to wear one. It's not in the North American tradition.

"The tartan kippah is a big seller. The tartan tallit is more popular than the kilt, but less popular than the kippah."

Elnekave says he and his wife, Barbara, founded The Israeli Source five years ago.

"We took two things from our backgrounds and marketed them together."

He explains that his Israeli-born parents run an importing company that primarily brings in food from Israel, while he and his wife had both worked in the Judaica business, so they formed a new company that imports Judaica mainly from Israel.

"I basically know Judaica. My family has the expertise in importing, wholesaling and how to reach the Jewish market. Thus The Israeli Source was born."

Elnekave says that clients appreciate the ambiance of the store and the experience of his staff. "We have a great working atmosphere, and that creates a welcoming environment for our customers."

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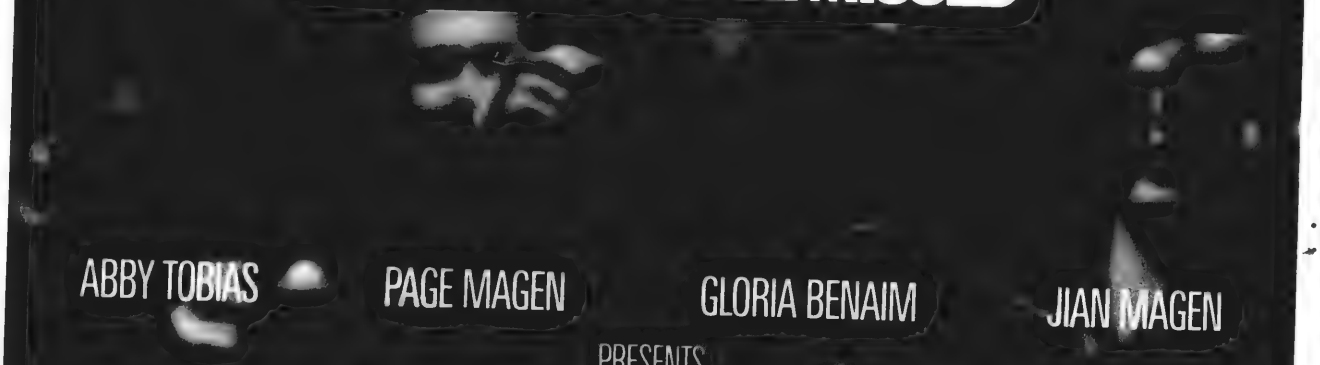

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Kosher Venues: Great Food & Atmosphere

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Where do we eat? It's tough enough planning for a small family meal, but how do you decide when you're planning a simchah for 100 – or 400 – of your closest friends and relatives? But as with a family meal, it comes down to just two simple questions: "how's the atmosphere?" and "how's the food?" Two kosher venues are answering both of those questions with a simple "outstanding."

The Avenue
- [X] Kosher Kitchen Available
- [X] Up to 300 person capacity
- [X] Wheelchair Accessible

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda, one of the city's most respected Conservative synagogues, has recently undergone a facelift to modernize and make it an even more desirable location. And at The Avenue Banquets, a new face on the site of the former Meron Banquet Hall, clients get not only a dazzling location but one of the city's most experienced wedding and event planners as well.

Marla Kay has been in the simchah business for over 30 years. Now, as co-owner of The Avenue Banquet Hall (905-669-0777), she says, "I don't do anything outside anymore." Working exclusively for her own clients at The Avenue, she's thrilled to be able to offer "new spins and new opportunities," and one of those "new spins" just happens to be kosher.

She's thrilled about the kosher side of the business – and it seems to have taken her by surprise. "The feedback we've been getting about our kosher food. People ask all the time, 'Is this kosher? This doesn't taste kosher!'"

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda
- [X] Kosher
- [X] Up to 300 person capacity
- [X] Wheelchair Accessible

Kosher at The Avenue means no compromises – religiously or in terms of the food. Under the strict supervision of Badatz Toronto, Zeece Kosher Catering (The Avenue's in-house kosher caterer) maintains a totally separate kosher kitchen. Kay says unlike many, "we cook all our food onsite; everything is very, very fresh. We don't order anything premade."

Even staples like hummus, babaganoush, or apple strudel are all homemade by The Avenue's kosher chef. No wonder, given that he used to be head chef at Sabra Salads in New York. "Imagine what he's doing with us," Kay says.

"He does a braised beef that's unbelievable – it melts in your mouth." Having a dedicated kosher chef allows The Avenue to create exceptional meals, like a recent bar mitzvah in a family that had come from India. "They asked us if we could do East Indian food kosher."

With spices in hand, a mouth-wateringly exotic menu materialized: seasoned chicken and rice, aloo gobi (potato cauliflower), and even custom-made kosher naan (Indian flatbreads).

From charcoal-grilled shish-ka-bob to chicken satay, from lamb and duck to fun touches like "street dogs" and chili stations, Kay says, "we don't just do regular food."

Premium touches are everywhere. From au courant square dinnerware and updated silverware to crystal chandeliers and an indoor waterfall, The Avenue is ready for your simchah.

Meeting with clients for the first time, Kay will walk through the venue, planning how each area should look, down to the most minute level: "If they want it crystally; if they want a lot of draping." She can even help clients plan their ceremony. "I'm a very detail-oriented person."

Whether you're planning an intimate affair in the small ballroom, which seats 80-90 with a dance floor, or the larger ballroom, which can hold 400 or more, Kay will make sure everything looks and tastes exactly the way you've dreamed. "When you come into The Avenue, you can feel that you're fully taken care of… I help with everything, from start to finish."

If you're looking for a traditional setting in a central mid-town location, look no further than Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda (416-633-3838). "Beth Emeth is not necessarily [just] a synagogue," says Edmund Duarte of Uptown Gourmet Catering. "We are a venue that comes with a built-in rabbi. We are a beautiful venue, with a beautiful room, with beautiful facilities."

Naturally, a big part of any celebration or gathering at Beth Emeth – which offers not only family simchahs but also corporate events and parties – is its commitment to kashruth. But that doesn't stop Uptown from creating show-stopping food. "We can replicate any menu or create anything your culinary imagination can envision."

Like a seared sea bass medallion with a light Cajun apple chutney, or mini beef Wellingtons with a merlot-and-shiitake reduction. "We try to be … ahead of the curve," says Duarte.

Premium food is just one of the special touches at Beth Emeth. "Whether it's a bris for 30 or [a wedding for] 300, everybody gets the same amount of respect."

"With a lot of the big venues, you're often not the only event," explains Andrea Levine. "At hotels and big banquet halls, they have three or four halls – three or four events going on at the same time. Here, the focus is on you."

Ultimately, what clients expect from a shul is what Beth Emeth delivers, says Duarte: "a very old-fashioned kind of business…as up-front as possible, with a focus on service and quality."

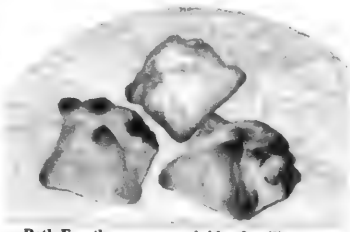
Centrally located, conveniently off Highway 401, Beth Emeth is ideal for guests from both north and south. There's a large parking lot and the wheelchair-accessible facility has recently undergone two upgrades – most recently within the foyer and chapel, which is the perfect size, Levine says, for an afternoon wedding.

"The chapel is beautiful now," she says, with bright, colourful new windows. It seats 85 to 90 people, making the occasion that much more intimate and meaningful. For larger weddings, most couples choose the sanctuary and main ballroom, which seats up to about 400.

And make no mistake, Duarte says, the ballroom is comparable to any venue around. "Weddings are about elegance. This ballroom is one of the most elegant rooms in Toronto.

"We don't like to attract as much attention," says Duarte. "We don't make a lot of noise… just quietly do what people want us to do."

Other kosher venues are: Adath Israel Congregation, 416-635-5340; Baycrest Hospitality Services, 416-785-2500, ext. 2477; Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am, 416-633-5500; Copper Creek Golf Club, 905-893-3370, ext. 202.


Beth Emeth serves up mini beef wellingtons

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Specialty foods brighten parties

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

When you're entertaining, you want to begin your meal with some tasty starters

Hot hors d'oeuvres – savoury appetizers served before a meal – have become somewhat passé for everyday entertainment. It's the kind of food one enjoys at large simchahs and special events.

However, with today's emphasis on healthy eating, serving dips with raw vegetables or flatbreads before a meal has become de rigeur for parties large and small. Dips of all kinds – hummus, baba ghanoush, spinach, artichoke – seem to be standard fare at the most elegant and casual affairs.

One food company that has been at the vanguard of this nutritional revolution is Summer Fresh Salads, which is known for its wide variety of dips and other starter foods such as grain and pasta salads.

The good news for people planning a party is that 14 of the dips are kosher, says Lesley Gordon, director of marketing at Summer Fresh. These 14 varieties include baba ghanoush, roasted red pepper and a variety of hummus flavours that include roasted garlic and lemon dill.

"We have had at least 10 flavours, and we're always adding new flavours."

Summer Fresh Salads
[X] **Kosher available**

She says the dips are found at all major retailers in the deli section, and Loblaws shoppers can check out Summer Fresh's new square packaging.

Gordon also suggests that people visit the Summer Fresh website (www.summerfresh.com) for recipe ideas.

She advises people to keep the dips – they have a relatively long shelf life – on hand in the fridge for drop-in company or for a quick meal starter.

Summer Fresh also has ice cream and cheese toppings to finish a meal, Gordon says.

These topping come in two flavours: cranberry pomegranate and maple walnut. "The sauces have a thick consistency. You can pair them with cheese to dress up the cheese and it looks like you've worked for hours."

Another way to end a meal with pizzaz is with a Mookie, a cookie with a message (www.mookietown.com) made by Jinja Ninja, an innovative cookie company that's taking the dessert world by storm.

"There's nothing like a sweet message to brighten one's day," says Beverly Horii, the founder of Jinja Ninja Custom Cookies (416-473-1814 or 416-533-5771). Horii set out to make ginger and sugar cookies for every occasion – birthdays, bar and bat mitzvah, showers, engagements, graduations, anniversaries and thank-you and corporate gifts and promotions.

Jinja Ninja Custom Cookies
[X] **Non- Kosher**

The possibilities are endless, because Horii has extensive training in drawing and drafting. The former architect decided to go into the cookie business, because she wanted a career outside the corporate world, she says. With her drafting skills, she can draw almost any design and reproduce it as a cookie, she explains.

She also does metal work, so she can create cookie cutters for any design for a large quantity of Jinja Ninja customized cookies. "I'm a jack of all trades." Horii is also an interior designer with an expertise in colour, which she says allows her to create custom-coloured cookies for any theme.

She recently did cookies with a hockey theme as bar mitzvah favours that were distributed with seating cards. The mother was thrilled with cookies, Horii says.

One of her larger projects was a three-tiered wedding cake made of iced gingerbread cookies.

"No one had seen a cookie wedding cake before. I took the bride's graphic – she used peonies for the wedding invitation – and her colour theme and made a three-tier cake out of the peony-shaped cookies.

"I made the banding [around the cake] out of letters in cream colour with messages like happiness and love."

When a corporate client introduced a new chair design, Horii created a cookie cutter in the shape of the chair and used the custom cookies to create a large cookie for the official launch, she says, noting that the smaller chair cookie was also used as a promotional novelty.

She uses natural ingredients such as butter and organic spelt in the batter. "I try to use as many natural ingredients as possible. I even experimented with natural food colouring, but you can't get the brightness of the colours."

Jinja Ninja's generic- themed Mookies – they are for birthdays, graduations, Jewish holidays – are sold at Pusateri's and a name can be added by ordering in advance at the bakery.

Other specialty companies advertising in this supplement are: Chocolate Charm, 416-787-4256; The Chocolate Moose, 416-784-9092

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Bellvue Manor can host any simchah, large or small

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

[Photo courtesy of www.bellvuemanor.com]

When you're hosting a simchah, you want to wow your guests, so choosing a venue is critical.

A venue that gets lots of positive reviews from guests and hosts alike is Bellvue Manor (905-761-7288), a banquet hall located in Vaughan at 8083 Jane St., two lights north of Highway 7.

Bellvue Manor (www.bellvuemanor.com) has four event spaces, says sales and marketing manager Guido Ramirez. "We have nine different options. We can do parties from 10 to over 1,000 people."

He says Bellvue Manor is a popular venue for weddings and bar and bat mitzvahs. "There's a COR-certified kosher kitchen on site."

The venue has been open since 2008, so it's equipped with pre-installed state-of-the art technical amenities, notes Ramirez. "The entertainment operates flawlessly, because it's newer technology and very user friendly.

"The screens are hidden in the architectural structure and they come down from the ceiling when you need them. They're used a lot at many affairs."

A big attraction for many people is Bellvue Manor's huge lobby, which is ideal for cocktail receptions, says Ramirez, noting that the owner had Jewish weddings in mind when the building was designed.

Jewish people like the ambiance of the lobby for the cocktail reception, he explains. "We have even done functions completely in the lobby. We recently had a wedding that was cocktails only.

"It was an artistic couple who wanted something different. Everything was bite-size weddings. The cocktails, *bedecken*, ceremony and reception all take place in different rooms from the reception to the dessert. We were able to accommodate them."

He says the availability of multiple rooms is well-suited to Jewish weddings, making transitions between different parts of them very smooth.

The food is a big draw for Bellvue Manor clients, according to Ramirez. He notes that the company, which has owned other banquet venues, has had the same chef for the last 15 years "Our chef has to be versatile, because our clients come from so many different ethnic backgrounds. He tries to accommodate as many special requests as he can."

The most popular dishes are continental cuisine, food with a European flavour, says Ramirez. "It's anything from sea bass to fine cuts of beef. Vegetarian options are common as well. Tofu stir fry is very popular.

"People generally choose three- to five-course dinner packages that often include late-night sweets and savouries."

Sometimes people have late-night hot dog stands and pizza stations, he says. "The sweet table can be anything from a chocolate fountain to waffles, but fruit's a must."

Ramirez says 80 per cent of the business at Bellvue Manor is repeat customers or word of mouth. "We've had many compliments from past guests that have included judges, TV and sports personalities."

He says the following note from one happy father of the bride typifies client comments about Bellvue Manor. "The staff are exceptional… The food was delicious. Everyone left full and happy."

Ramirez says they are never surprised by these kinds of compliments. "We're used to exceeding the level of expectation."

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PARTY PLANNER

Places to make your birthday a bash

By STEPHEN SWEET
Special to The CJN

No matter how old you get, you still want your birthday party to be the coolest.

And with so many different places out there, a couple of party spots want to make the choice simple.

Although Playtime Bowl and WHIMZ are very different in what they do, both are ready to take your booking.

Playtime Bowl
- [X] Kosher food available
- [X] Up to 200 person capacity
- [X] Wheelchair accessible

"WHIMZ is a live animal program," said manager Tracy Guerin. "It's a fun, educational and interactive program involving animals."

They have 22 different types of creatures to choose from for a party, but nothing that won't fit into your house.

"We deal with only small animals," Guerin said. "The largest animal we have is a rabbit.

"There are mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and many more animals available to bring out."

And when the pets leave your house, so does the mess.

"We bring everything to cover the carpet, and take care to avoid any messes," Guerin said. "We leave you with great memories, not stains."

A big drawing factor is the educational component involved with the party, led by the attending WHIMZ staff member.

"We present the animals in a fun, educational way," Guerin said. "Having fun while you're learning is our main focus.

"Depending on how much the kids want to talk, we'll say as little or as much as they want to hear."

The varying level of comfort also goes for holding the animals, too.

"We present the animals in a fun and safe way, which gives every participant a chance to interact with the animal as much as both are comfortable with," Guerin said.

"For example, if we bring a snake, some people might want to put it around their neck, and some might just want to see it."

Precaution is also taken for those with allergies.

"If people with allergies want to book with us, then they should book animals that don't have fur," Guerin said.

"We have reptiles, amphibians, insects, and some hairless rats and guinea pigs that are furless and considered hypo-allergenic."

If knocking over pins is more your thing, then Playtime Bowl may be the answer for you.

"We have a very large facility that allows groups to come in and pretty much customize any birthday party they could want at a bowling facility," said marketing and event co-ordinator Natalie Di Michele.

Part of the customization can involve playing in the back lounge, which offers 16 lanes of cosmic glow-in-the-dark bowling.

"We can book anywhere from six to 96 people in the back lounge," Di Michele said. "If you want to book the entire place, we can fit in around 200 people."

For children's birthday parties, there are six different packages.

"The kosher sparemaker package, which includes kosher pizza, is quite popular," Di Michele said. "So are any of the ones that include ice cream or balloons."

On the non-Kosher side of things, they have a full kitchen that can make anything from pizza to steak, or for children's birthday parties, chicken strips and onion rings.

"We also offer loot bags for kids," said Di Michele, who also mentioned that parents can bring in their own birthday cake for the event. "It's a really fun environment."

To help take the load off the parents, there are hostesses and servers around to do the work.

"They help the kids get their shoes and set them up to bowl," Di Michele said. "Afterwards, they'll graciously bring out the cake and organize the food."

The bowling lounge is not your run-of-the-mill pin joint.

"We're the only bowling lounge in Toronto that allows for adult and children's parties to have an upscale feel to them," Di Michele said.

"There are leather couches, high-top tables, and a full bar for the adults, with bottle service or specialty drinks available for grown-up parties."

Both Playtime Bowl and WHIMZ request that you book two to three weeks in advance, but can sometimes get you in on shorter notice.

You can reach Playtime Bowl at 416-787-4533 or online at www.playtimebowl.com. WHIMZ can be found at www.whimzonline.com or call at 416-656-7894.

DRAGON EGG

An exotic fruit developed in Israel from a cross between fruit from Ecuador and Panama. This new fruit can grow in a very hot climate requiring 20 per cent less water then normal vegetables. The fruit is a hit in posh London restaurant.

[Israel Sun photo]

Baycrest's dance gala raises more than $2 million

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

The cheering was loud and the excitement palatable at Dancing with Our Stars: Season 2, the recent gala held at the Sheraton Centre Toronto in support of Baycrest.

Five community leaders braved the spotlight to dance for an audience of about 900 people. Their performances were rated by Bruno Tonioli, a judge on the TV show *Dancing with the Stars*, comedian Mike Bullard and radio personality Maureen Holloway.

The evening's MC was Toronto-born celebrity entertainer Howie Mandel, host of the television game show *Deal or No Deal* and a regular on the TV show *America's Got Talent*.

He said he had a lot of affection for Baycrest because both of his grandmothers had been cared for by the centre.

The participants, Elliot (Saturday Night) Muzzo; Linda (Tiny Dancer) Waks; Zane (Golden Hands) Cohen; Anton (Boy Toy) Rabie and Honey (Hip Hop) Sherman were all paired with professional dancers and had worked on their routines during the summer.

Although all the performances were received with great enthusiasm, the winner was the sentimental favourite – Sherman, who has in the past suffered from debilitating arthritis.

She recounted how a year and half ago she underwent hip-replacement surgery and spent three weeks in rehab at Baycrest as the youngest patient in the unit at the time.

Indeed, her personal story made her performance that much more remarkable, Mandel told the audience. "A year and a half ago, she was in a wheelchair."

Even Tonioli, who has a reputation as a tough taskmaster, had kind words for Sherman, giving her a score of 9 out of 10. "Great footwork. It was very precise."

He described her performance as powerful, but Sherman did not quite see it that way. "It was one of the longest minutes in my life."

Later, she joked that she had taught dance partner Mikhail Zaslavskiy, "everything he knows."

The team that scored the highest on the dance floor – a perfect 10 by all three judges – was Rabie and his partner, Tanya Iaremchuk, who performed a Spanish routine.

From left Mikhail Zaslavskiy, Honey Sherman, Ed Sonshine of RioCan, evening sponsor.

The scoring was three-pronged: 50 per cent was based on the dancers' fundraising goals, 25 per cent was based on the judges' scores and 25 per cent was on voting by the audience.

Sherman came to the race as the fundraising leader by raising more than $700,000.

However, the ultimate winner of the evening was Baycrest, with more than $2 million raised for its Centres for Innovations in Aging.

Event co-chairs David and Stacey Cynamon thanked all the sponsors, but highlighted the "generous support of RioCan Real Estate Investment Trust, Royal de Versailles Jewellers Inc. and Rolex Canada Ltd., who have steadfastly supported Baycrest galas for the past decade."

Mark Gryfe, president of the Baycrest Foundation, said he was thrilled with the evening. "Last year, Dancing with Our Stars changed the face of galas in the city and was talked about as the most fun event of the year.

"This year, Season 2 raised the bar even higher. We raised almost twice as much money. Plans are already underway for Season 3, which promises to be even bigger and better."

Honey Sherman and Mikhail Zaslavskiy

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Party Planner

Caterer offers cooking classes for men

By JENNIFER LIBMAN
Special to The CJN

Peter Graben is better than a marriage counsellor. At least that's what one student at his new culinary school ManChef.ca believes.

"Peter taught me to cook, and now my wife and I are spending time together in the kitchen. We're having so much fun!" the student says.

Graben, who has been one of Toronto's leading caterers for years, expanded his business when he created ManChef.ca, a culinary school for men, in May of 2010. "I looked around, and there were no cooking schools geared toward men. And not only that, our school is 100 per cent kosher. *Editor's note: But not under any supervisory body.* Everything is made in my own kitchen."

Graben's classes accommodate up to six people, and the sessions are entirely hands-on. Individuals can sign up for one class at a time or for a series. Graben also offers private group classes for events such as birthdays, anniversaries, engagements or graduations. And he has led corporate team-building classes.

Graben helps the participants prepare the meal, and then they all eat together. "We make very simple foods. It's all about raising their confidence and showing them that they can learn to cook. We take every recipe step by step, so even if they've never boiled water before, they come out with a delicious product," he says. "Our classes focus on cooking from scratch, using fresh ingredients and time-tested culinary techniques."

The reason Manchef.ca is successful is that Graben recognizes the differences in the way men and women cook. "Women already know how to cook. They grew up watching their mothers and grandmothers and they feel comfortable in the kitchen" he says. "When they take a cooking class, they're looking for a new skill or a new recipe, but rarely do they need to learn to cook from scratch."

Graben explains that women often take control in the kitchen, which is the reason many men are so apprehensive about cooking. "When it's just the guys, they don't have anyone to take over. They have no choice but to learn!"

The first lesson Graben teaches is how to cook the perfect pasta. "One of the greatest things about pasta is that you can have a complete meal in about 15 minutes" he says. "The key is to always work quickly, as pasta won't hang around – if it cools it goes sticky and gluey, so drain it quickly, serve it quickly and eat it quickly."

Graben teaches participants knife skills and basic cooking techniques such as how to blanch vegetables. "We start from scratch, but we move quickly," he says. By the end of a session, participants will have prepared dishes such as miso salmon, lemon chicken, roasted vegetables and a variety of desserts.

"If you have a boyfriend or husband that can't cook, send them to me," Graben says. "I promise you won't be disappointed!"

For more information, or to sign up for a class, call 416-967-1818 or visit www.manchef.ca

THE FAMOUS LIFESTYLE VEGETARIAN BURGER

1 cup sticky rice plus two cups water
1 oz. finely diced onions.
2 cloves chopped garlic.
1 oz. diced red peppers.
5 oz. sweet potatoes diced small
1 oz. grated shredded mushrooms.
3 oz. coarsely chopped chick peas.
1 oz. natural bran wheat.
1 tsp. coriander.
1 tsp. oregano flakes.
1/2 tsp. celery seed.
1/2 tsp. chili powder.
1/4 cup chopped parsley.
salt and pepper to taste.
1 cup corn flake crumbs or bread crumbs.
oil

Cook rice in a pot with water. Bring to the boil for 10 minutes, simmer for an additional 10 minutes. When rice is cooked, remove from heat and cool.

Boil diced potatoes in water. When cooked, strain water and cool.

Place oil in pan, heat the oil and sauté the chopped onions and garlic on a low heat but don't brown them. Add mushrooms, red peppers and chick peas.

Mix rice and potatoes into the above and mix. Remove from heat, cool and add one beaten egg. Mash coarsely, either manually or with potato masher.

Use four-ounce scoop to portion burgers. Moisten hands and mould into shape of a burger.

Roll in corn flake crumbs or bread crumbs. Sauté on both sides. Place in preheated oven at 350 for about 5 to 8 minutes. Yield: 6 portions.

Your burgers can be served with a favourite curry and yogurt sauce or tomato sauce.

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PARTY PLANNER

Naot are built for comfort and style

By RANDI BERGMAN
Special to The CJN

Considering all of the wonderful products that the country has to offer, buying Israeli usually ensures you are, in fact, buying the best.

With Naot shoes, that "Made in Israel" quality stamp of approval comes with comfort and style to boot. For more than 20 years, Naot Canada has been the outpost of the brand. As well as distributing the Israeli-made shoes across Canada, the company also boasts four Naot-only GTA locations, including an outlet store and one that's opened recently at 1102 Centre St. in Thornhill. The company has expanded in other cities as well, having added a second Montreal location at 3941 Rue St-Denis to the roster, which also includes Calgary.

While distributing Naots across the country might seem like a daunting task to others, the Lissoos family runs their business with ease.

"Our relationship with the factory in Israel, Kibbutz Naot Mordechai, remains extremely close, and we are very proud of their dynamic design team, their aspirations to be innovative on every realm and their constant push for improvement," says Corinne Lissoos, founder and president of Naot Canada.

Chutzpah, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship are the pillars of the brand's success, along with unparalleled comfort, that is!

Simply put, Naot shoes are all about the way they feel. "Own a pair and you will understand," says Lissoos. "When a person's feet are nurtured and supported, as they are in a pair of Naots, they do not have to worry about their feet, they can get on with anything else they need to accomplish in their day probably more effectively, as they do not have foot discomfort."

Naots may be comfortable, but the Lissooses ensure that this comfort never comes at the price of style. They are expanding into the fashion realm with their new Prima Bella line of orthotic-friendly pumps for spring 2011, which feature removable footbeds. The men's selection will expand as well, with the executive line, featuring shoes that can be worn with business suits or casual wear.

Meanwhile, the fall Naot collection, currently in stores, features boots of many styles with stunning fabrications and accents, including the warm and ultra-chic origami boot.

Naot is a rarity in the box-store environment of today.

"Customer care is intrinsic to the Naot brand," says Lissoos. "We follow closely the development of each and every pair produced. We know the hands who are stitching."

Employees work as a team and are dedicated to fitting every person in the world with a pair of Naots.

Teens and 20-somethings cookbook is something special

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

I recently met up with best-selling cookbook author Susie Fishbein at Kosherfest 2010, which took place at Meadowlands in New Jersey on Oct 26 and 27. Susie was at the show to launch her new cookbook, *Kosher by Design: Teens and 20-Somethings* (Artscroll).

As we strolled around Kosherfest, we checked out new kosher products and discussed how the kosher market has exploded and gone mainstream. Kosher items that were once impossible or difficult to find are now much more readily available, opening new doors for kosher cooks who want to offer their families new twists instead of always serving the same old thing.

We also talked about her newest cookbook, *Teens and 20-Somethings*. Its subtitle, *Cooking for the Next Generation* is a deliberate double entendre because Susie's recipes not only appeal to a new generation of young cooks, they will be welcomed by the parents who cook for today's young, digital-savvy, fast food generation. This is Susie's seventh cookbook and it's a winner!

Teens and 20-Somethings offers up 100 easy-to-prepare new recipes and each recipe includes a large, full colour photo (by award-winning food photographer John Uher) so you'll know what the finished dish is supposed to look like. There are icons to indicate vegetarian, dairy-free, nut-free and gluten-free recipes. Susie's recipes are simple and don't require complicated equipment or gadgets. Students, newlyweds and young people starting out will find that the recipes in *Teens and 20-Somethings* are easy, fun, delicious and user-friendly. Many recipes offer lighter ingredients and there are healthy eating tips.

Susie Fishbein includes a list of basic equipment used for the recipes in her book, including mixing bowls, skillet, jelly-roll pans, can opener, food processor, immersion blender, spatulas, tongs, potato masher, garlic press, strainer, measuring cups and spoons (liquid and dry), oven mitts… and a fire extinguisher.

Fishbein explained that her family life has definitely influenced her career as a cookbook author. She said, "When my kids were younger, I published *Kosher by Design Kids in the Kitchen*. They learned to cook simple recipes with me. I have teens in the kitchen now. Their tastes have changed and their friends are more sophisticated.

Continued on page 38

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Planners turn vision into reality

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Food, drink, decor and entertainment can make or break an event. The best way to ensure your event is a success is to hire someone to pull everything together – an experienced event planner.

Michael Rosen of Michael Rosen Event Consulting and Karen Garscadden from Up and Coming Events can help turn your event dreams into reality.

Garscadden, Karen Jacobs, Murielle Bloomberg and Judy Steiner are associates of Up and Coming Events, which was founded more than 20 years ago by Garscadden and Jacobs.

"[We do] weddings, bar mitzvahs, social events... holiday parties, grand openings, themed events, and now we do a lot of major gala events," Garscadden said.

The company's many years of experience planning and co-ordinating events is a major asset to potential clients, she added.

"Our team is innovative and can offer interesting ideas and concepts for all kinds of events, big or small and on any budget.

"We know the ins and outs, and we know ways to be creative and cut budgets if necessary. We also know the newest and hottest trends, so for people who have a more generous budget, we can find the things that are unique and exclusive that can be showcased at their special event."

The Up and Coming associates make it their mission to ensure the personality of the host is evident in each event they plan.

"This is a major thing we like to focus on, that the event is a reflection of the hosts. We try to get to know our clients and what their taste is and what their style is. So we're not just making a party that's kind of a cookie-cutter party. We're trying to make something that's going to reflect the people who we're honouring.

"Sometimes people have been doing the same event, especially corporate, over and over and over again. We're going to try to take them out of the box and give them a new twist or a new idea to make it a little more creative and innovative."

The award-winning event team (they have been recognized three times by the Canadian Event Industry Awards for 'Best Wedding'), does much more than just food and flowers, Garscadden said.

"A lot of what we do is behind the scenes... it's dealing with families and emotions and family politics. Especially these days, there's so many unconventional family structures. [We need to be sensitive] to all the people who are involved in putting the event together and trying to work out compromises that will make everyone feel as comfortable as possible at a milestone occasion."

Rosen, of Michael Rosen Event Consulting, has 35 years experience in the event planning industry. In addition to his years of experience, he says the secret to his success lies in his laid-back attitude.

"I like to have fun with people and I like approaching things with a sense of humour. Rather than getting upset if something goes wrong, I just work on fixing it. I don't tear my hair out; I stay calm all the time and I approach things in a very light manner. It's the only attitude to have.

"There shouldn't be a lot of stress in making a party. You should approach it in a very fun way."

Rosen brings his passion for event planning to every simchah he does.

"I'm really in my element when I'm planning events. One of my favourite things in the world is to actually be at the event and executing. I love that. I love seeing all your hard work and all the planning come off perfectly.

"Even with weddings, I've been doing them for so many years and every time I send a bride down the aisle I get this shiver down my back. It never goes away."

His attention to detail, he added, is a definite advantage for clients.

"I'm very detailed, extremely so, and my years and years of catering and food and beverage experience really help me in doing this.

"Because of my years and years of experience I'm really well organized. I make sure nothing slips through the cracks."

In his role as event planner, Rosen says he symbolizes different things to different people.

"[To] the mother of the bride, I give calmness and order and detail. To the bride I'm the one who takes her vision and does my best to make it come true... For the bride's father I make sure that the investment yields high. I'm a good negotiator and I give good advice."

For more information on Up and Coming Events, visit www.upandcomingeventsinc.com or call 416-665-6100. Michael Rosen Events Consulting can be reached at 416-901-6008 or michaelrosen@rogers.com.

Other consultants/planners advertising in this supplement are: Heidi Gruenspan, 905-738-5030; Mindless Sophistaction, 416-251-2378; Swaye Entertainment, 416-545-0741; Jodi Molson, 416-845-0944.

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Party food easy to prepare

Continued from page 36

This new cookbook equips young adults with the knowledge and skills to create their own amazing foods – from quick and delicious munchies to a whole party."

You'll find tantalizing recipes in *Teens and 20-Somethings* for delicious dishes such as Pizza Soup, Peanut Butter and Banana French Toast, Layered Mushroom Ziti, Pineapple Maple Glazed Salmon, Red Velvet Cupcakes, and Chocolate Tart in Pretzel Crust. She's even included a recipe for Traditional Chicken Soup and offers a new twist on old-fashioned burgers with her Turkey Sliders. There are international influences as well: Mexican Pizza Empanadas, Thai Chicken Burgers, and Hoisin Vegetables. You'll find dozens of suggestions on how to "eat your way around the world."

Try some of the following recipes at your next birthday party.

PIZZA SOUP

Why order in? This recipe has all the makings of pizza…in a bowl!!! Your friends will flip when they dig into the cheesy baguette and you will love how easy it is to make.

1 French or Italian bread
1/2 cup olive oil, divided
1 large or 2 small onions, peeled, cut into 1/4-in. pieces
5 cloves fresh garlic, thinly sliced
1 tbsp. dried oregano leaves
2 (28-oz.) cans whole peeled tomatoes
1/2 cup water
1 1/2 tsp fine sea salt
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 cups fat-free skim milk
4 oz. shredded mozzarella cheese

Preheat oven to 375. Line a jelly roll pan with parchment paper. Set aside.

Cut 6 (1-in.-thick) slices from the bread.

Measure 1/4 cup olive oil into a small dish or bowl. Lightly dip both sides of each bread slice into the oil. Place on prepared pan and toast in the oven for 8 – 10 minutes, until golden. Remove the bread and preheat the broiler.

Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onions and cook until it "sweats," or turns translucent. Do not let it brown or burn, just become golden. Turn the heat down if it is cooking too quickly.

Add the garlic and oregano. Cook for 3 minutes, stirring with a wooden spoon or silicone spatula to scrape the bottom of the pot. The garlic should be fragrant.

Add the tomatoes. Put 1/2 cup water into one of the cans and swirl to loosen sauce from the sides, pour the water into the second can and swirl. Pour the water into the pot. Break the tomatoes by poking with the spoon or spatula. Simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper. Add the milk.

Transfer the soup in batches to a blender or use an immersion blender right in the pot; purée the soup until very smooth. Ladle the soup into oven-proof crocks. Top with a toasted bread slice. Top with 1 – 2 tbsp. cheese. Place the crocks onto the jelly roll pan and into the oven. If your crocks have handles, turn them in so they don't touch the sides of the oven. Broil until the cheese is melted and bubbly. Serve immediately, being careful as the crocks will be hot.

LAYERED MUSHROOM ZITI

Often there is a layer of beef in non-kosher baked ziti. In this recipe, mushrooms are chopped and sautéed to simulate that deep meaty flavor in a dish that you and your friends will go crazy for. If you can't find Romano cheese, just use double the amount of Parmesan. The better quality sauces are often sold in 25-ounce jars, so you may need a second jar.

1 (16-oz.) box ziti
kosher or coarse salt
water as needed
1 medium onion, peeled, cut into chunks
4 cloves fresh garlic, coarsely chopped
2 (10-oz.) boxes button mushrooms, cleaned
2 tbsp. olive oil

Continued on page 39

Glow menu meets Reisman's high standards

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Rose Reisman's name has become synonymous with healthy living and sound nutrition.

And it's no wonder. In the last 20 years, she has become a one-woman lifestyle industry. She runs a catering company, Rose Reisman Catering, and a meal delivery service, Personal Gourmet, and she writes cookbooks. All of these endeavours embody her healthy lifestyle philosophy.

Her 17th book, *Rose Reisman's Family Favorites*, was published by Whitecap Books earlier this year. She also has regular radio and television spots and three food columns.

Despite her busy schedule, Reisman donned a new culinary hat in the summer of 2009. She became a restaurateur, teaming up with Peter Higley, owner of the Pickle Barrel, to open GLOW, a sprawling restaurant (7 Marie Labatte Rd., Unit #E1) in Shops at Don Mills, the newly renovated shopping centre at Don Mills Road and Lawrence Avenue East.

GLOW's (416-384-1133) 5,000-square-foot main dining room has a relaxed ambiance with many windows and a patio that has seating for 100. In the summer, the doors to the patio – an entire wall – are opened so that even the people dining inside feel as if they're outside, Reisman says.

"I wanted a restaurant that feels like it's outdoors. The wood and the stone give the place a fresh airy atmosphere. It has a California feel."

The menu is also affordable. "We're very price conscious."

Reisman is enthusiastic about this latest venture, noting that GLOW has become a popular destination for diners all over the Toronto area. Indeed, on this day in October, the place is bustling with a lunch-hour crowd chowing down on colourful salads; grilled salmon, tuna and chicken; pasta; whole grains; bunless burgers and other light healthy fare.

"We don't use cream to mask the natural flavours and you won't find salt shakers on the table," Reisman says, noting that GLOW is one of the few full-service restaurants in North America dedicated to healthy eating.

Glow
[X] Non- Kosher
[X] Wheelchair accessible

The health theme resonates in other aspects of the restaurant. For instance, the servers are all wearing pink T-shirts to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a cause Reisman has supported over the years. She has helped to raise more than $1 million for education, research and treatment of breast cancer.

Reisman has developed the permanent menu for GLOW, and she's there at least twice a week, making sure the recipes meet her high standards. She says the restaurant has lucked out with its talented executive chef, Barry Serrao, who has been able to incorporate the philosophy of light and healthy cuisine into his daily specials.

A complementary trio of dips – feta-beet, carrot humus and artichoke asiago – paired with flat breads arrives at the table before the meal. While the flavour of the dips may vary, diners begin their meals with this healthy starter as an alternative to the traditional bread basket, Reisman says.

She raves about the mozzarella bar, handmade Italian di bufala compana paired with a selection of grilled or roasted vegetables served on toasted focaccia crostini. "We bring the mozzarella fresh from Italy."

The main courses are all served with healthy sides like edamame salad, mango slaw, seasonal vegetables and sweet potato wedges.

And you won't find any deep fried food, even on the children's menu, a healthy selection of child-friendly items that include Grilled Cheese Panini and Caesar Salad.

Desserts, light mousses and cheesecakes in 19 flavours, are served in shooter-size glasses, and while they may be reduced in calories, there's no scrimping on flavour. A shot of dessert will be in the 120 to 160 calorie range, says Reisman, noting that the s'mores mousse is one of the most popular shots. "We can't keep them in stock."

A private dining room, an intimate space with the same outdoorsy ambiance as the main dining room, seats 38 to 40 people. The whole restaurant can also be rented out for larger affairs. The main dining room can accommodate 200 people for a sit-down dinner.

An added bonus to such an affair is the atmosphere created by the two luminous exclusive glass art installations. *Mille Fiori* was created by world-renowned studio glass artist Dale Chihuly and *Sprout Box* is by Susan Edgerley, a leading Canadian glass artist.

People looking to have a party or a corporate event can plan a menu, Reisman says. "Our chef is happy to do that. We offer a variety of standard menus, but we will always do menu requests."

Generally, people choose two appetizers, salad or soup and three main course items like chicken, beef or fish, two vegetables, a starch plus dessert, she says.

The typical assortment of appetizers includes flatbreads, satay platters, ahi tuna over mango slaw, vegetarian antipasto platters, a variety of dips served with flatbread crisps, and burger sliders.

For people having simchahs, Reisman recommends the private dining room for brunches or Friday-night dinners for out-of-town guests. The meals can be served plated or served on family-style platters. There's even a Passover menu.

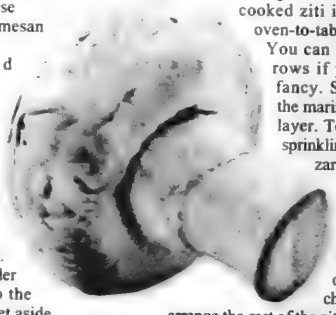
The private dining-room has two 60-inch plasma televisions equipped for visual presentations and private screenings. It's well-suited to corporate meetings, Reisman says. "We're booking private events three to four times a week."

She says the feedback from people holding their events at the restaurant is positive. "They love the intimacy, the ambience, the unusual décor, the service and of course, they love the food!"

They won't believe you made it

Continued from page 38

1/2 tsp fine sea salt
1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
4 cups jarred marinara sauce
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
2 cups ricotta cheese
2 tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
2 tbsp. grated Romano cheese



Preheat oven to 375. Cook the ziti in a large pot of salted, rapidly boiling water according to the package instructions, until al dente. Drain and rinse under cold water to stop the cooking process. Set aside.

Meanwhile, place half the onion and garlic into a food processor fitted with metal "S" blade. Pulse a few times until evenly chopped. Remove the contents to a bowl. Add the second box of mushrooms with the remaining onion and garlic and process until finely chopped. Add them to the bowl.

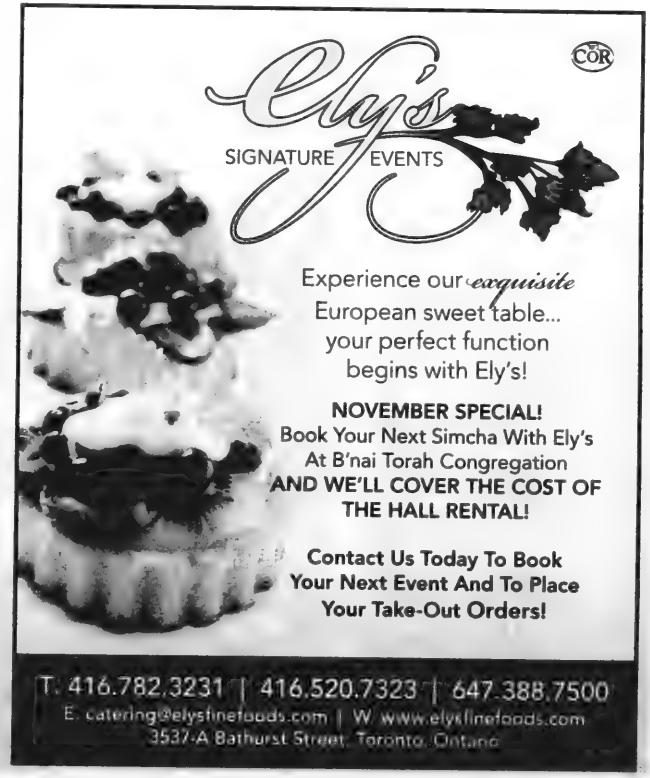
In the empty ziti pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat.

Transfer the chopped mushrooms to the pot and sauté about 15 minutes to remove the moisture from the mushrooms. This will give them a meaty flavour. Add the salt and pepper. Stir.

Arrange a single layer of the cooked ziti in a 9-by-13-in. oven-to-table or Pyrex pan. You can line them up in rows if you want to be fancy. Spread 1 cup of the marinara over the ziti layer. Top with an even sprinkling of all the mozzarella. Spread half the mushroom mixture over the cheese. Top with 1 cup of sauce. Sprinkle on all of the cheddar cheese and arrange the rest of the ziti on the cheddar. Top with remaining mushrooms and remaining 2 cups of sauce.

Spread an even layer of the ricotta over the top using a spoon or offset spatula. Sprinkle on the Parmesan and Romano cheeses.

Bake, uncovered, for 40 minutes, until cheese is bubbly and starting to brown. Serve hot. Yields 10 to 12 servings.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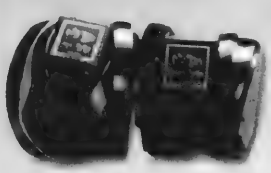

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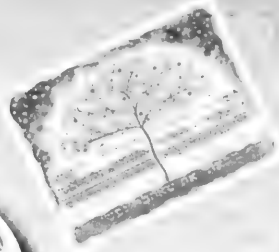

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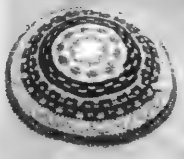

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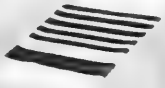

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Israeli wineries can boast of over 120 years of tradition.

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Congress wary of CIJA restructuring plan

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

A sea change is about to occur in the way Canadian Jewish community advocacy is conducted on both a regional and a national level.

According to Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), the change is being led by the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA), which is seeking to centralize control of the host of Jewish advocacy agencies it administers.

Early last week, Congress posted documents on its website revealing its views on the impending shift in the organizational structure involving it and other community organizations including the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC), Quebec-Israel Committee (QIC), National Jewish Campus Life (NJCL) and the University Outreach Committee (UOC). All of them fall under the CIJA umbrella.

Congress decided to "put a push on" CIJA by posting its documents now, CJC vice-president Barbara Bank said, because "we're not really getting a clear idea of what their plan is."

Congress said earlier this year that the council had advised all its advocacy organizations of plans to eliminate the current divisions of community representation and create a "single Jewish public affairs organization encompassing the national and regional level."

David Schwartz

The new entity would also work "in close co-operation with" and "operate under" the UIA Federations Canada system (UIAFC), Congress documents said.

In response to the CIJA restructuring committee's request for proposals on the best way to reorganize, Congress delivered a 13-page document to the council in June.

In its brief, Congress suggests the new communal entity should retain the title "Canadian Jewish Congress" for name recognition in the community, and proposed that a single, small board of governors be set up without an executive committee "so that lay oversight is most effective… [and] that such a simpler structure is far less likely to attract the scrutiny of the Canada Revenue Agency than the current structure, which is substantially more complex."

CIJA chair Stephen Cummings could not be reached for comment by the *CJN* deadline.

Congress' Pacific-region chair David Schwartz said the CIJA restructuring committee members include Larry Tannenbaum, chair of Maple Leafs Sports and Entertainment; David Engel, honorary director of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto; David Koschitzky, immediate past chair of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's board of directors; Mark Freiman, national president of CJC; Marc Gold, immediate past chair of CIC; Stanley Plotnick, CIJA founding board member; CIC chair Moshe Ronen, and Cummings.

Continued on page 25

COLOURFUL WELCOME TO MEN IN UNIFORM

The Commander in Chief of the Canadian Armed Forces, Walter Hnatyshyn, second from right, officially greeted his Israeli counterpart, Gabi Ashkenazi, third from right, last week at his office in Ottawa. The two chiefs of staff stand between traditional bear-fur-hatted Grenadier Guards. A Piper of the Canadian Forces Ceremonial Guard also greeted the military men.

[Israel Sun photo courtesy of the Canadian Department of National Defence]

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Canada

Fraud Case Dropped

TORONTO — Fraud charges against a Toronto man charged last year with bilking mostly Jewish investors in a $27-million Ponzi scheme were quietly dropped, partly because the courts lack the resources to deal with a complex fraud case, it was revealed last week. Tzvi Erez, 43, allegedly ran the scheme through a printing business that went bankrupt in October 2009. A court-appointed receiver said he defrauded 70 investors, mostly in Toronto's Jewish community. When charges were dropped Sept. 22, a Crown e-mail obtained by CBC News cited trial time and expense as a key reason. A lawyer for the complainant in the criminal case said he was also told that his client should have avoided the risky investment, the *Toronto Star* reported. Ontario Attorney General Chris Bentley told the legislature that his office is investigating and that the province "does not walk away" from criminal cases.

World

Ban To Be Fought

WELLINGTON — The case against New Zealand's ban on kosher animal slaughter will be heard Nov. 29 in the High Court in Wellington. Calling the ban "unintentional antisemitism," the president of the New Zealand Jewish Council said the community has a strong case and urged Jews worldwide to help pay its $123,000 in legal costs. Last May, Agriculture Minister David Carter rejected a proposal that shchitah, which has been performed in New Zealand since 1843, be exempt from the new animal welfare code, which says all commercially slaughtered animals must first be stunned. The community filed legal action in August after talks with Carter broke down.

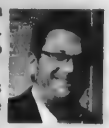
Rabbi To Run

KAMPALA — Native-born Ugandan Rabbi Gershom Sizomu is running for his country's national Parliament. If elected in the February vote, he would be the first Jew elected to national office in Uganda and the first rabbi to be seated in a nationally elected government outside Israel, according to Be'chol Lashon, an American organization committed to strengthening the Jewish People worldwide. Rabbi Sizomu, an ordained Conservative rabbi and the chief rabbi of Uganda, has been endorsed by the Forum for Democratic Change party and is waiting for his candidacy papers to be approved by the National Electoral Commission. The rabbi serves Uganda's native Jewish community, called the Abayudaya, 300 of whom converted to Judaism in 2003 under his initiative. Israel and Orthodox Jews in the Diaspora don't recognize the Abayudaya as Jewish.

Federation Reaffirms Shabbat Policy

MONTREAL — Federation CJA in Montreal says that it will continue to "respect Shabbat" in all its activities.

The statement by president Jack Hasen was made in the wake of the decision Nov. 1 by one of its agencies, the YM-YWHA, to be fully operational on Saturdays.



Jack Hasen

The federation said that it "recognizes that the Y consulted its membership and the majority has spoken in favour of opening on Shabbat. We appreciate that the Y undertook this consultation and acknowledge that the Y is an independent organization with the authority to enact its own policies."

The Y's main Snowdon branch has been open on Saturdays since Oct. 31, 2009. The membership was polled last month on whether the facility should be fully operational – the major difference being the opening of the room housing cardiovascular-training equipment – or the entire facility fully closed on Saturday, as it had been for many years. Some 55 per cent voted for full operation.

"We are very sensitive to those who are troubled by their decision, but hope that everyone will continue to work together to achieve harmony in our community. We reaffirm, however, that Federation CJA will continue to respect Shabbat in all its activities," the statement said.

The federation has traditionally not conducted any activities on Shabbat.

Monument Stolen

BERLIN — Thieves made off with a 750-kilogram Kristallnacht monument from the Jewish cemetery in Cologne, Germany. The theft of the nine-foot-high monument occurred Nov. 14, just days after commemorations of Kristallnacht, the night of Nazi-spurred violence and looting in 1938, *Ha'aretz* reported. The local Jewish community is offering a 4,000-euro reward for its retrieval.

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Galloway's Canadian tour met by protesters

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Controversial former British MP George Galloway's Canadian speaking tour is causing controversy all over the country.

York U threatens to sue rabbi
see page 32

The Free Palestine, Free Afghanistan, Free Speech tour kicked off at York University on Nov. 16, where Galloway spoke in front of a sold-out crowd. Outside the Price Family Cinema, several hundred protesters expressed their displeasure.

Avram Heisler, a third-year York student who is on Hillel at York's board, estimated 250 to 300 people came out to protest.

"I don't really oppose Galloway speaking in general, he has the right to speak," Heisler said. "It's more that he raises funds for a terrorist organization that I have a problem with."

Hillel of Greater Toronto, meanwhile, is demanding funds spent by the York Federation of Students (YFS) to bring Galloway to campus be refunded to students.

"[Galloway is] not a speaker who speaks for most of the university," Heisler added. "For the YFS to spend [student's] money is wrong."

Krisna Saravanamuttu, YFS president, told *Excalibur*, the York University newspaper, that they did not make any financial contribution to bring Galloway to York. He did, however, say YFS would cover security-related expenses.

At the York lecture, Galloway insisted he never supported Hamas, considered a terrorist group by the Canadian government.

"I have been asked why I have been dealing with Hamas," Galloway said.

Continued on page 32

York University students protest George Galloway's speaking engagement at the university on Nov. 16.

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Funday Sunday

Compiled by CJN Staff

Sunnybrook Foundation and Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) have joined together to produce Funday Sunday: Toronto's family fest, presented by Dancap Productions, Nov. 28 at the Metro Convention Centre.

Funday Sunday will raise funds for the women and babies program at Sunnybrook and for CHW activities in Canada and Israel

The event will feature games and activities for kids, a designer goods marketplace with deep discounts, and a health area for tips to keep your family healthy.

The seeds for the Funday came about, when Sunnybrook and CHW asked how they can engage "young families with two working parents, extra-curricular activities, carpools, financial stress," the two organizations said in a statement.

They came up with an "experiential charity, a fun, modern and interactive way to give back that doesn't take a lot of time while bringing the busy family together."

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A glorious heart of courage

From the editor's desk...

Woe betide the Jewish people if we measure the parameters of our modern existence in terms of the antisemitism directed towards us.

That the "most ancient of hatred" still persists in the year 2010 is undeniable.

That it exists alongside ever higher advancements in science, the arts and the humanities should be, but alas, is not inexplicable.

Over the millennia, antisemitism has shown itself to be probably the hardiest form of Otherly-hatred, the most reliable instrument of social control for demagogues, despots and demi-gods alike.

Neither truth, history, logic, conscience, fair play nor common sense, it seems, can loosen the hold of the hatred on those who are its propagators.

But to define ourselves in terms of that hatred alone, in other words, in terms of the malice propagated by the haters, merely surrenders to them control of the messages we strive to impart to the world about ourselves: our past, our present and our future.

Of greater import however is that it surrenders to the hater far too much influence over the messages we wish to impart to our children and our grandchildren about who we are, our mission to the world and our place in the unfolding history of the word.

In other words, we must not allow our efforts to respond to the antisemite to overshadow our efforts to teach to our children – and thus perpetuate – the beauty and the splendor and the far-reaching purpose of Judaism.

And yet it is precisely because of our millennial obligation to perpetuate our faith, traditions and way of life that we must respond to the antisemite wherever possible.

That was the distillate of the message imparted two weeks ago in Ottawa at the second meeting of the interparliamentary coalition to combat antisemitism.

Resurgent antisemitism is part of the times. Combating it is our battle.

In North America, and especially in Canada, we fight that battle from a relatively comfortable perch, namely, societies in which the sinews of democracy bind tightly the protective structures of our rights and freedoms.

There are places on earth, however, where there are no such protective democratic structures and yet courageous individuals nevertheless rage against the calumnies of discrimination and antisemitism.

Venezuela is one such place.

Sammy Eppel is one such individual. He is a community leader, director of information and analysis commission for the CAIV - Confederación Asociaciones Israelitas de Venezuela. Eppel appeared at the recent Ottawa conference as an expert on the subject of state-sanctioned antisemitism and spoke to us about the situation in Venezuela.

"Jews are being treated as an evil experiment in Venezuela."

About 15 years ago, Eppel said, there were between 25,000-30,000 Jews in Venezuela. Today there are about 9,800. In four years, he predicts, barely 5,000 Jews will remain there.

The government of Hugo Chavez instigates, informs and instructs widespread antisemitism in Venezuela. As spine-shuddering evidence, Eppel showed the gathering two videos that were shown on state-run television and that he said were representative of the message Chavez sends to his people about Israel and Jews.

The videos were in Spanish with English subtitles. One was a recording of a speech by a spokesman for the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru). It consisted of a masked individual clutching an automatic rifle who rapped, ranted and raved into the camera. Among the key nuggets of his message was "Zionists must be fought wherever they live, even in their homes."

The second video was a commercial message played during the intermissions of the FIFA World Cup soccer matches last summer. It showed a soccer team dressed in an Israel-emblazoned blue and white uniform abusing a group of cowering innocents obviously dressed as Palestinian victims.

Eppel told the panel that the state-controlled university recently allowed one of its professors to publish a 14-point blueprint of how to destroy the Jewish people.

Most of the members of the Jewish community are on government blacklists, he said. But, unlike the antisemitism of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, which is embedded deep within the core of the Iranian, Chavez harbours "an expedient antisemitism that he uses for political purposes." The Venezuelan people were never antisemitic before Chavez. The antisemitic acts "all stem from the government," Eppel said.

Despite, according to Eppel, the abject lack of the rule of law in Venezuela, he still urged us to write about the policies of the Chavez government and to expose the Venezuelan leader for what he is: a narcissistic, anti-democratic, anti-American, demagogue. Chavez's obsession with his image is his Achilles heel.

Eppel's obsession with combating antisemitism and protecting his people, indeed protecting the sanctity of human dignity is his glorious heart.

MBD

SeeJN

BAYT HACHNASAT SEFER TORAH

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner of the Yeshiva University-Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash holds the new sefer Torah commissioned by Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto in honour of Rabbi Baruch Taub, left. The procession went from Rabbi Taub's home on Bevshire Circle to the synagogue on Clark Avenue on Sunday. ***To see video, go to cjnews.com***

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Canadian yeshiva expected to open in 2012

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

After more than two years of groundwork, the Canadian Yeshiva & Rabbinical School – expected to open in 2012 – held a "celebration of progress" last week at Adath Israel Congregation.

Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum, the school's rosh yeshiva and the driving force behind its creation, said that Judaism is "being pulled apart at the seams," referring to a move to the right in the Orthodox world and a move to the left in Conservative Judaism. His school is designed to bring bring the factions back together.

A former rabbi at Toronto's Beth Tzedec Congregation, which left the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism two years ago, Rabbi Tanenbaum has retired from the synagogue. Faculty members for his new endeavour are from both Conservative and Orthodox backgrounds.

Rabbi Daniel Sperber

In March, Rabbi Daniel Sperber, a professor of Talmud at Bar-Ilan University and president of its Jesselson Institute for Advanced Torah Studies, came on board as chancellor of the Canadian Yeshiva. Rabbi Sperber, a 1992 recipient of Israel's prestigious Israel Prize for his scholarship, will continue to be based in Israel.

At the event last week, former British prime minister Tony Blair, speaking by video, expressed his support for the yeshiva and said he looked forward to working with it in the future. Blair now runs a foundation he established to promote understanding about major religions.

Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum

Retired senator Jerry Grafstein, the yeshiva's honorary chair, commended Rabbi Tanenbaum's spirit and persistence, and said that the yeshiva is important not only to the university, but to the academic community in general, as well as to the Jewish community and Canada.

"There isn't language for us," said Rabbi Tanenbaum in an interview. "We're not calling ourselves Orthodox. We're not calling ourselves Conservative. We're building a halachic institution."

Rabbi Sperber, speaking at the event, said he was persuaded to join the yeshiva largely because he has been disturbed by trends in the Israeli, American and European Orthodox rabbinates to move toward positions of stringency that have led to "the disenchantment of great parts of our Jewish community away from centrist Judaism.

"To create a new profile of rabbi who can present Judaism, Torah and Halachah in a welcoming fashion… who is willing to dialogue with anyone and everyone, to accept differences and to appreciate the legitimacy of views other than their own without compromising their own ideology, this I think is an enormous challenge, one which will require very careful navigation.

However, he added, if the goal is achieved, it "will have enormous benefits [including] much wider implications, because it may form a model that can be replicated elsewhere."

As well, it will justify his participation in it, a stand he noted he has been "very severely criticized for."

Rabbi Sperber told *The CJN* in an interview two days before the event that he believes an institution that is "truly centrist… and truly halachic" will bring people together.

Although Rabbi Sperber would have preferred the term "Orthodox," he feels the initiative is important in bridging a gap between the streams of Judaism, and should be encouraged, he said in the interview.

It's very important to him that the new yeshiva been seen as a halachic institution, he added. "Certainly the curriculum, the teaching of basic subjects, the final examinations of the students, and their own religious practices would have to be normative halachic, traditional halachic."

He also said that to create Canadian rabbis here, instead of having to "import" them, is an important move.

In addition to a four-year rabbinic smichah program, the school is applying for degree-granting status for programs including pastoral counselling.

Rabbi Tanenbaum said that he was approached by the Toronto School of Theology – a federation of seven Christian theological schools – because of his interfaith work. He was asked to consider having the yeshivah become the eighth institution at the University of Toronto's St. Michael's College.

Being housed among Christian seminaries has many positive potential implications for greater understanding between Christians and Jews, said Rabbi Sperber, who has also been involved in interfaith work for many years.

Other key features of the yeshivah will include a residence hall in a yet-to-be-determined location – to serve as a halachic living environment, a program for spouses, and scholarships and living stipends – ideally – for all students.

"We're working on the funding," said Randall Starr, chair of the yeshiva's board of governors. Operating costs for the first four years are expected to be in the order of $7 million.

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Abbas negotiations a game of charades

It is all so sadly predictable. The president of the Palestinian Authority (PA), Mahmoud Abbas, waves his hands in anger condemning the Israelis, wrings his hands in victimhood importuning the Americans, and clenches his fists in indignation impressing the Palestinian "street."

"If there is no complete halt to settlements in all of the Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, we will not accept [a return to the peace talks with Israel]," Abbas said. He was speaking to reporters after a meeting last Sunday in Cairo with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

The demand for a construction freeze as a precondition for negotiating peace with Israel, we have often pointed out in this space, is an utterly phony, expedient one for Abbas. The presence of Jews in the West Bank and in a sovereign state of Palestine should be part of the negotiations not a necessary condition precedent. But the world does not hold the Palestinian leader to a standard of governmental honesty or diplomatic integrity. And his people have not the power to do so.

Now he has added a new disingenuous wrinkle to his prevaricating protests.

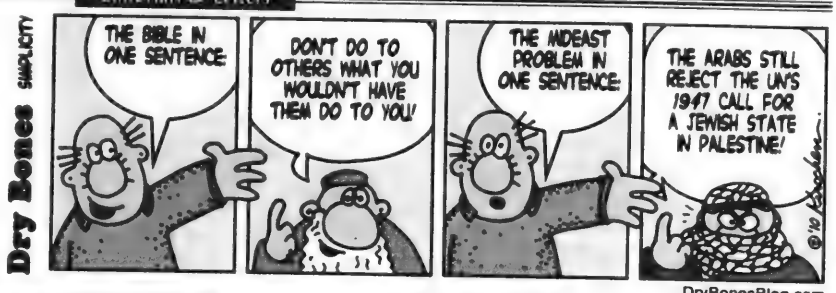
The government of Israel Sunday approved a five-year plan to renovate the area near the Western Wall and the adjacent Jewish quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem. The project is one of maintenance work only. It does not apply to areas that house shrines holy to both Jews and Muslims. "The aim of the plan is to improve access for millions of visitors to the site and also to the archeological sites, and to upgrade the physical infrastructure and the transport infrastructure in the area," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said in a statement.

The PA immediately condemned the announced renovation plan. Spokesman Ghassan Khatib said it was bad for the peace process. "Any Israeli activities in the occupied part of Jerusalem are illegal," Khatib said. "It's not healthy as far as the peace process is concerned because peace would require the end of the occupation of east Jerusalem."

If Khatib or his superior, Abbas, truly cared about a peace process, let alone a healthy one, they would sit across a table with Israelis and actually try to negotiate peace, in all its difficult, challenging, emotional, history-changing details. But they prefer not to. Rather than extend their hands to the other side, they prefer to wave, wring and clench them in perpetual self-glorifying warriorhood and self-pitying victimhood. They engage in nothing but a sorry charade. And yet, far sadder and more ominous for any prospects of peace, Khatib and Abbas cling to an ignorant if not also bigoted and supremacist notion of history that denies any Jewish entitlement to the Western Wall and the Old City of Jerusalem.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

U.S. Justice Department officials said accused Nazi war criminal John Demjanjuk would be extradited to Israel to stand trial on charges of murdering thousands of Jews at the Treblinka death camp in Poland. The retired Cleveland-area autoworker was accused of being the guard "Ivan the Terrible" and serving at Treblinka in 1942-43, but he said he was a German POW. His eventual guilty verdict was overturned on appeal by Israel's Supreme Court.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Security Council seat not a loss

I am writing in response to Liberal party leader Michael Ignatieff's Nov. 11 letter to the editor ("Ignatieff on Mideast policy"), in which he suggests that Canada's loss of a seat in the Security Council of the United Nations represents a huge loss for Canada within the international community. I say quite the contrary. This particular body within the UN and, in fact, all bodies within the organization have become increasingly corrupt over the years, and basically drive an agenda that serves their own interests and not those of their citizens. Their main agenda, of course, is to vilify Israel. How proud I am that Canada does not hold a seat on this council because of its upholding of principles, truth and justice. I am so proud of Prime Minister Stephen Harper and grateful that he is at the helm of our country. In all of my years I have never seen such unparallelled levels of antisemitism. And yet our leader will not cave in or bow to the pressures of political correctness. Being a politician true to his game, Ignatieff would rather court public opinion than lead in the fight of good over evil and justice over injustice.

E. Shapero
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Saudi Arabia on UN women's committee

The latest hypocrisy of the United Nations is the creation of a subcommittee called UN Women, which would have as one of its board members Saudi Arabia, and almost included Iran. The stated purpose of UN Women is dedicated to gender equality around the world. It is well-known that in Saudi Arabia, women need a male guardian's permission to travel and to have surgery and must be covered from head to toe in public. The most laughable restriction is that women are not permitted to drive an automobile. Saudi Arabia can continue to discriminate against women on the basis that Islamic (*sharia*) law prevails if there is a conflict with the ratified International Bill of Rights for Women. So in effect, even though it's a member of the board, Saudi Arabia is not bound where it considers that religious law should supersede the purpose of the committee. It would be interesting for someone to cite the section of the Qur'an that, according to Islamic law, prohibits women from driving a car. And we continue to fund this UN Agency?

Bert Raphael
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Applauds prime minister

Liberal party leader Michael Ignatieff sadly feels that Canada lost out on the Security Council seat because of its Middle East policies ("Ignatieff on Mideast policy," letters, Nov. 11). May I remind him that we Canadians have our strong values and principles. He should appreciate what Prime Minister Stephen Harper said so eloquently recently at the Ottawa conference on combating antisemitism: "It is a responsibility of us all" to stand up to the "three D's" – demonization, double standards and delegitimization." He also said: there are "a lot more votes in being anti-Israel than in taking a stand … Canada will take that stand, whatever the cost" ("PM pledges government's support for Israel," Nov. 11). May our prime minister grow from strength to strength, Amen.

The United Nations, as it stands today, has a major bloc of Arab/Muslim countries and their allies, whose only agenda is Israel-bashing. Does Ignatieff wish that we bend backwards and appease these oppressive regimes to win a seat on the UN Security Council?

Abraham Samson
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

LET THEM GO…

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1615

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

Brain research partners

Kudos to Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty for facilitating a joint Israeli-Ontario institute on brain research ("Ontario partners with Israel for brain research," Nov. 18). Not only will the institute benefit Ontario and Israel, it will stand as a reminder that antisemitism is not acceptable to Canadians. What better way to meet antisemitic hate on campus than to forge ever closer academic ties between Israel and Canada?

James Morton
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Holocaust exhibit in Lithuania

Regarding Rachel Kostanian, the curator of the Green House Holocaust Exhibit, which is part of the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum in Vilnius, Lithuania, she is everything your article says and more ("Nazi crimes have been downgraded in Lithuania," Perspectives, Oct. 7). I am well acquainted with Rachel. In fact, I went to the official re-opening of the Green House on Oct. 19. The Green House re-opened after extensive work to renovate the premises and display. This has been a controversial process that has caused Rachel some concern.

S.J. Butt
British Ambassador
Vilnius, Lithuania

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Perspectives

Is Netanyahu trying to follow Ben-Gurion's footsteps?

By ALUF BENN

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On Nov. 14, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu paid his annual visit to Sde Boker to participate in the official memorial ceremony for David Ben-Gurion. Prime ministers take advantage of this occasion to pick and choose from the philosophy of the country's founding father and imagine themselves as his successors and disciples. Here, seven years ago, Ehud Olmert, then the deputy prime minister, announced the plan for the withdrawal from Gaza. Prime minister Ariel Sharon was not at the ceremony.

Netanyahu described Ben-Gurion as a unique leader who declared the founding of the state even though he knew that war awaited, and despite pressure from friends and rivals. "He knew that everything rested on his shoulders, that he stood alone, by himself in the face of the historic moment," the prime minister waxed poetic.

The prime minister devoted the main part of his speech to the tension between the leader's principles and "the world's" demands. Ben-Gurion knew nations cannot exist without alliances, but "in the matter of Jerusalem, Ben-Gurion stood up against the world with impressive courage," he said.

Now Netanyahu is sitting in Ben-Gurion's chair, and he feels himself to be in a similar situation. "The world," led by U.S. President Barack Obama, is demanding he deny his principles, stop the settlements and hand the West Bank over to a Palestinian state. His political partners Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, Deputy Prime Minister Silvan Shalom, Vice-Prime Minister Moshe Ya'alon and Minister without Portfolio Benny Begin are insisting he refuse the American demands.

And Netanyahu is torn. The deeper he delves into the philosophy of the country's founder, the harder it is for him to face the historic moment when he must decide which way to go: to say "yes" to Obama and risk losing his coalition and facing an acute rift inside Israel, or to refuse the Americans, close ranks with Lieberman, Ya'alon and Begin and embark on a diplomatic battle against the Obama administration. As is his wont, Netanyahu is trying to have it both ways, please both sides and pass the buck.

"There is a huge and powerful temptation to wait for a more propitious time, to form a firmer majority, to find partners in responsibility. But Ben-Gurion knew how to identify the elusive historic moment of now or never," said Netanyahu at Sde Boker. Will Netanyahu know too?

After his seven-hour meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in New York earlier this month, the sides issued a joint statement about the talks "focused on creating the conditions for the resumption of direct negotiations aimed at producing a two-state solution." Ostensibly, Netanyahu and Clinton are walking hand in hand toward a better future and a new Middle East. Inside the room, however, Netanyahu came up against a dictate from the American administration: freeze the settlements for 90 days and use that time to determine the future border between Israel and Palestine.

Yitzhak Rabin once related that James Baker, the elder president George Bush's strong-arm secretary of state, used to attend meetings with Israel's leaders with an open notebook in his lap. It apparently contained his talking points. At some stage, Baker would shut the notebook, look his interlocutor straight in the eye, "and then you knew he was speaking as the U.S. secretary of state." At that moment, the Israeli leader would understand there was no point in debating and thenceforth he had to obey Baker – or find himself in conflict with America the great.

Clinton "shut the notebook" on Netanyahu in order to transmit a message: the Republican victory in the Congressional elections has not taken Obama's peace efforts off the agenda.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaking at the annual memorial service for Israel's first prime minister David Ben-Gurion.

Netanyahu was given an offer that can't be refused: freeze the settlements and negotiate on the borders now, in return for fighter planes and diplomatic guarantees in the future.

The offer has to be read in its negative: the guarantees Netanyahu is asking of the Americans reveal his anxieties. Like a husband who asks "You do love me, don't you?" or a landlord who has the tenants sign 1,001 guarantees, Netanyahu isn't certain of Obama's support. He wants authorization to build in east Jerusalem, he wants permission to resume construction in the settlements at the end of the moratorium (in closed conversations he promises not to be excessive), he wants America to veto any initiative in the UN Security Council to recognize a Palestinian state and, under pressure from his partners in the government, he is demanding that the negotiations focus not only on borders but rather cover all the core issues.

And here is the commentary: Netanyahu understands that at the end of the new moratorium, there will be a demand for another moratorium, as happened last time. He fears Obama will let the Palestinians bring up their cause at the UN and will not veto it. And he is scared of discussing borders, which will mean opening a map and committing to a concrete position and not just vague slogans.

If the agenda is expanded, Netanyahu will be able to bring narrative demands like "recognition of Israel as the state of the Jewish People" and at any moment cause the negotiations to blow up. However, if they talk only in numbers and percentages, dunams and boundaries, the coalition will fall apart and Netanyahu will be depicted as someone who made concessions, gave the Land of Israel to the enemy and got nothing in return. Then he will have to look for his voters in Lieberman's column.

Netanyahu is demanding a written commitment from Obama, in an expression of the mistrust between them and perhaps also in order to show achievements at home – like the letter then-prime minister Ariel Sharon got from former U.S. president George W. Bush in return for evacuating Gush Katif in Gaza. But this will be a consolation prize. If the prime minister of Israel does not trust the president of the United States to impose a veto on an essential issue such as a forced solution and recognition of Palestine's independence within the 1967 borders, and wants a written note in advance, then the alliance between the two countries is in deep trouble.

But maybe not. Until now Netanyahu has refused to initiate moves and shown he prefers to act only under American pressure. Perhaps this makes it easier for him to distance himself from his past positions, and maybe it's convenient for him that Obama tells him what to do.

Netanyahu knows that in direct negotiations vis-a-vis Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, there will never be any agreement on the borders. Perhaps he is expecting an American map that will determine where Palestine will arise and free him from the dilemma of how far to withdraw. After all, that's what his guide and teacher David Ben-Gurion did when American presidents ordered him to leave Sinai in 1949 and 1956.

Abbas eyes UN appeal for independent state as peace talks stall

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JERUSALEM – Palestinian leaders will meet in the coming days to form a back-up plan in case talks with Israel fall through, a West Bank official said Sunday.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will consult with leaders of his Fatah faction over the contingency program, which could involve bypassing the U.S.-sponsored peace process to seek statehood through the United Nations, the Palestinian Liberation Organization official said.

There has been widespread speculation that Abbas is considering an appeal to the UN for recognition of an independent Palestine ever since direct talks collapsed when Israel refused to renew a 10-month settlement building freeze after it expired on Sept. 26.

Sunday's comments could now be a sign that the Palestinian leadership sees the UN track as an increasingly realistic option, as U.S. attempts to break the deadlock falter.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will, in the coming days, continue to cajole his cabinet colleagues toward accepting American incentives, including 20 advanced F-35 fighter planes, in return for a new 90-day freeze.

But even if he overcomes considerable resistance from within his own Likud party, as well as right-wing coalition partners Yisrael Beiteinu and Shas, it could not be enough to persuade Abbas to rejoin negotiations.

Israel has so far balked at the Palestinian and U.S. line that a new freeze, unlike the last one, must include east Jerusalem, which Israel annexed in 1980 but Palestinians claim as their future capital.

Abbas has vowed not to return to the table unless settlement building is halted on all territory beyond the Green Line – Israel's pre-1967 border and the likely basis for a Palestinian appeal to the UN.

"If there is no complete halt to settlements in all of the Palestinian territories including Jerusalem, we will not accept [a return to talks]," Abbas said in Cairo on Sunday.

Opinions

Fighting clergy burnout

In August, the *New York Times* published a feature on clergy burnout. It cited multiple studies, each more fascinating than the next.

The Presbyterian Church found that since the 1970s, the number of ministers leaving their jobs had quadrupled. The Evangelical Lutheran Church found that 13 per cent of their ministers were taking antidepressants. My favourite was a seven-year study of 1,726 Methodist ministers in North Carolina. Compared with congregants, the ministers reported significantly higher rates of diabetes, high blood pressure and asthma.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

This study fascinated me. First of all, who knew there were 1,726 Methodist ministers in North Carolina? And remarkably, it took the learned professors at Duke University a full seven years to learn something that every Jewish mother knows: being a rabbi is "not a job for a Jewish boy!"

Clergy burnout is understandable. Community work, for both volunteers and professionals, is the hardest work in the world. Indeed Rashi famously quips that if you place the burden of communal leadership on someone's shoulders, "they will disintegrate on their own."

And rabbis are idealists who expect a lot of the world. We're frequently disappointed.

We get disappointed by our fellow leaders: today, there are entire blogs devoted to collecting news articles about the failings of rabbis. We get disappointed by our community: teaching Judaism in North America feels like a Sisyphean task, like pushing a boulder up a hill with the rock constantly rolling down again. And we get disappointed by life's injustices.

Some people have remarked to me that it must be "easier" now for me to deal with difficult funerals, considering that I now have 20 years of experience. Actually, the opposite is true. If you go to one tragic funeral, you imagine it's a unique event that happens once in a lifetime. But if you go to 10 tragic funerals, you have a terrible sinking feeling, because you know there will be an 11th one, too.

Burnout is a serious problem. In life, there's much to be disappointed about, including ourselves.

I've found in my own career that the best way to fight burnout is to collect things. I collect authentic thank-you notes. I collect smiles from simchahs. I collect remarkable stories.

These collections remind me that all disappointments in life are outweighed by a hero's generosity and a bride's smile. These collections remind me of why I became a rabbi, and that whatever disappointments may come today, tomorrow may bring true inspiration.

Pushing back for its own sake

In late October, amid much self-promotional hype, leaders of the Canadian BDS movement met in Montreal to celebrate their campaign of boycotts, divestment and sanctions against Israel.

By all reports, the BDS movement once again proved to be more virtual than real, puffing itself up on the Internet while failing to stir much excitement. The movement's broad call to mobilize "civil society" was met with awkward silence. Apparently, barely 100 people attended the conference's final session. It's clear that this fall will be remembered for the glowing depictions of Israel as a profitable, thriving "startup nation," in *La Presse* and other French media outlets rather than for the glowering denunciations of Israel by angry misanthropes.

Gil Troy in Montreal

With the BDS momentum proving to be more bark than bite, much of the organized Jewish community ignored the conference. Believing that you should never disturb your enemy if he or she is in the process of self-destructing, there were no major counter-demonstrations, few clarion calls to mobilize. The strategy seemed to be that shining a spotlight on the BDS movement's flaws would give the boycotters attention they don't deserve.

While I understand that logic, the strategy ignored the great distress that the simple fact of the conference convening in Montreal caused among many pro-Israel Montrealers. Even if the conference failed to live up to its own hype, we in the pro-Israel community needed to push back for our own sake. In fact, the conference, even if minor, provided an opportunity for a classic ju jitsu move: taking an opponent's energy and redirecting it for your own purpose.

Just before the conference, dismayed by the Jewish communal silence, I met with one student who was willing to stand up for Israel publicly and proudly. Following the successful "buycott" strategy in Toronto, when BDS calls backfired and a call to boycott Israeli wine led to a run on Israeli wine, and calls to boycott a Dead Sea Scroll exhibit and the Toronto film festival's celebration of Tel Aviv's centennial led to waves of sold-out shows, a few students sent out a call to buy Israeli products that weekend. I forwarded the call around, and echoed it in a Montreal *Gazette* opinion piece that ran during the conference, while blasting the boycott movement for endangering the peace process.

We didn't have the time or resources to trigger a mass movement. That was never our intention. But the feedback we received was extraordinary. As people e-mailed to detail their purchases of Elite chocolate here or 10 Israeli bottles of wine there, they also thanked us. Most moving were the thanks – from Jews and non-Jews – that celebrated the opportunity to do something personal, positive, and constructive for Israel. "What a wonderful idea," one woman wrote. "Finally a logical way to respond to all the madness around us."

Group responsibility and individual empowerment are essential to effective grassroots action. It's the logic of the firing squad put to good use. Firing squads demand full participation from all assigned, while one of the shooters unknowingly fires blanks. This allows everyone to take responsibility as a group while indulging the calming and exculpating hope that their gun was the one firing blanks.

In the Torah, every Jewish citizen took responsibility for the community by paying a half-shekel. Today, the federation campaign tries to enlist as many participants as possible, even if many make token donations and most funds are raised from big givers – often in one big splashy event.

If we understand the importance of spreading communal responsibility and maximizing individual feelings of involvement when it comes to fundraising, shouldn't we apply that same principle to supporting Israel? I'm proud of what we did to push back against the BDSers, yet I feel we missed an opportunity. The weekend could have been a chance for even more Montrealers to embrace the plucky democracy in the Middle East by acting out the Zionist and Jewish imperative to act constructively – not just believe abstractly, or even hide delightedly when your adversaries stumble.

The shul of no shopping

"This is the season to go shopping, fah-la-la-la-la…" And believe me, Chanukah is no better. After a quiet Chanukah in Israel last year with almost no hype and no presents (only little kids in Israel get Chanukah gifts, and then only small tchatchkes), I'm in culture shock over the starts-in-November shopaganza that conflates Chanukah and Christmas into one big mall-athon.

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein in Toronto

A few years ago, I stumbled upon Reverend Billy of The Church of Life After Shopping (it used to be called The Church of Stop Shopping.) Reverend Billy is actually actor Bill Talen, an activist street performer based in New York City. In "mockumentary" style, he and his choir lead revival-type experiences, on sidewalks and in malls and especially in chain stores, encouraging consumers to "stop shopping" and to abandon their near-addiction to the products of large corporations and mass media, putting the notions of economic justice and environmental protection ahead of blind buying.

He takes on the giants: Starbucks, Wal-Mart, Disney. On Dec. 25, 2005, Reverend Billy performed at Disneyland. He led the choir down "Main Street, U.S.A." singing anti-shopping songs. He was promptly arrested for disturbing the peace.

When you watch footage of people going up and down huge escalators in megamalls, we really look like lemmings or scurrying rodents. Up and down, into this store and that, coming out laden with packages, into the next store, out of the next store. You can imagine that the Church of Life After Shopping is most busy in the weeks leading up to Christmas and Chanukah. And most reviled by holiday shoppers who don't want to stop. They yell at him for ruining the "fun" of the season.

I'm discomforted, not over the idea of giving gifts on Chanukah, but over our lack of awareness of the ramifications of those gifts. We throw away tons of boxes and wrapping paper. The broken toys with one piece missing end up in garage sales, and eventually landfills. Cheap plastic trinkets compete with expensive iPads, all made in China, where some kid may be working long hours in oppressive conditions to make our baubles.

We buy logos and brand names, and an idea that somehow this very thing we are purchasing is the one thing we need to make us happy. What about a box of homemade cookies? It's easier to buy a pre-packaged ribboned assortment from the mall, adorned with a picture of an old-fashioned bubbie on the box, as if anyone's bubbie actually made those cookies. (Hint: a factory machine did.)

What about a hand-written note of appreciation? We'd rather go to a chain store that isn't unionized and buy tinsel-flecked cards on non-recycled paper. How about a hand-painted scarf from a local artist? It's cheaper to buy a printed one from some French designer with a factory in India. What about a coupon for a night of babysitting? Better to buy a DVD set of the latest Hollywood flick to show the nieces and nephews.

Where's the spirit of Chanukah? Chanukah contains within it a strong message of conservation, not consumerism. Planned obsolescence would have killed the little jar of oil. It was meant to last for longer than it should have. The rabbis wonder exactly how it lasted: did it get divided into smaller units or did it just burn slower? Either way, the miracle was that what we had was enough. The "true" message of Chanukah is that a little bit of something can last for a long, long time.

I wish we had a Jewish Reverend Billy to lead the shul of no-shopping, before we start believing that shopping is the spirit of our "season" too. Before consumerism becomes the religion of the 21st century.

The Kirshner File

German popular opinion and the Holocaust

British historian Ian Kershaw, a professor of modern history at the University of Sheffield, has spent much of his career studying the Nazi movement in Germany. His two-volume biography of Adolf Hitler, a magisterial work, has burnished his reputation as a penetrating analyst of Nazism and the Third Reich.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Kershaw's latest book, *Hitler, the Germans and the Final Solution* (Yale University Press), will probably be regarded as the culmination of his three-decade quest to shed light on one of the darkest periods in European history.

In this illuminating volume, consisting of 14 essays, Kershaw focuses on Hitler and the Holocaust and German popular opinion vis-a-vis Jews.

Kershaw argues that Hitler's poisonous world view about the primacy of racial struggle and his warped conceptions about Jews were formed by the mid-1920s, when the first volume of his hateful and turgid manifesto, *Mein Kampf*, was published.

Hitler was of the view that Judaism and Marxism were inextricably linked. As he put it, "The Jew is and remains the world enemy, and his weapon, Marxism, is a plague afflicting mankind." As Kershaw notes, Hitler believed that Jews constituted a race, not a religion, and that they were "a racial tuberculosis among nations." The aim of a German "government of national strength" would be the "removal of the Jews altogether." But at one transitory point, Hitler suggested that if Germans Jews "behaved well," they might be permitted to stay in Germany.

This idea, of course, was short-lived, and Hitler continued to harp on two major themes as he addressed audiences around the country: The Jews were responsible for the "stab in the back" that forced Germany to surrender in 1918 and the revolutionary fervour that convulsed the nation after its capitulation.

Kershaw says that Hitler was a shrewd enough politician to know when to tone down his violent antisemitism. As he campaigned for office, he focused less on Jews and more on the deteriorating economy and political instability. "When necessary, he could, and did, keep [Nazi] party radicals in check," Kershaw writes. "At other times, it was useful to unleash their pent-up violence on the Jews."

But even when, for tactical reasons, he remained publicly detached from the persecution of Germany's Jewish population, he was the guiding hand behind its implementation.

By January 1939, his antisemitism had gelled into a malignant force. Hitler told the Czech foreign minister that "the Jews will be destroyed" and delivered a prescient speech in the Reichstag in which he warned, "In the course of my life I have often been a prophet, and have usually been ridiculed for it… Today I will once more be a prophet: if the international Jewish financiers in and outside Europe should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war, then the result will… be the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe."

Taking issues with historians who claim that Hitler hewed to a grand design in plotting the Holocaust, Kershaw subscribes to the belief that he issued no comprehensive general extermination order.

Rather, Nazi functionaries in German-occupied territory took the initiative in murdering Jews in their respective regions, and their actions met with approval from superiors.

The Wannsee conference, which took place in a posh Berlin suburb in January 1942, formally sanctioned the systematic attempt to exterminate European Jews.

On the ground, the murder of Jews actually began about a month earlier in Chelmno, Poland, when Jews were gassed in mobile vans. Kershaw adds that the actual decision to physically destroy Jews was taken in September or October of 1941.

Just months later, Hans Frank, the governor-general of Poland, spoke openly of the need to "exterminate the Jews wherever we find them." Heinrich Himmler, the SS chieftain who was placed in charge of the extermination process, claimed he was acting on Hitler's authority.

Himmler's comment is telling. Kershaw makes it crystal clear that, absent Hitler, the Holocaust may have been still-born. As he writes, "Without Hitler as head of the German state, and without his fanaticism, it seems hardly conceivable that the Final Solution would have occurred. This thought itself is sufficient to posit a fundamental link between Hitler and genocide."

Turing to a related topic, Kershaw admits he was surprised to learn that the persecution of Jews had an insignificant impact on the daily life of most Germans.

The majority of Germans were simply indifferent, he observes. So while the road to Auschwitz was built by hatred, it was paved with indifference. On a scale of one to 10, the so-called Jewish question was relatively unimportant in the minds of Germans, who were preoccupied with more pressing matters.

Quoting the historian David Bankier, Kershaw says that Germans were morally insensitive to the fate of Jews. And while Germans generally did not share the same enthusiasm for antisemitism as the leadership, they implicitly supported Nazi policy, given their deep-seated anti-Jewish attitudes and feelings.

Kershaw writes: "Most Germans were neither dyed-in-the-wool Nazis nor convinced anti-fascists. Partial rejection of Nazism existed in large parts of the population alongside partial approval of the Nazi regime."

Elaborating on this theme, he says that Germans usually reacted negatively to the persecution of Jews when they were personally confronted with the evidence of Nazi brutality, or when their economic interests were directly at stake.

A case in point was Kristallnacht in November 1938, when Germans here and there displayed a frisson of public sympathy for Jews. "There were few occasions, if any, in the Third Reich which produced such a widespread wave of revulsion – much on moral grounds – as the Kristallnacht pogrom," says Kershaw.

In most cases, however, Germans were perturbed by the material destruction and the tasteless hooliganism of the attacks.

Otherwise, Germans seemed unconcerned by the steady drumbeat of state antisemitism. "Increasingly, Jews were depersonalized, forced out of social and economic contact with non-Jews," he observes. "The consequence for the shaping of opinion was less the creation of dynamic hatred than of lethal indifference towards the fate of the Jewish population. The further Jews were removed from the 'real world' of everyday life, the more apparent was the indifference of the non-Jewish population."

Germans greet Adolf Hitler rapturously

The notion that ordinary Germans were unaware of the Holocaust has been disposed of by Walter Laqueur in his book *The Terrible Secret*. Nevertheless, it is impossible to ascertain how many people knew about the mass killings and what degree of knowledge they possessed.

"But what can be established beyond question is that widespread rumours were in circulation about the fate of the Jews, and that the information… was often explicit enough to provide an unmistakable indication that Jews were being killed in great numbers in the east," writes Kershaw in a sweeping generalization that seems perfectly reasonable. "No less [a person] than Hitler himself referred to public rumours about the extermination of the Jews in one of his Table Talk monologues in October 1941. And a year later, Martin Bormann [a top-level Nazi] felt it necessary to counter rumours about 'very sharp measures' taken against Jews."

In short, many, many Germans knew that genocide was being committed in their name, and that German civilization was being besmirched by it.

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Leon Katz (with father Eugene)

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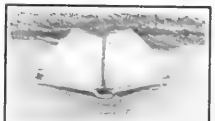
Jewish Life

Lessons from the shamash

By RABBI LORI COHEN

Chanukah, or Chag Ha'urim, the Festival of Lights, is a most beloved holiday. During the long, dark evenings, we want to flood our homes with light as we feast on latkes, and sufganiyot. It's a holiday, although minor in the Jewish calendar, that's widely observed. It's also become increasingly common to bring our chanukiyot into public squares, roadways and mall parking lots. But is this really a modern practice?



Rabbinic Reflections

The Talmud says we should put our chanukiyah in a place that's visible from outside the house in order to proclaim the miracle to all who pass by. The greater community was to be brought within "our light," to witness our celebrations. Of course, the rabbis said that during a time of danger, we should keep our lights inside our homes and not visible to others.

Here in Canada, we're free to display our decorations andlights. We're definitely fulfilling the rabbinic instruction to advertise our story. With our 20-foot-high chanukiyot and our competition for gift-giving, we're very visible to the wider community. It seems somewhat ironic that the historical significance of Chanukah was about fighting assimilation, yet today we see our minor festival competing with another group's major festival on the public stage.

But perhaps we've taken this mitzvah a little too far. We've forgotten the significance of the shamash, the extra candle that's necessary because Chanukah lights can't be used to kindle other lights.

A story is told of a young man who became an apprentice to a blacksmith. He learned all the skills – how to hold tongs, lift a hammer, smite an anvil and blow the fire with the bellows. After his apprenticeship, he found work as a royal blacksmith. But his delight turned to despair when he realized he had failed to learn how to kindle a spark. All the other skills were useless if he didn't know how to light the fire.

Each of the eight lights of Chanukah is important, but without the shamash, we can't kindle other lights. The spark is what makes everything else possible.

So what can we learn from the shamash?

First, we must know how to kindle the spark within us. We must have knowledge of, and passion for, Judaism. The letters of Chanukah can also spell "chinuch" – education. It's our responsibility to make sure we have the necessary skills to live Jewish lives. Each of us may define that in a different way. For some, it's about ritual, for others prayer. Some feel the power of our history, while others do tikkun olam. But without the spark, the passion, we can't truly live it.

Second, the shamash teaches us that we must sanctify ordinary things. We're not just Jewish when we go to shul, attend a simchah or make Shabbat. We must be Jewish in how we interact with people – at the grocery store or at work. Being Jewish is 24/7.

Third, the shamash shows us that it's not our job to simply stand alone and burn. We're also responsible for helping others truly shine. Our light must extend beyond ourselves. It's our responsibility to reach out to meet others' needs. We're our brothers and sisters keepers!

Perhaps this is how we should publicize the miracle – not with decorations, but with our characters. It's not how high our chanukiyah is placed, but how high we raise others. The shamash, which may seem insignificant, has so much to teach us. May each of us this year learn to be a shamash.

Rabbi Lori Cohen is spiritual leader of Temple Shalom in Waterloo, Ont.

We're not alone in the dark

In rabbinic literature, Chanukah not only speaks of the events of the Maccabees, but also speaks of the winter solstice, the time of year when darkness appears to be overtaking light. The days are shorter, and the symbolism of the dark night, with its connection to darkness of learning and spirit, can easily overtake us.

Darkness also has an aspect of hidden elements, in that it's easy to hide in the dark. When we speak of divulging new meanings, we speak of "bringing things to light."

Midrashic Moments
By Rachael Turkienicz

This year, there's an interesting intersection between what we are reading in Torah and the holiday of Chanukah.

The Torah portions tell us the story of Joseph. The young boy who must hide his pain of exclusion within his family ends up as an Egyptian ruler hiding his true Jewish identity. It's difficult to read the portions in which Joseph needs to turn away from his brothers who reappear at his doorstep begging for food. He must turn away, because he's overcome by emotions and a yearning to reveal who he is, but at the same time not surrender the safety of hiding his true self. He retreats to darkness and continues pretending to be someone other than his true self for as long as he can, but in the end his identity is revealed.

In the events of Chanukah, we're also made aware of an element within the Jewish nation that chooses to Hellenize themselves and likewise hide their true selves. Even the heroes of the story, Judah the Maccabee and his brothers, are called by their Greek names, already speaking of a blend of identities.

Interestingly, the only other holiday the rabbis connect with Chanukah, and also enacted as a Jewish holiday, is Purim. Clearly the aspect of hidden identity is key to the Purim tale, too, as Esther, the hero, hides her identity for most of the story.

In each case, the realization of being true to an inner identity and allowing it to speak outwardly is what prompts change. Joseph saves his family and impacts Jewish history forever once he reveals who he really is. The Maccabees are able to unite under one leader and also impact Jewish history forever once the question of identity is confronted, and Esther saves the entire nation once she's able to state her true identity.

Within all of us, there are the hidden parts that lie in deep, dark places within ourselves. At times, those hidden thoughts can lead us to lonely places. When the days get shorter and the darkness extends around us, it can be easy to give power to the hidden elements. How wonderful to have Chanukah peer into that darkness and bring eight little moments of light and collective identity.

The miracle of Chanukah is not just the victory of the Maccabees, nor is it only the oil jug that lasted eight days. The miracle also includes communities and families coming together at a time when we want to be home and cocoon ourselves in the darkness. Those are the moments we must gather together and bring light. Really, we're not creating a moment of sharing, but understanding that as deep and dark as our inner heart might be, it never stands unsupported.

In the midrash, this is stated beautifully, when it's said that even before we finish shaping a thought in our heart, the Holy One already understands it.

Rachael Turkienicz is the director of rachaelscentre.org.

Jewish Life

Italians and Jews

Past Forward
By Alex Gropper

I got involved recently with a project that highlights the close relationship between Italians and Jews, thanks to the efforts of Gianni Bardini, the consul general of Italy in Toronto.

For me, it was a wonderful opportunity to promote friendship and understanding between ourselves and our Mediterranean neighbours. The project got started when some prominent Italian-Canadian builders told the consul general that it was Jews who gave them their first opportunities in business in Canada, for which they were very grateful.

Yet this relationship should come as no surprise since Italians and Jews have been intertwined for thousands of years. The Maccabees were the first to send a delegation to Rome before the Common Era. There is evidence as well to suggest that there was already a colony of Jews in Rome by that time.

Jews were among the earliest supporters of Julius Caesar. By the first century CE, Rome's Jewish population had grown tremendously, augmented by the huge influx of Jewish slaves who had been captured in the first Jewish Revolt against Rome, which culminated in the sack of Jerusalem in 70 CE and the capture of Masada three years later.

The victory parade of the Emperor Titus commemorating the capture of Jerusalem, with the menorah from the Temple as part of its spoils, was vividly portrayed in his Arch, which still stands at the entrance to the Roman Forum. It is even said that Titus' mistress was Bernice, the granddaughter of Herod the Great.

Many of the Jewish slaves who came into Rome were put to work building the Coliseum. Ironically, some 2,000 years later, Italians who had immigrated to Canada went to work for Jewish builders.

It has even been estimated that at the height of the Roman Empire, in the first and second centuries of the Common Era, as much as 10 per cent of the total population might have been Jewish either by birth or conversion.

Some of the earliest and most imposing synagogues were to be found scattered throughout the Empire in places such as Ostia Antica, the harbour of Rome, and Sardis, one of the major cities located in the eastern part of the Roman Empire in what is now southwestern Turkey.

The toleration that the Roman Empire had shown to its Jewish citizens would change when Christianity became the official religion of the Empire in the fourth century CE under the Emperor Constantine. This trend would be briefly reversed when Constantine's nephew, Julian, inherited the throne. Julian was even contemplating allowing the Jews to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, but he was assassinated before he could put his plans into effect.

For the next 1,500 years Jews had a mixed history in Italy. In some eras they did well and in others they did not. Remains of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues have been found throughout the peninsula, attesting to a Jewish presence there for two millennia.

Unfortunately, Italy's Jews were not able to escape the horrors of the Holocaust. Mussolini had initially welcomed all people into the Fascist party, and Jews were among his first supporters. One of his early mistresses was of Jewish background. But this would change once Mussolini got entangled with Hitler.

Yet as individuals, many Italians aided the Jews. On a personal note, it was Italian PoWs returning from the Russian front who smuggled my in-laws and a group of other refugees out of Poland and into Italy at the end of World War II.

For the love of latkes, Part 1

Jewish & Digital
By Mark Mietkiewicz

Chanukah is almost here. And to celebrate, it's time to pay tribute to the latke.

We all know the story about the menorah and the miracle and the oil. But just how did potato pancakes enter into the picture? Phyllis Glazer explains that wherever Jews have lived, they have developed food traditions using ingredients that were commonly available. Jews in the Middle East or around the Mediterranean used fresh-pressed olive oil to fry their Chanukah foods, including olive-oil fried puffs of dough. But "for Jewish villagers living in Russia or Poland, pickings were slim in winter and potatoes were cheap." And rather than olive oil, latkes were fried in schmaltz, or rendered fat. **[http://bit.ly/latke11]**

If you happen to be in Israel over Chanukah and order a latke, you might be served a blank stare in return. Try ordering a "*Ieviva*" instead. But Nathan Jeffay says that even if you *do* know that Hebrew word, you may still be out of luck because Israel has become somewhat of a latke-free zone. He cites a surprising economic reason. In the 1920s, the trade union of Jewish workers in Mandate Palestine was concerned that Chanukah provided few commercial opportunities. Jeffay quotes food historian Gill Marks: "**Latkes are homemade and so** are useless for business." The unions seized on the tradition of sufganiyot, Chanukah doughnuts, and encouraged bakeries across the country to sell them. "They can generate weeks of work for bakers, people transporting them, and sellers." **[http://bit.ly/latke12]**

Who would have imagined that there's a whole sub-genre of latke humour lurking on the web? In the "Ritual Slaughter of the Latke," Raphael Finkel expounds upon the intricate (and phony) Jewish laws that ensure that latkes are kosher. For example, just as kosher meat must be salted, we must "remember to salt the potato and leave it to drain for at least 24 hours. We do this in memory of Lot's wife, Latke, who was turned to salt. Use a lotta salt, in memory of Lot's daughter, Lotta." **[http://bit.ly/latke13]**

Then there is the classic "Latke vs. Hamantash: A Materialist-Feminist Analysis." Robin Leidner of the University of Pennsylvania's sociology department tries to settle that age-old question: which food is more liberating for women – latkes or hamantashen? Let's just say that things don't come out too well for our favourite pancake. **[http://bit.ly/latke14]** Actually, this food fight has been fought on at universities since 1946. Check out the delightful Wikipedia entry. **[http://bit.ly/latke15]**

What is the perfect complement to a steaming latke, apple sauce or sour cream?

Argues Nicole: "*Only* applesauce with latkes. Sour cream is for blintzes."

Counters UnConundrum: "Sour cream, sour cream, sour cream, until about the sixth or seventh one… then the sour cream starts to get rich, and I like to switch to apple sauce… :)" **[http://bit.ly/latke16]**

While many people seem to get a chuckle out of latkes, the same can't be said for Jill Fenton. When she was challenged to spell "latke" during the final day of competition at the National Spelling Bee, the seventh grader from Central Christian Middle School in Kidron, Ohio, spelled the food as "lotka." Deb Friesen, assistant principal at Central Christian, said she couldn't have spelled the word, either. That enabled Sean Conley of Shakopee, Minn., to walk away with first prize when he correctly spelled "succedaneum." **[http://bit.ly/latke18]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Greater Toronto Area

Modelling the latest fashions, left photo, Nadine Joffe and Cory Bickof, right photo, Julia Slater. [Vito Amati photos]

Zareinu Fashion Show draws hundreds

By CARA EDELL
Special to The CJN

Fashion and philanthropy came together recently in celebration of the children of the Zareinu Educational Centre of Metropolitan Toronto.

Hundreds of people of all ages attended the seventh annual Zareinu Fashion Show, a fundraiser held at the Royal Ontario Museum on Nov. 16.

Models, Zareinu students and their family members walked the runway, while awareness was raised about the issues faced by children with special needs.

Zareinu is a world-renowned treatment centre and school that provides individualized therapies and special education to children with a wide range of physical and developmental challenges.

Zareinu's staff delivers innovative therapeutic interventions and programs to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities including cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, autism spectrum disorder and other neurological and developmental impairments.

Produced by Erika Larva of Monarch Events together with Hala Event and Communication Inc., the event was hosted by fashion icon Jeanne Beker. It featured collections from Vintage Couture, Matooka, Ross Mayer and Shenkin West, among others.

Singer Michael Burgess entertained guests with a special performance during the show. The evening also gave Zareinu supporters, volunteers and parents a chance to share their personal stories with the audience.

"It is our goal to enhance the profile of the issues faced by families of children with special needs and to educate the community about the incredible work being done at Zareinu," said Randy Spiegel, Zareinu's executive director.

"We hope that people who need us will find us, and if they know others who need Zareinu, they will share the information and this will open the doors to them and their children."

Spiegel said Zareinu relies heavily on donations, which makes the fashion show a critical fundraiser. The need is greater than ever, as the students require a bigger centre to facilitate their learning and development.

Stacy Markin, event co-chair alongside Renee Rosenzweig, revealed during the show that a building fund is in the works to provide the students with a new state-of-the-art facility.

"Zareinu currently doesn't have the space needed to help everyone who wishes to attend the school. Therapies are being performed in the hallways. Classes are overflowing. It is time to give these children and the incredible Zareinu team the home they deserve."

Markin said she was most excited about watching the Zareinu students take to the stage. "It's very emotional and inspiring to see. Some children are carried, some have walkers. Some are very slow, but determined. There is no other event that demonstrates these children's abilities and showcases inclusion like the Zareinu Fashion Show."

Markin's teenage daughter, Shayna Bracha, is a Zareinu student who has participated in the event for several years. Told by doctors as a child that she would probably never walk, Shayna amazed the audience as she graced the runway with little assistance.

"In those early difficult months of learning, my child had severe disabilities and a grim future. Zareinu was everything we could ask for," Markin said. "We were told Shayna would never recognize me as her mother. We were told to put her in an institution. Today, Shayna definitely knows me and everyone dear to her. I am very indebted to Zareinu."

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Josh Freedman, left, Mitch DeBora and Melissa Perez at the Chabad Youth Network gala.

Teen leaders honoured

By MICHELLE BITRAN
Special to the CJN

The Chabad Youth Network (CYN) honoured young community leaders at its second annual gala benefit, held Nov. 16 at the Terrace Banquet Hall in Vaughan.

Mitch DeBora, Josh Freedman and Melissa Perez were the award-winners of the night, each of them taking home the CYN Young Leadership Award for their work with other Jewish youth.

The CYN, headed by Rabbi Shmuli Nachlas and his wife, Chani, offers programming such as educational initiatives, retreats and volunteer work for young Jews in the Toronto area.

The non-denominational group sees more than 250 teens pass through the doors of its two locations – one in Thornhill and one in midtown– each week.

"It's the hand of God that blesses our work," Rabbi Nachlas said in his speech at the event.

To the kids, he's Rabbi Shmuli, the glue that holds CYN together. Throughout his talk, he recounted stories of young people who've been personally affected by CYN's work.

Rabbi Nachlas' passion has certainly rubbed off on the evening's three honorees.

"I understand the importance for Jewish youth to stay together… When we're young, it's the ideal environment to stay together," DeBora said of why CYN means so much to him.

DeBora, 18, is a first-year engineering student at Queen's University who has spent the last five years attending, and then running, CYN programs.

DeBora first got involved with CYN through Torah 4 Teens, the accredited high school course program for teens. He said he enjoyed the classes so much that they led hiwm to take part in other CYN programs, until he eventually started planning and chaperoning various events and retreats.

Freedman, also 18, shares DeBora's sentiments about connecting young Jews. Two years ago, the now-first-year economics student at Queen's co-founded the CYN program called Teens for the Community, which co-ordinates visits to seniors homes and organizes fundraisers, among other outreach initiatives.

High school students are able to complete their required community service hours through the program, but many stay on even after they've fulfilled the mandatory commitment.

"It was a part of their week they actually enjoyed," Freedman said of the more than 60 teens now involved with Teens for the Community.

Like the other two winners, Melissa Perez, 21, believes CYN is vital to keeping young Jews engaged and united. Having been involved in various Chabad youth programs for the last nine years, Perez now focuses on organizing events for CYN alumni, who are university students like her.

"It's very exciting," Perez said of winning the award. "It's very rewarding to see that you've inspired someone, even if it's just one person."

Toronto doctor feted

Compiled by CJN Staff

Canadian Friends of Sarah Herzog Ezrath Nashim Hospital recently honoured Dr. Paul Garfinkel at its annual concert.

A member of the Order of Canada, Garfinkel was honoured on his retirement as CEO of Canadian Addiction and Mental Health Centre.

Singer Dan Hill was the featured performer at the concert, and the keynote speaker was Dr. Ezekiel Caine, CEO of Herzog Hospital. The event was co-chaired by Dr. Dorothy Pullan and Lena Shugar.

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(Back row, l to r) David Bloomstone, James Menkes, Dan Zeevi, Michael Dorfman, Anthony Segal (chair) and Dov Zevy (chair)

(Front row, l to r) Peter Shin, Ben Mogil and Yaron Gr[illegible]

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United Jewish Appeal

Critics slam thesis that alleged 'Jewish racism'

U of T comes under fire

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The University of Toronto is coming under fire for granting its "imprimatur" to a master's thesis that critics say is an allegation of "Jewish racism" and is of low academic standards.

In a letter to University of Toronto president David Naylor, retired sociology professor Werner Cohn said the thesis posits that "the Jews of the world, most particularly those of Canada and the United States, are racist and seek to oppress people of colour everywhere."

The thesis, Cohen goes on, is averse to empirical data, and its author, Jennifer Peto, "makes wild… charges against her fellow Jews without a shred of evidence."

The document in question is titled *The Victimhood of the Powerful: White Jews, Zionism and the Racism of Hegemonic Holocaust Education*. It was submitted as part of a master of arts degree in the department of sociology and equity studies in education at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE), a branch of the University of Toronto.

Summarizing her thesis, Peto stated that it "focuses on issues of Jewish identity, whiteness and victimhood within hegemonic Holocaust education. I argue that today, Jewish people of European descent enjoy white privilege and are among the most socio-economically advantaged groups in the West. Despite this privilege, the organized Jewish community makes claims about Jewish victimhood that are widely accepted within that community and within popular discourse in the West.

"I propose that these claims to victimhood are no longer based in a reality of oppression, but continue to be propagated because a victimized Jewish identity can produce certain effects that are beneficial to the organized Jewish community and the Israeli nation-state.

"I focus on two related Holocaust education projects – the March of the Living (MOL) and the March of Remembrance and Hope (MRH) – to show how Jewish victimhood is instrumentalized in ways that obscure Jewish privilege, deny Jewish racism and promote the interests of the Israeli nation-state."

Cohn, who is retired from teaching at the University of British Columbia, said the thesis is making the rounds in academic circles and was forwarded to him by a friend at the University of Washington in Seattle. PajamasMedia.com carried a critique of the document and the University of Toronto, while the *National Post* ran an article from the Eye On A Crazy Planet website, run by blogger Richard Klagsbrun. .

Cohn said the University of Toronto had failed to adequately vet the thesis before approving it. "It's terrible that an arm of the University of Toronto gave it its imprimatur, that this is a contribution to knowledge.

"As I point out in my blog, she makes assertions, but it can't be called an advancement of knowledge as she doesn't test it in any way."

Cohn said much of the thesis is subjective and personal. While "in some fields of social science, you want to evaluate how it affected you personally, you need a check on that so that [it conforms] to academic standards.

"To show how subjective the whole thing is, she thanks her comrades in the [Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid] who taught her how to put the theory of the thesis into practice."

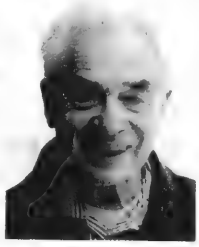
In her thesis, Peto acknowledged she is "an anti-Zionist Jew" and she argued that "by supporting Israel, [Jews] are supporting a brutally oppressive regime."

She said it can be painful for Jews to become anti-Zionist, but it was less painful for her "because I was already an outcast in the Jewish community and estranged from my family for being atheist, queer, gender-queer, feminist and generally outspoken in a highly normative, Orthodox setting."

Cohn pointed out that analyses of the MOL and MRH were key parts of the thesis, but Peto failed to survey the scholarly literature about the programs. MOL brings Jewish high school students to Nazi death camps in Europe and then on to Israel while the MRH focuses on non-Jewish university-aged students who visit only Europe.

Peto summarizes her analysis of the MRH as exploring "the racist and imperialist effects of the hegemonic Holocaust education that targets non-Jewish people, especially people of colour."

As for the MOL, "I want to demonstrate how the MOL centres the violence experienced by European Jewish people in order to obscure the privilege now enjoyed by most Jews of European descent, to erase the history of the ethnic cleansing of Palestine and to ensure that participants support the ongoing violence of Israeli apartheid."



Werner Cohn

MOL national director Eli Rubenstein said, "It's very sad to read this kind of stuff. She didn't speak to me or to anybody from MOL or MRH.

"She hasn't been on a trip where you see a Holocaust survivor holding the hand of someone who survived the Rwandan genocide or the Sudanese genocide, that it's comforting and helps them to heal.

"How can you write a master's thesis and not speak to a single survivor, educator or student in the program, and how can the university accept that?" he asked.

"We have survivors who rebuilt their lives and want to share their stories of survival and make sure that it doesn't happen to anybody, and here you have someone criticizing us for that… it's very sad."

Responding to a request for an interview, the University of Toronto issued a written statement by vice-president and provost Cheryl Misak: "Due to our privacy obligations to students, I cannot discuss an individual student's academic work or his or her performance. What I can, say, however, is that freedom of expression issues are ever-present in our society, especially on a university campus. The University of Toronto's *Statement on Freedom of Speech* makes it clear that freedom of inquiry lies at the very heart of our institution: 'all members of the University must have as a prerequisite freedom of speech and expression, which means the right to examine, question, investigate, speculate and comment on any issue without reference to prescribed doctrine, as well as the right to criticize the University and society at large.'

"Of the thousands of MA theses written at the University of Toronto in partial fulfilment of degree requirements, it is inevitable that some will have elements that offend various individuals and groups. In such cases, the university is committed to allowing and encouraging a full range of debate. The best way for controversy to unfold is for members of our community to engage with the perspectives and arguments they dispute. It is intelligent argument, not censorship, that lies at the heart of our democratic society and its institutions."

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Emil Fackenheim on the State of Israel

Professor Michael L. Morgan
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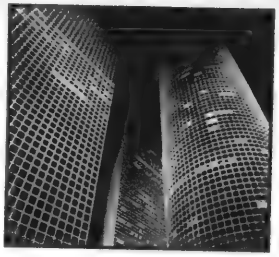

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*Over the last 16 quarters the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange (TASE) has significantly outperformed the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX), 30% better As of September 30, 2010
Past results do not guarantee future performance. Results will vary depending on many factors including market conditions and available opportunities.

Bardikoff goes from monkeys to the monkeybars

By Frances Kraft

Carly Bardikoff has an honours BA in history from McGill University and an MA in child study and education from the University of Toronto's Institute for Child Study, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

But working with children in Africa for four of the past five summers has enriched her formal studies immeasurably.

"I learned so much, and I've been able to bring it into the classroom," said the 25-year-old teacher of Grade 3 math, science and social studies, and Grade 4 language arts, at Leo Baeck Day School's Thornhill campus.

Last year, she taught an animals unit to a Grade 2 class. "That was perfect," she said in a recent interview. "In Grade 3, we're learning about communities."

In Africa, she said, "Everyone is so nice and appreciative of what you're doing, and willing to bring you into their communities.

"I loved the land. I think it's absolutely beautiful," said Bardikoff, sporting earrings from Ghana and a colourful necklace of recycled paper from Uganda.

This summer, she was a volunteer educator in Uganda, at the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary.

Prior to that, in 2007 and 2008, Bardikoff worked as a teacher in Botswana, home schooling two young boys. Her first summer in Africa was in 2006, when she volunteered at an orphanage in Ghana, working with children who had special needs.

A LESSON FROM THE TEACHER

"I really do believe in letting students follow their interests and build on what interests them, and feel proud about the work they do."

Why Africa, after years of working at the Reform movement's Camp George? "I'm very into history, and at McGill I took a lot of African history courses," she said.

Bardikoff also loved working with kids, and thought she could combine her interests by working with children in Africa.

A 2005 stint as a teaching assistant at Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School – which served students with learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and mild forms of autism – played an important role in setting Bardikoff on her career path. "I just loved it," she said.

As well, she noted, her mother, Ricki Wortzman is an educator who once taught at Leo Baeck. Her father, Alan, is a psychologist.

A Toronto native who attended French immersion school, Bardikoff joined Leo Baeck's staff last year, shortly after graduating from OISE. In her first year, she taught Grade 1 and senior kindergarten French, and Grade 2 math, science and social studies.

As a teacher, she said, she has "so much fun" with her students. "I enjoy watching how excited they get... when something clicks."

Although she wasn't looking to work in a Jewish school specifically, Bardikoff has taught Sunday school at Holy Blossom Temple, worked at the Toronto Heschel School in 2006, and was involved in Jewish programs as a student. As well, she ran a private Jewish unaffiliated religious school for elementary school children.

Bardikoff believes in "having children be active participants in their own learning" through hands-on experience. To build critical thinking, in part, she uses games from all over the world, she said.

Not surprisingly, some of them are from Africa.

Carly Bardikoff *[Frances Kraft photo]*

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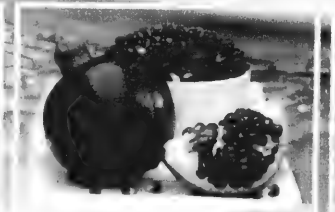

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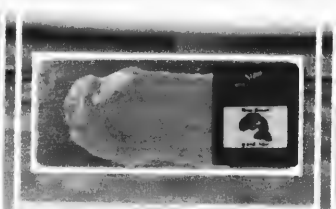

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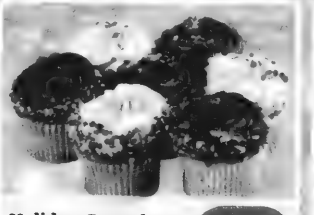

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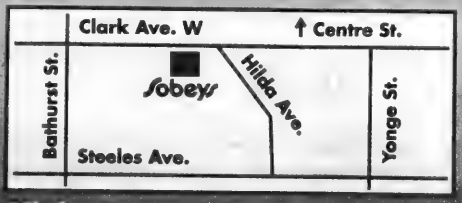

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Greater Toronto Area

Palestinians not viewed as agents of change

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

With last week's announcement that Israel might accept a new 90-day moratorium on West Bank housing in exchange for enhanced U.S. security and diplomatic guarantees, western media focused, once again, on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Is he sincere? Can he get the approval of his fractious cabinet? If he can, will he move the negotiating process ahead with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and the PA?

Accepted as a given in much of the coverage is the idea that progress for peace rests almost entirely on Israel's shoulders. The assumption is that – and this is critical – if Israel makes the expected compromises, a two-state solution would be right around the corner. After all, that's what the Palestinians have been yearning for, even demanding.

What the media have failed to examine, however, is what's actually going on among the Palestinians. What, after all, do we know about Abbas' own commitments, and willingness – and, indeed, capacity – to compromise with Israel? Similarly, what do we know about the support he has within the Palestinian community to deliver if a political deal with Israel started to take shape?

What we do read about is that Fatah in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza remain as bitterly divided as ever, despite Egypt's efforts to broker a reconciliation. Beyond that, what do we really learn from the media? Very little, it seems.

Danny Rubinstein recently provided some of the missing details in a feature on Abbas and his Fatah party in the Oct. 25 issue of *Jerusalem Report* magazine. Fluent in Arabic and a longtime observer of Palestinian affairs, Rubinstein has met with every major Palestinian political figure and knows the inner workings of their power structure and society.

Rubinstein made the following points:

• While Abbas is the chairman of the governing Fatah party, the largest faction of the PLO, he has a lot of opposition within the party and other PLO factions to a negotiated two-state deal with Israel. This has left Abbas quite isolated and weak. (Palestinian media mostly ignored demonstrations last month in Ramallah, Nablus and elsewhere in the West Bank against resuming peace talks.)

• In mid-September, only nine of 18 members of the Fatah Central Committee showed up to discuss negotiations with Israel. Although the results of the forum have not been made public, it appears that Abbas did not get a mandate to pursue talks with Israel. He nonetheless decided to go to Washington, D.C., at the urging of U.S. President Barack Obama, though accompanied by only a small group of familiar aides including Saeb Erekat and Nabil Shaath. (The lack of support might be one reason that, as reported in the *Jerusalem Post*, just a few days after he met with Netanyahu at the Washington summit, Abbas declared his refusal to compromise: "If [the Israelis] demand concessions on the rights of the refugees or the 1967 borders, I will quit. I can't allow myself to make even one concession.")

• While PA security forces have done a good job arresting Hamas activists and disrupting their cells, Hamas remains quite popular in the West Bank. Despite an improved economic climate, many Palestinians still view Fatah leaders as belonging to a corrupt organization. They also look upon Abbas and other compliant Fatah leaders as "lackeys" of American and Israeli interests.

Rubinstein's overall assessment is chilling: "From my last two visits to Ramallah [Abbas' headquarters], my impression is that Fatah, the leading party of the Palestinian government, is disintegrating. And of even greater concern, there is no candidate in sight who might replace Chairman Abbas."

The failure of the media to pay sufficient attention to developments within Palestinian society and its ruling structures is longstanding and does not reflect a lack of access. Rather, it appears to stem from a lack of interest in the Palestinians in their role as agents of change, as opposed to their more familiar role as victims.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

on cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

• Centre Hillel plans to partner with other student-oriented groups to serve its members and expand its activities.

• The Université du Québec à Montréal recently honoured Israeli-American sociologist Elihu Katz with an honorary degree for his scientific contribution to the the field of social sciences, especially communication.

Also this week on the web:

• Montreal writer Kortney Shapiro comments on Hillel's annual Shabbat dinner which celebrated the lives of Holocaust survivors.

• Israeli wineries can boast of over 120 years of tradition.

• Animator breaks into feature films with *Summerhood*.

Greater Toronto Area

Rabbi Nachman's 200th yarzheit celebrated

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Simplicity: it's a wonderful idea in theory, but the details continue to elude us as we struggle with the demands of modern life. But real answers are available from a very old source: chassidic leader Rabbi Nachman of Breslov.

Rabbi Jonathan Rietti, senior lecturer of Gateways International, crediting Rabbi Nachman for "the vast majority of my inspiration," believes Rabbi Nachman's teachings are as relevant today as they were in the 18th century – if not more so.

In a recent celebration of Rabbi Nachman's 200th yahrzeit, Toronto's Breslov Research Institute hosted Rabbi Rietti at a fundraiser brunch for more than 150 supporters at Aish HaTorah in Thornhill. Speaking on the topic of "Simplicity: Connecting with your Inner Self," Rabbi Rietti used humour and gentle, accessible lessons to bring Rabbi Nachman's core concepts down to earth for a modern audience.

Rabbi Jonathan Rietti
[J. MacLeod photo]

"There are three time zones – past, present, future," said Rabbi Rietti. "You only really exist in the present. You can't live in the past, and the future doesn't exist." That can be liberating – not only for us as Jews, but also for anybody trying to live a meaningful life, free from wallowing in past mistakes. "Every moment is a completely different creation. Who I was an hour ago does not define me."

From Rabbi Nachman's wisdom, Rabbi Rietti believes that focusing on the present moment means really focusing. Multi-tasking has become something to be proud of: "I can do more than one thing simultaneously!"

Rabbi Nachman would say we've got it all wrong. If you're at work, be at work, not on the phone with friends, in the middle of a solitaire game, planning your next vacation, said Rabbi Rietti.

Driving down the highway sipping a cup of coffee, listening to the radio, talking on the phone: "Where's the real me?" he asks. "When you're busy with your child, be busy with your child." If you're texting at the same time, your child will notice – and suddenly, your life is a whole lot less simple.

In Rabbi Nachman's writing, this intentional focus is referred to as *temimus* (*temimut*). Its root is the word "*tam*" – a word that can mean either "simple" (the same word describes the "simple son" in the Passover Haggadah) or "whole." Our forefather, Jacob, is referred to in the Torah by this term.

Someone once asked Rabbi Nachman's greatest disciple, Rabbi Nosson, "What's the greatest thing you ever saw your rebbe do?" His answer: "Whatever he was doing in that moment." Everything he did, he tried to accomplish through unifying himself: mind, soul, emotions, into one consciousness.

These may seem like difficult ideals, said Rabbi Rietti. Even Rabbi Nachman couldn't live up to them all the time, claiming he sometimes fell 100 times a day. "But what matters," said Rabbi Rietti, "is how many times you get up."

Sometimes, simplifying also means letting go of futile obsessions, like the idea of changing the people around us. "You're not here to change anybody – nobody ever succeeded in changing anybody."

Instead, we must learn to accept other people, and indeed, our own circumstances in our lives with *temimus*. Good circumstances and nice people may be easy to accept, but harsh or unpleasant ones are an opportunity to ask God for clarity to help change ourselves to face that moment. "That's how we change others – others will respond to a different me."

Rabbi Nachman left an astonishing spiritual and intellectual legacy in his 37 years. In 1810, dying of tuberculosis, he moved to Uman, Ukraine, then a major centre of the *Haskalah* (enlightenment) movement. Today, the town has become a pilgrimage site for tens of thousands of followers who arrive before Rosh Hashanah and throughout the year.

Unlike most chassidic leaders, Rabbi Nachman left no successor, but his main disciple and student, Reb Noson, worked tirelessly to publish and disseminate Rabbi Nachman's works and ideas. To continue that effort into the modern age, the Breslov Research Institute was founded in 1979. Dedicated to promoting Rabbi Nachman's teachings in clear, modern, understandable language, the institute has translated his ideas into English, Hebrew, Spanish, Yiddish and Russian.

Breslov Research Institute founder and writer Rabbi Chaim Kramer also spoke at the event, pointing to the upcoming holiday of Chanukah as a perfect opportunity to focus on the continuing relevance of Rabbi Nachman's words. "One little candle can light an entire room... we will light up the darkest moments until there's light all over the world."

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Coast to Coast

No basis for Diab's claims, prosecutor says

Compiled by CJN Staff

A Crown prosecutor in Ottawa last week asked Superior Court Judge Robert Maranger to reject defence claims that France manipulated evidence or misrepresented key facts in the extradition request for alleged terrorist Hassan Diab.

Defence contentions about the alleged French wrongdoing was "a teetering house of cards that won't be standing much longer," Crown attorney Claude LeFrancois said, according to a report in the *Ottawa Citizen*. He said claims by defence lawyer Donald Bayne that France had manipulated evidence were "preposterous."

In court documents, LeFrancois also stated, "The abuse alleged represents a direct attack on the conduct of French prosecuting authorities."

Earlier, Bayne had asked the court to stay extradition proceedings against Diab, a Lebanese-born former sociology professor who is alleged to have planted a bomb in a motorcycle saddlebag outside Paris' Rue Copernic synagogue in 1980 that killed four passersby and wounded more than 40.

Bayne argued that evidence provided by France may have come from unknown sources, perhaps foreign intelligence agencies, including those of Germany and Israel, and may have been obtained by torture.

He also alleged that French evidence was full of "contradictions, inaccuracy and omissions" which amounted to a failure of due diligence and perhaps "abusive manipulation."

Responding to Bayne's assertions, LeFrancois said the defence lawyer had accused lead French prosecutor Marc Trevidic of obstructing justice.

"That is a very serious accusation to level at any of our extradition partners," he said. "In my 13 years of practice in this area, I have never heard anything so sinister directed at a foreign state."

"There is no evidence that any of the 'misrepresentations,' if misrepresentations at all, were other than inadvertent," he said.

Handwriting analysis provided by France showed a high degree of probability that Diab signed a Paris hotel slip under a false identity, which was also used to purchased the motorcycle used in the bombing. LeFrancois said it is up to the trial judge, not one presiding over an extradition case, to determine validity of the evidence.

Diab, 56, has denied all charges against him and said he was a student in Beirut at the time.

Associated students not affected by area shooting

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Elementary students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns Education Centre on Neptune Drive were never at risk in the wake of a fatal shooting that took place half a kilometre from the branch, school officials said.

Principal Eric Golombek sent an e-mail – co-signed by Associated's director of education Mark Smiley and executive director Elliott Brodkin – to parents last Friday in response to the death of 16-year-old Tyrone Bracken.

The student of nearby Sir Sandford Fleming Academy was discovered by police with gunshot wounds around 4 p.m. on Nov. 17 in a stairwell of 135 Neptune Dr., a government housing building where he lived.

Golombek told parents that the "safety and security of the Posluns community – our students, parents and staff – is our highest priority."

He said school officials have been in touch with Toronto Police 32 division, who told them the shooting wasn't random and that Associated students "were not at risk at any time. They confirmed that had there been any threat to the school community, we would have been contacted immediately."

Golombek said school officials are maintaining contact with the Toronto Police's community response team and are consulting with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's director of community security.

"Please be assured that there are very stringent security and safety protocols that remain in effect at Posluns," Golombek said.

Golombek spoke to students in grades 1 to 5 about the incident at a regular school-wide tfillah service the day after the shooting.

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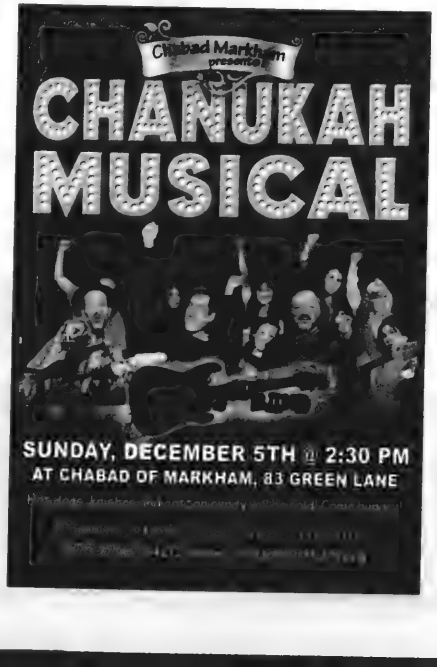

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דזשערי קעין

הוי איז עס געשריבן אַז בלויז אין פֿאַטיטאָ לאָטקעס געפינט מען דעם לוסטיקן אָן פֿריילעכן טעם פֿון חנוכה?

פֿאַר אונדז מיזרח איראָפּעישע יידן האָט דער מינהג פֿון עסן לאָטקעס הנוכה אַן אָנהייב געוואָרצלט אין דער אָרמקייט פֿון שטעטל לעבן. "לאָטקע" איז אַן אוקראַיניש וואָרט. אונדזערע סלאַווישע שכנים, וואָס האָבן געלעבט אין די זעלבע אָרעמע אומשטענדן וי שטעטל יידן, האָבן אויך געגעסן לאָטקעס. דער פֿאָרוואָס איז אין נישט שווער צו פֿאַרשטיין. קאַרטאָפֿל זענען געווען גרינג צו פֿלאַנצן און פּראָסט צו באַקומען.

איידער די שפּאַניש מאַראַנן האָבן געבראַכט קאַרטאָפֿל פֿון דרום אַמעריקע אין 15טן יאָרהונדערט האָט אייראָפּע נישט געוווסט פֿון אַזאַ מאכל. שטעלט זיך די פּראָגע, אויב נישט קאַרטאָפֿל וואָס וואָלט מען געפֿרעגלט צו פֿייערן חנוכה? וען מען קוקט אַרײַן אין דער געשיכטע פֿון יידיש, יום-טובֿדיקע רעצעפּטן געפֿינט מען צוויי אומבאַגרענעצטע פֿאַקטן. ערשטנס האָבן יידן, אין אַלע עקן וועלט געפֿרעגלט אין ברימל. צווייטנס האָבן יידן געפֿרעגלט אַלערלייַ עסנוואַרג צו פֿייערן חנוכה.

ס'איז דער ברימל וואָס איז וויכטיק נישט די לאָטקע. דער ברימל דערמאָנט אונדז וועגן די חשמונאים, זייער קאַמף צו באַפֿרײַען די יידן פֿון אַנטיוכוס עפּיפֿאַנוס, און דאָס צוריקנעמען דעם בית-המקדש אין ירושלים. די גמרא דערציילט אַז וען די חשמונאים זענען אַרײַנגעקומען אין בית-המקדש האָבן זיי געפֿונען איין רײַן קריגל מיט ברימל צום אָנצינדן די מנורה, אָן דער ברימל איז נעוועז גענוג פֿאַר איין טאָג. אָבער עס איז געשען אַ נס און דער ברימל האָט געברענט אַכט טעג. דאָס וואָרט "חנוכה" מיינט דער וויידער "דערהיליקונג" פֿון בית-המקדש. דינט דער אָנצינדונג פֿון קריגל ברימל רופֿט מען חנוכה דער יום-טוב פֿון ליכט. די דינקע ליכטעלעך וואָס לייכטן אין דער מנורה דערמאָנען אונדז וועגן דער אָנגיינדיקן קאַמף פֿאַר פֿרייהייט אוּן שלום פֿאַר דער גאַנצער מענטשהײַט.

די אַשכנזים האָבן איך גיכן פֿאַרשטאַנען אַז דער ברימל איז מער ווי אַ סימבאָל. ס'קומט צונויף אין טאָג טעגלעכן לעבן. ווי בעסער פֿאַר אַ התנערקער מענטשהײַט צו פֿייערן חנוכה דען מיט צעריבענע קאַרטאָפֿל נעפֿרעגלט אין ברימל?

וועי זענען זיי ערשטע צו מאַכן לאָטקעס פֿאַרן חנוכה טיש? ס'שטייט געשריבן אַז די איטאַליענישע יידן זענען נעוועז די ערשטע צו פֿייערן חנוכה מיט לאָטקעס. אָבער ווי האָבן זיי געמאַכט זייערע לאָטקעס מיט ריקאָטע קעז. פֿאַרוואָס קעז– חיילי חנוכה איז אַ מילכיקיקער יום-טוב. אין די מיזרח לענדער, אוּן היינט אין ישראל, איז סופֿגניה דער נעפֿרעגלטער מאכל האָס מען לעקט זיך די פינגער מיט.

מיט חנוכה זענען פֿאַרבונדן פֿאַרשידענע פֿאָלקס מינהגים וי: געבן קינדער חנוכה געלט, שפּילערײַען אין קאָרטן, קינדער שפּילן אין דרײדל, אוּן מאַכן פֿאַרשטעלונגען פּונקט וי אין פּורים.

נו, צינדט די דינע ליכטעלעך אַן אוּן פֿאַרברענגט מיט פֿרײַנדט אוּן משפּחה. אָבער עסט נישט צו פֿיל. ס'זענען דאָ מענטשן וואָס האַלטן אַז נעפֿרעגלטע איז נישט גוט פֿאַרן נעזונט. איך האַלט אַז מענטשן וואָס וואַרפֿן דאָס וואָרט "קאָלעסטעראָל" אַפֿן חנוכה טיש זענען שוגא-ישראל. לאָמיר אָלע פֿאַרברענגען אונדזער יום-טוב פֿון דערהיליקונג אוּן פֿרייהייט. נעמט אַ צוויי לאָטקעלע.

אויב איר האָט נעדאַנקען וועגן אונדזער וויקל שרייבט דורך פּאָסט אָדער בליץ-פּאָסט: info@thecjn.ca

Proposed restructuring concerns CJC members

Continued from page 1

Since June, according to Congress' online documents, its subsequent correspondence with CIJA has served to worry and anger various CJC members, particularly Schwartz.

In a separate letter sent to Louise Davey – an outside consultant retained by CIJA's restructuring committee who is also COO at RSM Richter Chamberland in Montreal – Schwartz concurs that while the national Jewish community would be "well served" by a single advocacy organization, his board was "displeased" and "strongly disagrees" with suggestions set out in a CIJA brief called *The Newco Document* that allegedly proposes turning Congress board members into mere "committee members of Newco."

Barbara Bank

"Committees will lack the glue and succession planning that a regional board has… Simply put, if [CJC's Pacific] regional board is disbanded, Newco should assume the loss of many, if not most, of the current board members," Schwartz wrote. "Not only will valuable and committed volunteers not rush to join committees, but the long-term relationships of trust and confidence, the key to effective advocacy, will be lost."

Efforts by *The CJN* to obtain *The Newco Document* were unsuccessful.

Schwartz also wrote that CIJA's propositions in *The Newco Document* are not "clear" on future funding for his region, and he seeks assurances from CIJA that "core funding" for Pacific region staff will continue.

> ***'None of us are privy to what's happening,' Bank said. 'We get these reports [from CIJA], but they're not that detailed.'***

Speaking to *The CJN* on Nov. 19, Schwartz said he had just received "Draft 2" of CIJA's *Newco Document* from Davey, which he termed "a work-in-progress."

He said he intended to read through the new brief over the weekend to determine whether Congress' concerns had been addressed, but said he felt that CIJA's "ideas" about the restructuring were "amenable to change."

When asked if he could forward a copy of the second draft of the *Newco Document* to the paper for review, Schwartz said that "it's only being sent on a confidential basis to the different organizations for their feedback via Ms. Davey." She then circulates responses to the CIJA restructuring committee, he said.

Bank told *The CJN* she, too, was looking over the second *Newco Document* draft late last week, but as far as she could tell at the time, there seemed to be little difference in this iteration.

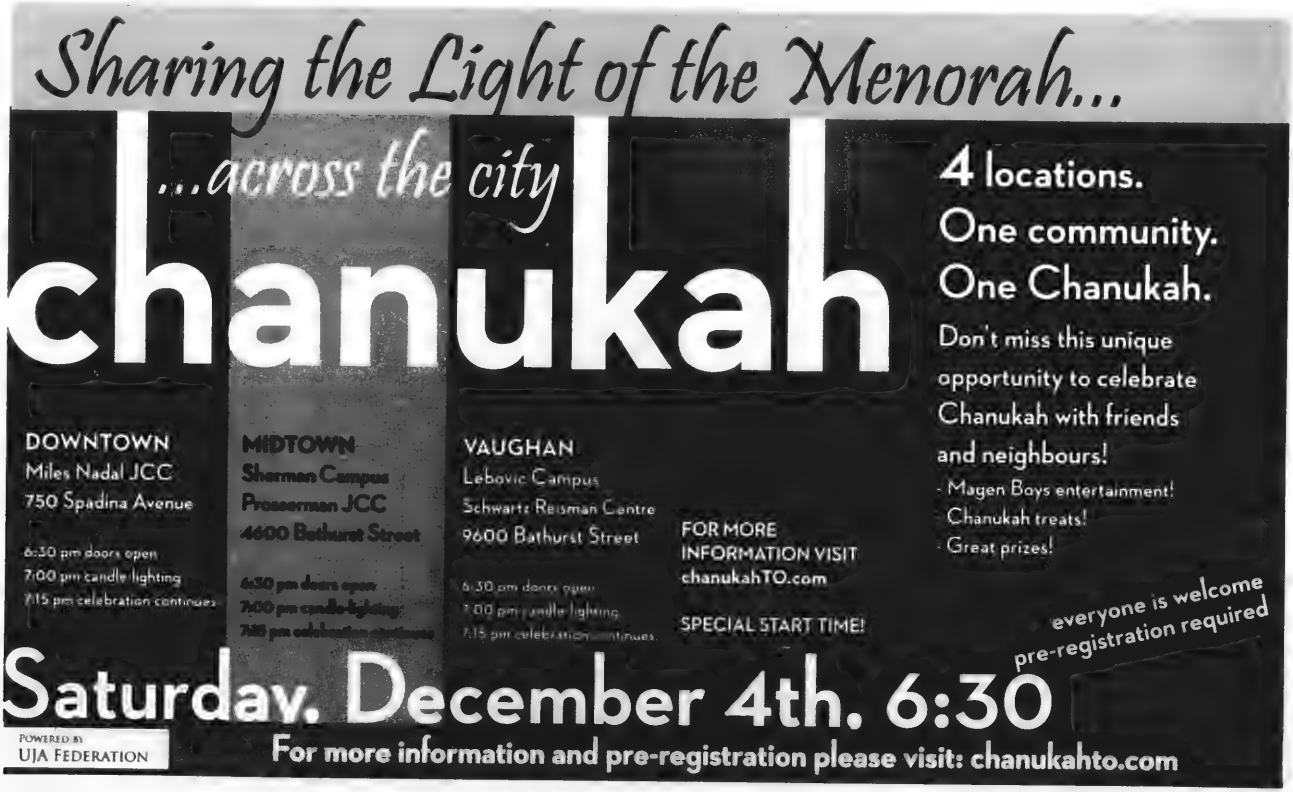
"None of us are privy to what's happening," Bank said. "We get these reports [from CIJA], but they're not that detailed."

She said Congress has been told the restructuring would happen soon, though deadlines have come and gone without any implementation or followup from CIJA.

"We were told a new CEO was going to be put into place three weeks ago, and that hasn't happened yet. But I know they're trying hard to do this as quickly as possible."

Bank said CIJA's new national advocacy structure appears to be "pared down, with a single board of directors as opposed to what is currently in place – a CIJA board of directors, a Congress board, a CIC board, a UOC board, etc. So it's really a plan that would tie us into the local federations more. It's a different approach to advocacy, it's more a real public affairs [structure] rather than an advocacy one."

She said Congress' main concern is that its 90-year history and resonance with the community would be lost in this reorganization.



Coast to Coast

Brandon, Man. elects its first Jewish mayor

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Brandon, the second-largest city in Manitoba, has elected its first Jewish mayor, and she's also the first woman to be chosen for the position.

"I have always been busy," Shari Decter-Hirst, who was elected Oct. 27, told *The CJN*. "But now I am moving at breakneck speed, attending openings or putting in appearances at different functions and getting up to speed on a variety of city projects."

Shari Decter-Hirst

Brandon, with a population about 41,000, is located 200 kilometres west of Winnipeg. Decter-Hirst defeated eight-year incumbent Dave Burgess by almost 1,500 votes (7,037 to 5,573).

Decter-Hirst launched her campaign more than a year ago. "There was a group of us who were becoming more and more frustrated by the lack of transparency and accountability at city hall," said Hirst, who up until her election was director of college advancement at Assiniboine Community College. "My campaign presented a clear vision of where we would like to take Brandon."

One of her focuses is on revitalizing the downtown area. "I like what Fargo did," she said, referring to the city of about 40,000 about 300 kilometres south of Winnipeg, in North Dakota. "Fargo turned its downtown into a hospitality and entertainment centre.

"We have a lot of offices downtown but after 6 [p.m.], everything closes down. We need to get more people living downtown. We have had a couple of successful affordable housing projects open downtown. What we need now are more market-driven accommodations."

Decter-Hirst is a rarity in Brandon in that she is a fifth-generation Jewish resident of the city. She noted that her Jewish roots in Brandon go back to the early 1900s.

"My maternal grandmother's family, the Cripps, were among the first Jewish families in Brandon," she said. "I admire the courage of those early Jewish residents of Brandon. They faced many hardships living within a less-than-welcoming larger community."

While there was a good-sized Jewish community at one time, the Jewish population has dwindled considerably. The synagogue was closed many years ago.

Brandon University, she noted, does have some Jewish professors and students.

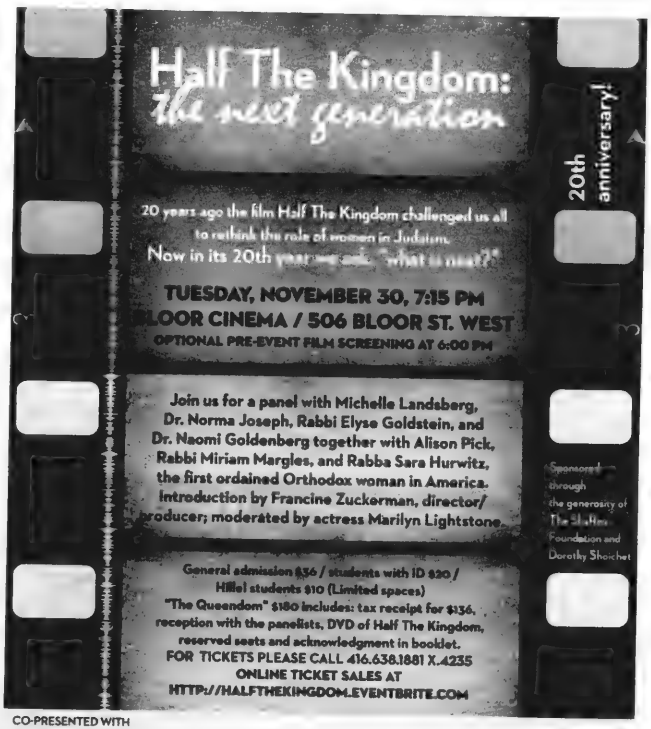
"Without a synagogue though, it is hard to hold a community together," she said. "It's sad to see our Jewish community disappearing."

Decter-Hirst has fond memories of growing up in Brandon, where her father worked for Manitoba Hydro and her mother was a nurse. She went to university in Saskatoon and also attended the University of Manitoba. She has worked primarily as a fundraiser for various capital campaigns, including the building of Asper Jewish Community Campus in Winnipeg in the early 1990s, and served as board chair of Manitoba Public Insurance just prior to her decision to run for office.

She met her Winnipeg-born husband, Dr. Derry Decter, when she was working for a women's group in Brandon and the new, single, doctor in town was recruited to work with the group.

"We have a lot of family in Winnipeg on the Decter side," she said. "It has been nice being part of a larger family and being included in the bar mitzvahs and weddings."

THANK YOU: **Former prime minister Jean Chrétien recently returned to the Jewish General Hospital to thank his surgeon, Dr. Jeff Golan, right, and nurse François Aubé. Chrétien was treated for a condition known as spontaneous subdural hematoma at the Montreal hospital last summer. To read story, please go to cjnews.com**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Class Acts

ZAREINU VISIT: Grade 6 girls from Netivot HaTorah Day School recently visited Zareinu Educational Centre, where they toured classrooms and took part in a workshop to help them experience what it would be like to have challenges in fine and gross motor and verbal skills. Pictured, from left, are Alyssa, Ayala and Sarah. *[Rebecca Ansel photo]*

CHAGALL IN TRAINING:

Junior kindergarten student Ryan Press, from Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns Education Centre on Neptune Drive, proudly displays his artistic creation, inspired by the image of a tallit in the painting *The Prayer* by Marc Chagall.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Arlene & Murray Finkelman were thrilled to be in Israel for the birth of their great-granddaughter, Yael. Proud parents are Sarah & Ikan Sharabi.

Mazel tov, Harold & Anne Goldman on their 65th wedding anniversary. Much love from Heather & Robert, Louise & Ken, Cheryl, Barbara & Roni, your grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Jerry & Linda Garshon are thrilled to announce the engagement of their son, Kevin, to Sarit Kapon, daughter of Rina Kapon and Rami Kapon.

Happy 85th birthday to a very special lady, Eva Kay. All our love, Marleine, Alan, Sparkie, Oliver, Lucky Frank, Miriam, Dash & family.

Jeff & Susan Armel (née Randall), together with their children and parents, are proud to welcome twins Daniel and Samantha to the family.

Paul, Lisa and Hannah Kay welcome Ryan Samuel, born Aug. 1. Great/grandparents, Brenda Gorendar, David & Elaine Cooper, Noreen & Gary Kay, Malka Gorendar, Sari Troister.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **WWW.CJNEWS.COM** and click the **Family Moments button!**

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What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

Our regular columnist, Leila Speisman, is away on medical leave.

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Deadline for Dec. 9 is Nov. 29. Deadline for Dec. 16 is Dec. 6. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Nov. 25

MICHAEL WEX

Author **Michael Wex** comes to Beth David with his new book, *The Frumkiss Family Business*. 7:30 p.m. Free. All welcome. 416-633-5500.

Friday, Nov. 26

TORAH CLASS

Beth Tikvah Torah class, Saturdays to December. **Lionel Sharpe** does parshah Vayeshev. 9:45 a.m.

SHABBAT SERVICE

Erev Shabbat Service followed by choir presentation of African-American spiritual music. Temple Emanu-El, 8 p.m. 416-449-3880.

Saturday, Nov. 27

FUNDRAISER DINNER

Dystonia Medical Research Foundation, Toronto chapter, holds its 22nd annual dinner. 6:30 p.m. Hazelton Place, 111 Avenue Rd. Silent auction and raffle. $55. dystoniacanada.org.

POTLUCK AND GAMES

Women's vegetarian potluck and games night. 7:30 p.m. 30 Holly St. party room (Yonge/Eglinton). Bring a friend and join Kulanu for delicious food, good company and fun games. Opportunity to meet other Jewish gay women. RSVP by Nov. 25 to kulanutoronto@gmail.com, saying what vegetarian/dairy food item you would like to bring.

Sunday, Nov. 28

BOOK TALK

The book *Victor Kugler: The Man Who Hid Anne Frank* is discussed by the book's author, **Rick Kardonne**, and **Irving Naftolin** at Anshei Minsk Synagogue. 7 p.m. Q&A period follows.

GIFT AND CRAFT SHOW

Our Kinda Gift and Craft Show, in support of Hospice Thornhill. 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. North Thornhill Community Centre, 300 Pleasant Ridge Ave.

THYROID DISEASE

"Thyroid Disease: The 'Hidden' Health Problem." With **Dr. Ronald Goldenberg**. Beth Emeth, 9:30 a.m. $10. 416-633-3838 to reserve.

CHANUKAH PREPARATION

Prepare for Chanukah with a program for women. Ulpanat Orot, 45 Canyon Ave. 9:30 a.m. 416-781-1777. Babysitting available.

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Students aged 5-18 are asked to apply in advance for a booth and pay a small fee to participate in Shaarei Shomayim's first craft show and sale. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. **Raquel**, raquelmilgrom@yahoo.ca.

Tuesday, Nov. 30

'PHOTOGRAPHY LESSON'

"Photography Lesson: Part 2," with **Aaron Bacher**. Bring your lunch at noon, presentation begins at 12:30 p.m. Coffee and cookies served. Temple Har Zion members $3, guests $5. 905-889-2252.

'PRISONERS IN IRAN'

"Prisoners in Iran." **Marina Nemat** spent two years as a political prisoner in Evin. She is the author of bestseller *Prisoner of Tehran* and was awarded the first Human Dignity Prize by European Parliament in 2007. Lunch and learn. Beth Tikvah, 12 p.m. By reservation. 416-221-3433.

RABBI BOWMAN SPEAKS

Rabbi Shmuel Bowman discusses Operation Lifeshield, which provides above-ground air raid shelters to save the lives of civilians under constant attack in Israel. Beth Tikvah. 8 p.m.

Continued on page 29

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Continued from page 28

ART LECTURE

Focus on Art with **Doug Purdon**. "Great Crimes in Art," 1:30 p.m. Council House, 4700 Bathurst St. $10. info@ncjwc-ts.org, 416-633-5100.

Other News

JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

Toronto Jewish Film Festival. Nov. 26-28. *Ahead of Time*, *Hidden Children (L'affaire Finaly)*, *A Matter of Size* and *The Debt*. 416-487-3281 to register. $95 for Temple Sinai members, $115 for non-members.

ISRAELI ENGINEERS

"Engineering With Soul: Achievements of Israeli Engineers Without Borders." With **Mark Talesnick**, associate professor in the Technion faculty of civil and environmental engineering. Beth David. Dec. 2, 7:30 p.m. All welcome. Free.

LINE DANCING

BDBIBA Sisterhood presents line dancing with **Annie Wilder-Sharpe**. Dec. 7, 8 p.m. Beth David Sisterhood Hall. Sisterhood members free, guests $5.

CHANUKAH PARTY (1)

Solel Congregation of Mississauga's Chanukah party. Dec. 5, 1-3 p.m. $5 per person, $20 a family. Latkes, pizza, sufganiyot, face painters, clowns. 905-820-5915.

CHANUKAH PARTY (2)

Temple Sinai Social Club. Celebrate Chanukah with lights, latkes and laughter. A Touch of Klez performs. Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. $10. By reservation only. 416-487-3281.

BAYCREST VOLUNTEERS

Baycrest is looking for volunteer gallery guides and arts and crafts facilitators. If you have an art background, skills in jewelry design, drawing, painting, photography, creative writing, storytelling and more, call 416-785-2500 ext. 2572.

JIAS GENERAL MEETING

Annual meeting for Jewish Immigrant Aid Services. **Guidy Mamann**, of Mamann Sandaluk Immigration Law Firm, on "Recent Trends in Immigration and the Impact on Our Community." Dec. 14, 7 p.m. Prosserman JCC.

ONEG SHABBAT

Shaar Shalom Singles invites the public to a special Chanukah Oneg Shabbat, led by **Ben Silverberg**. Dec. 3, 8 p.m. Shaar Shalom Synagogue. Kiddush and mix and mingle following. David, 416-224-9494.

BOOK SALE

Dec. 3-5. 70% off Canadian publisher's price on thousands of books. Profits to Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada. 120 Duffield Dr. Markham. Friday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

MUSICAL RECITAL

Concert at Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. Dec. 12, 12-2 p.m. Refreshments served. Tax receipts for donations $18 and over. Sponsored by Na'amat Canada.

NCSY CONCERT

30th annual NCSY concert and gala dinner. **Eli Gerstner** and Yeshiva Boys Choir perform. Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. Toronto Centre for the Arts. ncsyconcert.com, 905-761-6279, ext. 230, for tickets.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211. "Broadway's Great Jewish Composers: Harold Arlen." Music historian **Jordan Klapman** talks about his life and music. Nov. 25, 1:30 p.m.

Connecting the Generations. Catered lunch plus Jewish heritage visit to ROM. Meet a student. Ext. 155.

Chanukah Musical Celebration. **Aviva Chernick** entertains. Dec. 9. Reserve by Dec. 6. Ext. 155.

Computer course for beginners. 3 instructors, 6 students. Tuesdays 1 to 3 p.m. for 8 weeks.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Dec. 15, departs 10 a.m. Lunch and Laughter: latkes, etc. Nov. 30, 12 p.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Social circle – needlepoint, etc. Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Seniors woodworking – skilled craftsmen. 416-630-6487.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Lecture: "Famous Jewish trials: Adolf Eichmann." With **Gerald Ziedenberg**. Nov. 30, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

Chanukah lunch and concert. Dec. 1, 12-2:30 p.m. $13 members, $17 guests.

Wellness lecture: "How Do I Follow a Low Sodium (salt) Diet?" With dietician **Ilana Kobric**. Dec. 2, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Free.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. www.prossermanjcc.com, 416-638-1881.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 18

What's New

Half The Kingdom challenged us, 20 years ago, to rethink the role of women in Judaism. Now we ask, "What's next?" Nov. 30, 7:15 p.m. Bloor Cinema. Optional screening of movie at 6 p.m.

Family Programs: Shabbat Party, Preschool Dance, Sports With **Jay** and Sing-along with **Deborah Maes**. **Monique Shapiro**. Ext. 4012.

Not your usual potato latkes. This class for adults puts a new spin on traditional holiday food. Make latkes out of sweet potato, zucchini, beets with cumin and coriander and traditional potato. Dec. 1, 7-9 p.m. Members $25, guests $35. With **Ellen Grossman**.

"The Female Ruse: Stories of Women's Deception in Genesis" with **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** and **Rachel Adelman**. $10 at door. Dec. 13, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Room 105.

Registration for January courses open. Study recorder, Latin dance, acting, folk dance, etc.

Chanukah party. Latkes and entertainment with **Shaya Petroff**. Free. Dec. 5, 12-2 p.m.

Friday night dinner, Nov. 26 with Jewish singles group Plenty o Gefiltefish. meetup.com/plenty-o-gefiltefish or ext. 4235.

Intermediate line dancing. No partner necessary. Fridays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Pay at the door.

"God, Torah, Israel: The Jewish Tripod." How do we deal with Judaism's three big ideas – revelation, authority and community? And how do they guide the theory and practice of liberal Jewish life? Dec. 2-16. Members $90, guests $130, students/seniors $50.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Sundays, 8 a.m., and Thursdays, 7:15 a.m. Complete kosher breakfast after services. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Toronto Jewish Film Society. 2011 subscription season selling out. Eight great films from January to December on selected Sundays at Al Green Theatre. Noted speakers introduce and discuss each film. **Joelle**: ext. 139 to register.

Renee Barda: Life Begins Again! With **Dorothy Krizmanic**, **Gideon Wilk** and **John Lettieri**. Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $22 regular, $18 group. Ext. 0.

1960s-themed Book Salon and Coffee House. Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m. **Harold Troper** discusses his new book, *The Defining Decade*, with **Dan Mendelsohn Aviv**. Musical performances feature songs from and inspired by the '60s. Ext. 154.

Nov. 28, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. "We've Come a Long Way – or Have We?" Equality, inclusiveness, and innovation in Jewish life, lecture with **Aviva Goldberg**. $9 drop in. sharonis@mnjcc.org, ext.154.

Book launch, Nov. 29, 7 p.m. Jacobs Lounge. **Adam Seelig**'s literary debut, *Every Day in the Morning (slow)*. Ext. 154.

Chanukah cooking workshop. Nov. 30, 7-9 p.m., with **Elise Burton**. Ext. 154.

Dec. 5, 12-2 p.m. Family Chanukah celebration. Ext. 277.

Media Mondays, lectures with film clips. Nov. 29, 7 p.m. Contemporary foreign-language cinema. *Eye Weekly* film critic **Adam Nayman** examines recent art-house exports. $12, $6 for students with ID. Ext 606, esthera@mnjcc.org.

Utah's Crying, an original rock musical. Dec. 2-4, 8 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $15 online, $20 at the door. utahscrying.com, 416-731-7253.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *God Is Great... I Am Very Small*, with **Audrey Tatou**. **Shlomo Schwartzberg** speaks. Dec. 5, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. Tickets sold 15 minutes prior to screen times. $15, $10 for ages 18-29 (7:30 screening only). esthera@mnjcc.org, ext. 606

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

SUPPORTING ISRAELIS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES: Canadian Friends of AKIM-Israel Association for the Mentally Handicapped gathered recently to hear retired admiral Amichai Ayalon speak about the work of AKIM. From left are Olga Eisen, Alex Eisen, Saul Feldberg, Ayalon, Toby Feldberg, Diane Richler, Alexander Serota and Michael Sax. ***[Erin Sullivan photo]***

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Cutler, Leah	Oct. 28/10	3580 Bathurst St
Gastfreund, Josek	Oct. 29/10	64 North Meadow
Goldhar, Jack	Oct. 30/10	477 Dell Park
Kahn, Nathan	Oct. 30/10	3 Duplex Ave
Czaryski, Barbara	Oct. 30/10	10 Kenneth Ave
Moskoske, Benjamin	Oct. 30/10	29 Clevedon St
Schonberger, David	Oct. 30/10	
Lorber, Aaron Alfred	Nov. 4/10	40 Reiner Rd
Brenner, Irwin	Nov. 4/10	4001 Bayview Ave
Plachta, Nathan	Nov. 2/10	Private
Cohen, Charles	Nov. 2/10	4300 Bathurst St
Tolson, Ruth	Nov. 3/10	170 Red Maple Rd
Raymond, Harry	Nov. 3/10	4 Glen Edyth Dr
Muller, Susan	Nov. 5/10	260 Betty Ann Dr
Ingel, Yosef	Nov. 6/10	38 Oxford St
Richards, George	Nov. 6/10	Private
Wolfstadt, Elizabeth Shirley	Nov. 6/10	8 Covington Rd
Tsimberg, Yana	Nov. 5/10	625 Finch Ave. W
Posin, Lottie	Nov. 5/10	Private
Geist, Isaac	Nov. 7/10	7300 Yonge St
Smith, Arlene	Nov. 7/10	82 Buttonwood Av
Ivanova, Anna	Nov. 7/10	Private
Wulf, Lea	Nov. 9/10	3580 Bathurst St
Wagman, Beatrice	Nov. 9/10	645 Castlefield Ave
Perlamutrova, Sofa	Nov. 10/10	Private
Aberbach, Etka	Nov. 11/10	3560 Bathurst St
Mazor, Toby	Nov. 11/10	86 Crown Heights
Freedman, Rose	Nov. 11/10	55 Ameer Ave
Judelman, Shenella	Nov. 13/10	644 Sheppard Ave
Kremer, Esther	Nov. 13/10	550 Cummer Ave
Fischer, Klara	Nov. 13/10	14 Blue Forest Dr
Pliskow, Ruth	Nov. 13/10	541 Finch Ave W

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Marvin Fox	Nov 7/10	95 Overbrook Pl
Dave Moskot	Nov 7/10	110 Promenade Cir
Rose Rubinoff	Nov 7/10	11 Mallaby Rd
Bugsy Golosky	Nov 8/10	55 Skymark Dr
Morris Sheridn	Nov 9/10	2075 Bayview Ave
Saul Linder	Nov 9/10	64 Old Colony Rd
Tillie Bildner	Nov 9/10	150 Heath St W
Uriel Rozen	Nov 10/10	88 Boultbee St
Ruth Greenberg	Nov 9/10	1 Concorde Place
Ann Singer	Nov 10/10	866 Sheppard Ave W
Freda Stern	Nov 11/10	11 Townsgate Dr
Syma Kosher	Nov 11/10	9 Sandale Gardens
Irwin Rose	Nov 11/10	9 Fairway Heights Cr
Donna Schachter	Nov 10/10	32 Camberwell Rd

Judith Irene (Joey) Greenspoon ז"ל

Passed away in Calgary on Oct. 26th, 2010, at age 55, after a brief battle with colon cancer. Beloved daughter of Murray Greenspoon and the late Mildred (Emilia) Greenspoon, sister of Sylvie (Rick Levine) and Bernie Greenspoon. Joey is survived by her children Kati LeClair and Adam LeClair, Calgary, her nephews, Aaron and Samuel Levine of Ottawa and many close and loving friends and relatives. Joey used her skills in Reiki and spiritual healing, working with seniors and battered women. She battled MS for 30 years with courage and ingenuity, using her knowledge to help others. Joey lives on in our hearts. Her legacy of helping others and healing continues to inspire us.

Donations in her memory may be made to the MS Society or to Holocaust Education. Cards may be mailed to Ottawa.

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On Campus

Queen's U rector censured for speaking out against Israel

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

A Queen's University student rector was censured by the university's student government after he used his Remembrance Day speech as a platform to speak out against Israel.

Speaking in front of a large crowd at the university's Remembrance Day ceremony, Nick Day began by talking about his family's contribution to World War II. He then went on to discuss the First Nations people in Canada and the Rwandan genocide before landing on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"My grandfather would have been troubled by the international silence on Palestinian human rights," Day said.

"He would have been dismayed by the following order, issued by the Israeli Defence Force's central command to its soldiers: 'When our forces encounter civilians during the war or in a raid, the encountered civilians may, and even must, be killed. Under no circumstances should an Arab be trusted, even if he gives the impression of being civilized.'"

It is this statement that troubles Mitchell Rattner, the president of Queen's Israel on Campus.

The IDF command that Day quoted, Rattner said in a written statement, has some serious omissions. The actual quote, taken from Edward Said's book *The Question of Palestine*, is: "When our forces encounter civilians during the war or in the course of a pursuit or a raid, the encountered civilians may, and by halachic standards even must be killed, whenever it cannot be ascertained that they are incapable of hitting us back. Under no circumstances should an Arab be trusted, even if he gives the impression of being civilized."

Day's "omissions betray his intent to condemn Israel and inspire anti-Israel sentiment, even at the cost of false misrepresentation," Rattner said in a statement.

"From Day's presentation, one might logically conclude that this quotation reflects current official government policy, but this is untrue.

"To provide accurate context, this quotation was published in a theological pamphlet during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. The quote was originally issued by Rabbi Abraham Avidan, an army chaplain for the Israel Defence Forces, not a combat officer or politician… This quote is therefore not government policy; rather, it is a rabbinic interpretation of wartime Halachah. Following a condemnation of the pamphlet by Mapam [an Israeli political party], it was retracted," he continued.

Nick Day
[photo courtesy Queen's Journal]

"The section on Israel is the only part of [Day's] speech where he presents a direct quote, which… was terribly misquoted," Rattner said in an e-mail to *The CJN*. "His remarks about Israel are meant, in my opinion, to be divisive, to sting and thereby have the effect of alienating students."

Jessica (who requested that her last name be withheld), a Queen's University graduate student who was at the ceremony, said that parts of Day's speech were inappropriate.

"I think it was important and courageous to mention ongoing conflicts and crises around the world, [but] it was not appropriate to misquote Israeli military policy in a way that vilified Israel. His speech made me uncomfortable as he presented biased and selective information that misrepresented Israel and the conflict," she said.

On the same day as the ceremony, Queen's student government, the Alma Mater Society (AMS), passed a proposed censure of Day at a regularly scheduled meeting of the AMS Assembly. Fourteen members voted for it and 10 against, while 11 abstained.

"Misinformed, anti-Israel rhetoric goes unchallenged on too many campuses, and I was impressed that the AMS responded to it so quickly," Jessica said. "I feel it established an important precedent. Should student leaders desire to use their positions to speak publicly about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they will have to ensure an adherence to the facts."

Rattner, however, said he is not entirely satisfied with the outcome of the meeting.

"The censure only dealt with the inappropriate timing of his remarks and didn't specifically address what he said. As president of Israel on Campus at Queen's, I felt it was my responsibility to respond to his specific comments about Israel.

"Nick Day made no effort to apologize. In fact, he said that were he to be presented with this same opportunity again, he would do the same thing," Rattner said.

"If he were not rector and his comments were not made to a 'captive audience' on such a day, I would feel differently. We are all entitled to our opinions. It just frustrates me that he can make such comments about Israel, especially in this venue, and completely get away with it."

Day declined to be interviewed, however, updates from his Twitter account made after he spoke confirm his stance. He tweeted: "I stand by my speech! Will continue to speak out" and "my duty is to speak my mind and live up to my campaign promise on social issues."

'Our inheritance is the survivors' legacy'

Hillel Montreal's recent annual Shabbat dinner celebrated the lives of Holocaust survivors. Seen here from left are Holocaust survivor Olga Sher, Kortney Shapiro and her grandmother, Vera Gold, at Hillel Montreal's annual Shabbat dinner. To read Kortney Shapiro's account of the event, please go to cjnews.com

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Solomon Schechter Academy, a leading Conservative Jewish elementary day school committed to academic excellence, is seeking a dynamic, motivated individual to fill the position of Principal and education leader of the school to commence on August 15, 2011.

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Please send curriculum vitae to the Academy's Head of School to shamerman@solomonschechter.ca. Website www.ssa.qc.ca

Deadline to submit applications: December 10, 2010. We thank everyone who applies, but only those candidates eligible for an interview will be contacted.

0914

On Campus

Suzuki distances himself from tour

Continued from page 3

"I have news for the people in Ottawa: everybody else in the world is already talking to Hamas... If you want to resolve a conflict, you have to talk to the people who are engaged in the conflict."

Michael Brown, who is a professor at York University, said he wishes Galloway had not spoken at York, but feels York is unfairly receiving a lot of excess attention because of it.

"I'm sorry Galloway was on campus," he said. "I would have been much happier if he wasn't.

"[However], he is going to other universities as well and no one's making a fuss about that... York has been very good to Jewish students and the community."

Galloway's next stop, in Montreal on Nov. 17, saw him challenge Immigration Minister Jason Kenney (who was responsible for banning Galloway from entering Canada in 2009) to a boxing match. He also said the Harper government's support of Israel was responsible for Canada's failed UN security council bid.

"I don't understand why this great country of Canada allowed itself to become effectively an embassy for the racist apartheid state of Israel," he said.

Galloway's 10-city tour has also taken him to Halifax, Hamilton, Calgary, Yellowknife, Edmonton and Vancouver.

His visit to Vancouver led to an online movement encouraging supporters of one of the tour's sponsoring organizations to withdraw their endorsements.

Environmental activist David Suzuki; Spencer Herbert, a Vancouver MLA; Dan Chambers, a United Church minister; the Green Party of Canada; and the Green Party of British Columbia have all asked to be removed as supporters of StopWar.

StopWar, which calls itself "Vancouver's Labour/Community coalition of organizations united for justice and peace," brought Galloway to Vancouver on Nov. 22. The organization has, according to its website, 171 (previously 174) endorsing members, some of which have either disbanded or do not exist.

Through the StopStopWar.ca Facebook page and the website stopstopwar.blog.ca, supporters of the project are contacting StopWar's endorsers to inform them of Galloway's support of Hamas and Hezbollah.

When contacted by the StopStopWar movement, Suzuki responded by saying he had never heard of StopWar.

"Thank you for the information. I quite honestly have never heard of this organization and have no idea whether or how my name became associated with it. I have taken your information and demanded the immediate removal of my name," Suzuki's response read.

Suzuki's name was removed from the StopWar website on Nov. 18. However, Irene MacInnes, one of the StopWar founding members, told the *National Post* she requested and received Suzuki's endorsement previous to the 2003 Iraq War.

Rael Katz is the president of Hillel's Israel Awareness Club at the University of British Columbia and one of the founders of StopStopWar.

The purpose of StopStopWar, which Katz said "transpired very quickly," (the first post on their website was on Nov. 15), "is to contact the organizations of individuals who have committed to StopWar.ca to claiming they are against war in Iraq.

"StopWar is abusing their privilege and abusing their membership base to bring in speakers that contradict the very essence of stopwar.ca," Katz added.

Rev. Gary Paterson of St. Andrew's-Wesley United Church in Vancouver, where Galloway spoke, told the *National Post* that he rented the space to StopWar not knowing Galloway was the speaker, and made it clear that the talk was not a church-sponsored function.

Galloway's Canadian speaking tour wraps up with a visit to Winnipeg on Nov. 26 and one to Ottawa on Nov. 27.

York U threatens to sue rabbi

Former British MP, George Galloway's first stop on his Free Afghanistan, Free Palestine, Free Speech tour at York University last week has left York threatening a lawsuit against a local rabbi.

Rabbi Ahron Hoch of the Dan Family Village Shul sent a mass e-mail prior to Galloway's visit encouraging community members to take action against it.

"George Galloway is a known supporter of Hamas and an activist for terrorist organizations," Rabbi Hoch wrote in the e-mail.

"[York President Mamdouh Shoukri] defends the decision to allow him to speak under the pretext of freedom of speech. The concept of freedom of speech was never meant to be used... to spread support for terror, murder and genocide.

In a Nov. 15 letter, York's office of the counsel asked Rabbi Hoch to cease and desist.

"You state that 'Mr. Shoukri has again showed his amazing tolerance for antisemitism and lack of vigilance regarding the feeling of safety for Jewish students on campus.' This statement is untrue, is harmful to President Shoukri and his reputation, and to that of the university... We expect a retraction and apology forthwith."

Alex Bilyk, York's director of media relations, said a lawsuit against Rabbi Hoch is to be determined.

"The trigger for the letter... was the fact that Rabbi Hoch suggested Dr. Shoukri was antisemitic and not concerned about the safety of Jewish students on campus. That's untrue," he added.

Rabbi Hoch, however, said he never called Shoukri antisemitic.

"I want to make something very, very clear. I'm sure Mr. Shoukri is an honourable man, a man of peace. I never accused him of being antisemitic.

"If a speaker comes in that supports [Hamas], then you are being tolerant of antisemitism."

Prof. Michael Brown, who teaches at York University, said the lawsuit is "not going to happen.

"[It is an] empty threat and possibly a stupid one... an excellent way for York to ensure that the Jewish community be angry," he added.

— L.S.

חנוכה שמח

James Pasternak

School trustee for York Centre

wishes the residents in our community a very Happy Hanukkah

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Toronto District School Board

Chanukah Food & Gift Ideas

Relax and enjoy something fried

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

At a time when watching every calorie passes for "virtue" or "goodness" and eating high-calorie foods is seen as "bad," one of the things I love about Chanukah is the freedom to enjoy fried foods without feeling guilty. After all, the miracle was about oil, not "oven-baked."

You don't have to go overboard: eat fried foods judiciously, but for this one week, or at least a day or two of Chanukah, relax and enjoy something special cooked in oil to commemorate that miracle.

Israelis eat sufganiyot, the French eat beignets, Americans eat donuts. In the southern part of the United States, fritters are very popular. Every country or region has some form of fried dough that is popular at Chanukah.

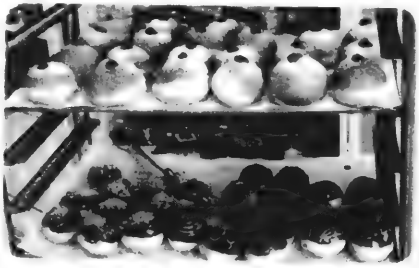
Whether it's sufganiyot, donuts, beignets or fritters, all of them are easier to make than you think. In most recipes, the dough can be mixed just before you are about to fry them.

Fried food, whether it be chicken, fish or sweets, will be greasy if the oil used isn't hot enough. The oil should reach 375 so that the food will not absorb the oil. Also, do not prick the food with a fork or knife while it is frying. Remove the food from the oil when it's done and drain on crumpled paper towel. The reason for crumpling the paper towel is so that the food doesn't sit on the oil drenched paper and reabsorb the oil.

I have not given specific amounts in these recipes because the number will depend of the size you make.

BANANA BEIGNETS

3/4 cup flour
2 tbsp. sugar plus 2 tsp.
1 tsp. baking powder
3/4 cup plus 2 tbsp. pareve milk, water or apple juice
1 egg
oil for deep frying
4 bananas, each quartered crosswise
powdered sugar



[Barry A. Kaplan photo]

Mix flour, sugar and baking powder in a bowl. Add liquid and egg and stir until smooth. Heat oil in deep fryer or heavy, deep skillet to 375.

Working in batches, dip bananas into batter and then carefully add to oil. Cook until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Drain on paper towels.

Serve with good quality store-bought caramel sauce. Pour caramel sauce onto plates. Set bananas on top of sauce. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve.

APPLE FRITTERS

1 cup boiling water
1/2 cup (1 stick) margarine or butter
1 cup flour
4 eggs
2 cups peeled, diced apples
sugar, powdered or granulated
cinnamon (optional)
oil for frying

In a medium-sized saucepan, heat the butter or margarine and water together, until the butter is melted. Add the flour all at once, and stir vigorously until the dough forms a ball. Remove from the heat and allow to cool for 5 minutes. Add 1 egg, and beat until it is thoroughly combined. Repeat, adding the remaining eggs one at a time and beating thoroughly after each one. The dough will be very stiff. Add diced apples and mix until combined.

Heat the oil to 375. Place the sugar and cinnamon, if you are using it, into a large paper bag. Place the dough in the hot oil by teaspoonfuls. Do not try to crowd the pan, as that will lower the temperature and make them greasy. Fry until golden on one side. Turn and complete frying. Lift them from the oil with a slotted tool and place on crumpled paper towels for a moment to drain, then put them into the sack with the sugar. Shake to coat them, then remove and put them on a platter. Repeat with the rest of the dough. Serve.

Preserving family recipes

By BEVERLY LEVITT
Special to The CJN

This year my mother, Celia Levitt, will celebrate her 93rd Chanukah.

In our family, holiday gatherings are always potluck – picture three generations bustling about our very different kitchens, recreating recipes passed down by our mamas and grandmas for more than 100 years.

Although I consider myself a fairly accomplished latke maker, I find myself calling mom at least 20 times – "Should I use peanut oil or safflower?" "How can I make my latkes stay crisp for more than two minutes?" And finally, "If I don't put zucchini and garlic into the batter, will you eat them?"

Truth, I already know the answers to my questions, but I love that I can still call her for advice. And as much as I like asking the questions, that's how much she loves answering them.

Somehow it restores the balance. It's hard when your daughter grows up, but even harder when your mother grows old.

For years, mom and dad made the latke batter for our annual Chanukah party. Actually she directed – he grated. Since our extended family is 50-strong, that was no mean feat. Nobody could figure out why her latkes were more delicious than anyone else's. I knew the secret. But I wasn't talking.

Like my mother, who was keeper of the kingdom of both of my grandmas' recipes, I struggled for years with their Ashkenazi delicacies from Poland and Russia: brisket and tzimmes, potato kugels, chopped liver, which all but shout, "Ummm… we're home." These recipes have soul, and nobody makes them like my mother.

When I saw Pamela Hensley Vincent's *Jewish-Sicilian Cookbook* (Overlook Press), which, she admits, she wrote, not because she's the world's greatest cook, but to pay tribute to her parents, grandparents and husband, I loved the book and its intent – preserving family memories through recipes.

The chapters have one-word titles – Yetta, Manny, Gail, Jack and Duke – with photos, recipes and remembrances. I loved that the photos showed all the relatives when they were young, as they aged and finally, the last few photos she'd taken of them. I felt closer to my family just looking at hers.

When we met at her book signing in Beverly Hills, Calif., the effusive, former actress confided, "I had a childhood filled with so much beauty, I needed to say thank you to all of them."

She writes, "I remember grandma standing at the kitchen sink for what seemed an eternity, cleaning the chicken, muttering "Feh!" as her nail-bitten but capable little hands pulled the unwanted fat from the bird, preparing it for soup. After the pieces were clean, she would lovingly place them into a large pot and sprinkle coarse salt over them before adding the water. I follow the same ritual."

"Grandma Yetta clearly influenced my decision, 40 years later, to write down the recipes," says Hensley Vincent, who treasures memories of her family gathered around Yetta's immaculate, white-cloth-covered dining table, laughing, arguing, imploring the family matriarch to stop "hovering" and just sit down.

The ritual beginning to every meal was the small platter of fresh, crisp vegetables Yetta would place in the centre of the dining table. A work of art all its own, it seems a healthy bridge from the old world to the new.

I myself was struck with pangs from the past as Pamela described the tradition. I remember my mother serving this same salad practically every night. It strikes everyone but me as strange that raw vegetables are my comfort food.

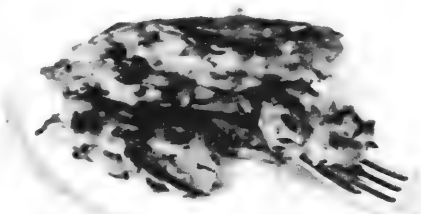
Washington, D.C. artist Mindy Weisel preserves her mother's Old World traditions, handing them down to her three daughters to nourish their own families. She feels close to her mother, Lili Deutsch, as she pours pure olive oil into glass inserts, sets down the wicks and lights the sterling silver menorah just as her mother did in Hungary before the Holocaust.

Lili missed her beautiful home so much when the Deutsches moved to America after the war that she needed everything to be as it was *in der haim* – in her home in the Old Country.

"It was my mother's fierce desire to keep the beauty she remembered alive," says Weisel, who was born in the displaced persons camp in Bergen-Belsen, Germany.

"My mother instilled in me an appreciation of beauty and an awareness of people's feelings. When I realized I could express my emotions through my art, I was compelled to paint," she says. Weisel's passion and her rage fill her canvases, fraught with the colour blue, her mother's favourite, and often named *Remembrances*.

Continued on page 36



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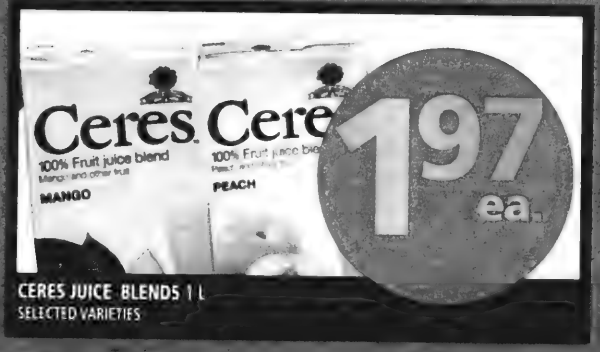
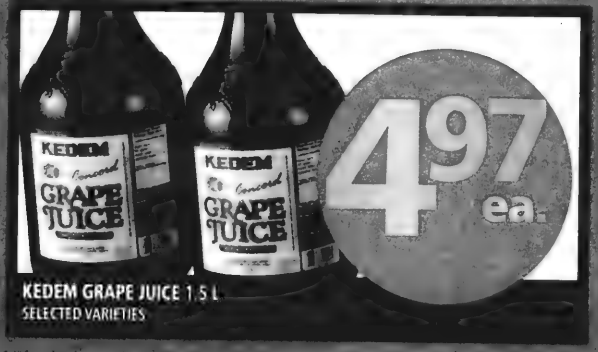
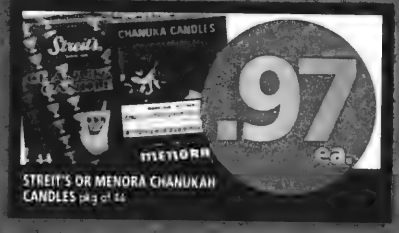


CERES JUICE BLENDS 1 L
SELECTED VARIETIES

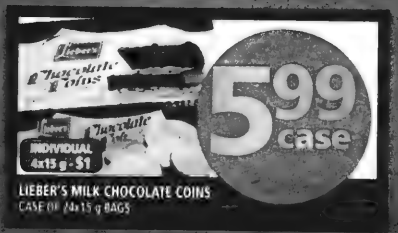


KEDEM GRAPE JUICE 1.5 L
SELECTED VARIETIES

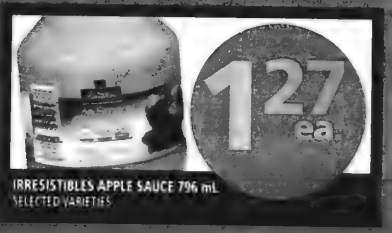


STREIT'S OR MENORA CHANUKAH CANDLES pkg of 44

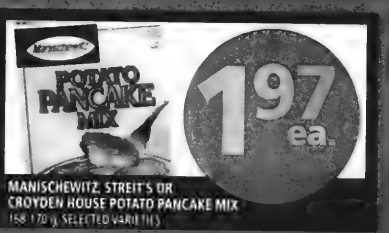
MANISCHEWITZ TAM TAM CRACKERS
226-227 G, SELECTED VARIETIES



LIEBER'S MILK CHOCOLATE COINS
CASE OF 24x15 g BAGS

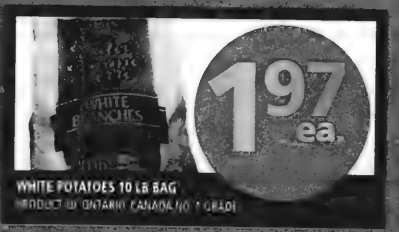


IRRESISTIBLES APPLE SAUCE 796 mL
SELECTED VARIETIES



MANISCHEWITZ, STREIT'S OR CROYDEN HOUSE POTATO PANCAKE MIX
158-170 g, SELECTED VARIETIES

KINERET POTATO LATKES 600 g
SELECTED VARIETIES, FROZEN



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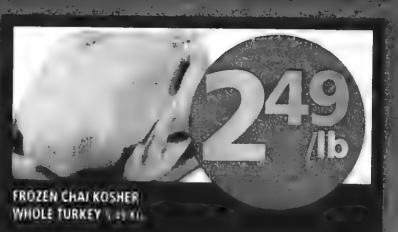

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Mothers share Chanukah favourites

Continued from page 34

Just as Hensley Vincent's cookbook reflects the love she felt for her family, Weisel's paintings evoke the essence of her mother's stories and her feelings.

Weisel also remembers her mother's joy in making wonderful meals for her. For the Jewish holidays, especially, she cooks her mother's favourite Hungarian dishes – Chicken Paprikash and Veal Goulash. Like Hensley Vincent, Weisel published a cookbook, *The 7-Day Colour Diet* (Capital Books, 2003) and included the famous Hungarian chicken recipe.

"My mother was a wonderful cook but it was hard getting recipes from her," Weisel laughs. "She never used them. She used to say they were an American tradition. Everything she cooked was by feel. That's the way I cook too," Weisel smiles. "I learned to cook by emulating my mother."

Chef Laura Frankel inherited her parents' attitudes toward food, albeit in a much more modern setting. The chef/owner of Shallots Bistro in Skokie, Ill., was encouraged to look at cooking as creative, challenging, but most of all, fun. When she was a teenager her dad, Gunnard, embarrassed her by what she considered "strange combinations." Imagine melting sharp cheddar cheese atop a slice of apple pie.

Frankel laughs at her provincial teenage tastes but remembers how she desperately wished she could have salami on rye with mustard like the other kids. Now the innovative chef respects his sense of wonder at discovering new creations and revels in exciting new combinations at her restaurant.

Frankel's mother, Charlene, was, as her daughter calls her, "your basic purist." Her soup was made from scratch, and there were no packaged, canned or processed foods in the pantry. As a result Laura fills her kosher restaurant with seasonal, organic produce, sustainable poultry and meat. If she can't find wild salmon, salmon is scratched from the menu that day.

Frankel remembers how much fun her parents had as they cooked together. It created a warm family unity, she says. It's no wonder that both she and her brother love to cook.

Frankel wrote an award-winning cookbook straight from her heart, *Jewish Cooking for all Seasons*. It's dedicated to her parents.

"When you sit down to write about people you love, it just flows out of you," Hensley Vincent says. "I visited haunts both magical and sorrowful. As I went along, I recognized the cookbook was, in fact, a scrapbook locked away all those years."

As our family gets older and the thought of losing them looms large, especially around the holidays, it's a rewarding pleasure to spend time recording sweet moments of their life, including their favourite recipes. Have a dedicated tape recorder and keep it with you, as the best conversations are usually impromptu. Be sure to label each tape. Ask for photos throughout their life so that you can have a pictorial chronology. It's a wonderful tribute to them to assemble a book of meaningful moments.

As a relative gets older, gather the ingredients for their signature dishes and get in the kitchen with them. Just as older people love talking about their past, they'll be flattered to conduct a cooking demonstration. As they're throwing in a pinch of this and a handful of that, before the ingredient hits the bowl, carefully measure each item. Even if you have to redo the amounts later, you'll have a basis.

Take, for example, the way my mother starts with the basic latke recipe, and for more nutrition, grates celery, garlic, zucchini and parsnips into the batter, and for extra flavour, folds in fresh parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme. She isn't being sacrilegious – she says even sacred recipes can be enhanced.

Celia runs her kitchen the same way she lives her life. The ultimate iconoclast, she believes that even if something seems "carved in stone," it should be examined, experimented with and, if necessary, redefined.

ZUCCHINI AND POTATO LATKES

From Celia Levitt, developed at home in her kitchen.

1 lb. zucchini, peeled
1 lb. red and white potatoes, peeled and grated
1 medium onion, peeled and grated
2 garlic cloves, pressed
2 eggs, slightly beaten
1 tsp. salt
white pepper to taste
1/2 tsp. dried basil
1/2 tsp. dried oregano
1/2 tesp. dried thyme
1/4 tsp. cayenne
1/4 cup toasted whole wheat bread crumbs
peanut oil

Grate zucchini down to the seeds; discard seeds. Squeeze out liquid. Add potatoes and onion. Put mixture into mesh strainer to remove excess liquid. Add garlic to mixture, then squeeze through cheesecloth. Mix pulp with eggs, salt, spices and bread crumbs. Fashion into circles. Heat oil in skillet; drop mixture into oil by tablespoonfuls and fry until golden brown. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Continued on page 37

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Chanukah traditions are passed down

Continued from page 36

YUKON GOLD POTATO LATKES

From Laura Frankel, chef/owner of Shallots Bistro in Skokie, Ill.

3 Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into medium dice
3 Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and grated
2 leeks, finely chopped
3 eggs, lightly beaten
salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup flour or as needed
canola oil for frying
dried cranberries or fresh pomegranate seeds for garnish

Place diced potatoes into a medium saucepan with enough water to cover. Cook until tender over medium high heat, about 5 to 8 minutes. Drain thoroughly. Combine cooked potatoes with grated potatoes and leeks. Fold in eggs, salt and pepper, using enough flour to bind the mixture. If the latke batter is too dry, add another beaten egg. It should resemble a loose cookie dough.

Fill a large sauté pan with oil to a depth of 2 inches. Heat oil until blazing hot. Carefully drop batter by tablespoonfuls into the oil. Lightly flatten the top with a spatula. Cook until golden brown, about 3 minutes on each side.

Drain on paper towels and serve immediately, or put into moderate 250 oven and cover with foil until ready to serve. Garnish with dried cranberries or fresh pomegranate seeds. Serve with cranberry applesauce. Makes about 2 dozen 3-inch latkes.

CRANBERRY APPLESAUCE

From Laura Frankel

6 Granny Smith apples, peeled and cored
1/2 cup sweet white wine (optional)
2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
1 1/2 to 2 cups sugar
1 cinnamon stick

Place apples, wine, if using, and the cinnamon stick in a medium saucepan. Add enough purified water to barely cover apples. Cover pan and place it over medium heat. Cook apples until quite soft and fragrant, about 15 minutes. Let cool.

Drain apples, reserving liquid, and place them in a bowl. Mash apples with a fork; set aside. Place cranberries in the same saucepan and add back the apple cooking liquid. Add additional liquid if necessary to cover the cranberries. Add sugar and cook over medium heat until cranberries are "popped" and quite thick, about 15 to 20 minutes. Pour cranberries through a fine sieve to remove skins. Stir cranberries into the apples until combined. Adjust sweetness if necessary. The sauce will keep covered in the refrigerator for 5 days, or can be frozen for 3 months. Makes 3 to 4 cups.

HENRIETTA'S SALAD WITH DUKE'S RUSSIAN DRESSING

Adapted from *The Jewish-Sicilian Cookbook* by Pamela Hensley Vincent (Overlook Press, 2004)

1 large head organic iceberg or romaine lettuce
3 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced into sticks
3 stalks celery, trimmed and thinly sliced into sticks
6 whole scallions, trimmed
1 large beefsteak tomato, in wedges
1 medium cucumber, sliced into thick rounds
2 hard boiled eggs, peeled and cut in quarters

Russian dressing
juice of 1 lemon
2 tbsp. apple cider vinegar
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tsp. chili sauce
1/4 cup olive oil
1 tsp. seasoned salt
pinch of sugar

Place lettuce leaves, carrot and celery sticks, scallions, tomato wedges cucumber slices and hard boiled eggs artfully on a ceramic tray in the middle of the dining table.

For the dressing: In a small bowl combine all ingredients and mix well. Family or guests will make their own salads by taking vegetables that please them and tossing with a spoonful of dressing.

CHICKEN PAPRIKASH

From Mindy Weisel's mother, Lili Deutsch, who loved making it on Chanukah because it reminded her of home in Hungary (in Yiddish it was "*in der haim*")

1 large onion, minced
1/2 pound cremini mushrooms, sliced
1 tbsp. olive oil or as needed
1 chicken, cut into quarters
1 to 2 cloves garlic, peeled and pressed
1 to 2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. pepper
2 tbsp. imported paprika
2 tsp. dried basil, crushed
1/2 tsp. oregano
1/2 tsp. rosemary (optional)

Preheat oven to 350. Sauté onion and mushrooms in oil until light golden brown. Rub chicken with fresh garlic; season with salt, pepper, paprika, basil, oregano and rosemary. Place chicken pieces in casserole and cover with onions and mushrooms. Bake, covered, for 45 minutes and uncovered for 30 minutes. Baste several times while chicken is baking.

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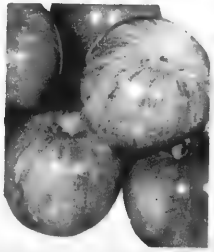

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- 1390 Major Mackenzie Dr., Vaughan

My Cooking Class is a hands-on primer

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Firefly Books, a local publisher, has just published *My Cooking Class*, an innovative set of cookbooks sure to appeal to both seasoned and novice hands in the kitchen.

Recipes are presented, step by step from start to finish, in visual sequence.

Every pot, pan and utensil is cleanly photographed.

Better still, each and every ingredient is shown in the correct quantity and in the order in which it will be used.

My Cooking Class thereby takes you as close as you can possibly get to a cooking class without leaving your home.

The series consists of six books.

Middle Eastern Basics, with text by Marianne Magnier-Moreno and photographs by Frederic Lucano, covers a lot of ground.

Appetizers from hummus to spinach dip. Soups and sauces from lentil soup to tarator sauce. Side dishes from couscous to rice pilaf. Meats from roasted lamb to shish kebab. Fish from stuffed trout to monkfish tagine. Desserts from date and walnut cake to rice pudding.

Vegetable Basics, by Jody Vassallo and Clive Bozzar-Hill, is comprehensive, too.

A chapter on roots and tubers zeroes in on a wide range of dishes from french fries to sweet potato crumble. "Fruit-like vegetables" includes vegetable lasagna, eggplant parmigiana and stuffed peppers.

Under the heading of cabbage, you will find delicacies like cabbage rolls and cauliflower with cheese. "Onions" brings on caramelized onion tart and leek and potato soup. "Leafy vegetables" introduces you to salad leaves, arugula and parmesan salad. "Pods and seeds" gives you such treats as corn fritters and stir-fried snow peas.

Pasta Basics, by Laura Zavan and Pierre Javelle, leaves no stone unturned.

You'll learn how to make a variety of pastas and whip up a rainbow of sauces. Recipes for such succulent dishes as eggplant macaroni and fusili with pepper sauce are at your fingertips.

If fish and meat are your preferences, recipes for spaghetti with fresh tuna, anchovy and onion spaghettoni, veal ragout timbale and lamb maltagliati will surely appeal.

As well, there are mouth-watering recipes for salads, lasagna, stuffed pasta and gnocchi.

Sauce Basics, by Kedas Black and Frederic Lucano, complements *Pasta Basics*.

Pasta sauces run the gamut from bechamel and aioli to pesto and classic tomato. Contemporary sauces include carrot sauce, mustard sauce and bell pepper relish. Salad dressings range from a vinaigrette to a caesar dressing. Sweet sauces include zabbaglione, mango coulis and lemon curd.

Steaming Basics, by Orathay Guillaumont and Pierre Javelle, proves that steam is not hopelessly bland.

You'll discover new condiments (garlic oil), dim sum (fish balls), "easy vegetables" (green peas, mint and ricotta), stuffed dishes (mushrooms with ginger), special suppers (sole rolls) and desserts (banana flans).

Last but not least, *Chocolate Basics*, by Orathay Guillaumont and Vania Nikolcic, will leave chocoholics pleased and sated.

The chapter on basics is an introduction to pastry cream and egg mousse. "Rich and moist" is a primer on cupcakes and muffins.

"Foamy and creamy" offers cream puffs and the chocolate milkshake, while "crunchy and soft" takes you into the world of cookies, mousse, brownies and pies. Chapters on cakes, truffles, fudge, pralines and macaroons open up fresh new vistas.

These cookbooks, if used faithfully and often enough, can transform you into a confident kitchen pro.

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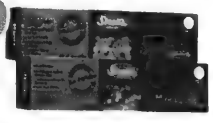
Soup Mix
Assorted Varieties



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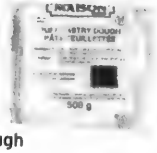

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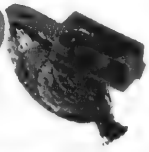

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Potato latkes now easier on the knuckles

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Making potato latkes from scratch has always been a labour of love, especially in the days before food processors, when the potatoes had to be grated by hand

One person with a vivid recollection of this gruelling task is Susanne Keppler. She says she and her sister used to scrape their knuckles at Chanukah time, grating potatoes for their mother's "light and crispy" latkes.

"Grating enough potatoes seemed to take forever," she recalls. "But I endured the pain. The payoff was worth it. No matter how many pancakes I ate, I could never get my fill."

Keppler now makes her own potato latkes, but her daughter, Lillian Stratton, doesn't have to grate the potatoes. Keppler says she doesn't have her mother's latke recipe, but she's getting "similar results" from a recipe she adapted from *My Mother's Kitchen* by Mimi Sheraton (HarperCollins Publishers 1979).

You can actually make latkes without grating or processing raw potatoes. According to Montreal-based nutritionist, Gitta Bixenspanner, latkes made from cooked potatoes – they're called chremsel in Yiddish – were popular in some parts of Poland and Hungary. "My mother is Hungarian and she prefers latkes made from cooked potatoes. Some people like them salty, while others like them sweeter. Hungarians sweetened their latkes with syrup and sugar."

Bixenspanner says her sweet potato latkes can be broiled or fried. "The squash in the recipe counteracts the sweetness of the sweet potato." Squash is also an ingredient in her Amazing Vegetable Latke recipe.

You can find more of Bixenspanner's latke recipes in the family section of the Aish HaTorah website at www.aish.com. If people have questions about the recipes, they can also contact Bixenspanner at gittastuart@sympatico.ca.

MIMI SHERATON'S TRADITIONAL POTATO LATKES

7 or 8 medium potatoes, about 2 1/2 lb.
1 large onion, peeled (don't scrimp on the onion)
2 eggs
2 tbsp. matzah meal
1 tbsp. salt
1 tsp. pepper (white, if you prefer)
vegetable oil for frying

Grate the potatoes and onions into a strainer set over a bowl or grate them together in a food processor. (Hand-grating is better for taste but bad for the knuckles.) Pour processed vegetables into a strainer. Squeeze out as much liquid as possible with a wooden spoon. Pour the potatoes and onions into a dry bowl. Mix in the eggs, matzah meal, salt and pepper. Add a little more matzah meal if the batter seems too loose, but it should not be thick or pasty.

Heat about 1/2 inch of oil in a heavy skillet and test with a little bit of batter. If it sizzles, the oil is hot enough. Make about 2 tbsp. of batter at a time into a thin pancake. Flip when one side is brown. Drain the finished pancakes on paper towels and keep warm until ready to serve. Yields 4 servings.

COOKED POTATO LATKES

3 large potatoes, peeled
3 eggs
1 small onion, grated
1/2 tsp. salt
oil for frying.

Boil potatoes and mash them well. Transfer mashed potatoes to a large mixing bowl. After the potatoes are cool to touch, add eggs, onion and salt. Mix to form a smooth batter. Form batter into patties and fry in a skillet on medium heat until pancakes are golden brown on both sides. Yields 3 servings.

SAVOURY SWEET POTATO LATKES

1 large sweet potato, cooked
1 small butternut squash, cooked
4 eggs
1 tsp. honey
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
2 tbsp flour
1/2 tsp. nutmeg (optional)
oil for frying (optional)

In a large mixing bowl, combine sweet potato and squash and mash. Add eggs, honey and spices. Form batter into patties. To broil, grease cookie sheet with oil and place patties on the sheet. Broil 10 minutes on each side. To fry, grease a skillet and fry on medium heat until pancakes are golden brown on both sides. Yields 6 servings.

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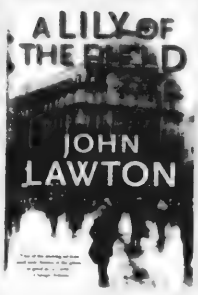
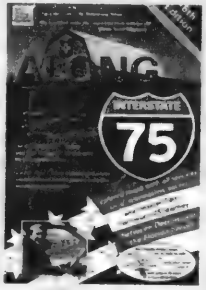
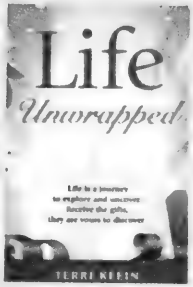
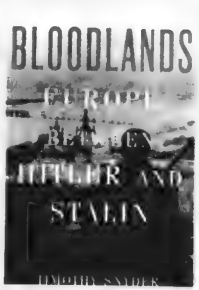
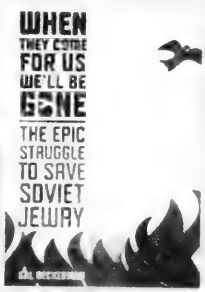
Books for every taste











By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

It is estimated that there are approximately 130 million unique books in the world. Whether fiction or non-fiction, drama or comedy, fantasy or historical, there are books for every kind of person. Here's a sample of recently published books for adults.

Biography

***Simon Wiesenthal: The Life and Legends* by Tom Segev, Doubleday**

This is the first fully documented biography of legendary Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal. Liberated from the concentration camp at Mauthausen, Wiesenthal made bringing Nazi war criminals to justice his lifelong crusade. With access to Wiesenthal's private papers and records of the U.S., Israeli, Polish and East German secret services, Segev is able to reveal the intriguing secrets of Wiesenthal's life, including his role in the capture of Adolf Eichmann, his controversial investigative techniques, his unlikely friendships with Kurt Waldheim and Albert Speer and his rivalry with Elie Wiesel.

***Mordecai: The Life and Times* by Charles Foran, Knopf Canada**

This is the definitive, detailed and intimate portrait of Mordecai Richler. It is the first major biography with access to family letters and archives. Award-winning novelist and journalist Charles Foran brings to the pages the richness of Richler's life as a young bohemian, irreverent writer, passionate and controversial Canadian and deeply romantic lover.

History/Politics:

***The Ghosts of Europe* by Anna Porter, Douglas & McIntyre**

In her latest book, the bestselling author of *Kasztner's Train* examines the social and economic climate of former Soviet bloc countries. Porter travelled to Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary to discover whether – and how – democracy has taken root in the countries that were once behind the Iron Curtain. Peter C. Newman called this "a must read."

***When They Come For Us We'll Be Gone: the epic struggle to save Soviet Jewry* by Gal Beckerman, HMH**

It's all in the title. Beckerman, a reporter with *The Forward*, draws on newly released Soviet government documents as well as hundreds of interviews with Refuseniks and activists. He shows how small acts of defiance turned into an open struggle in which thousands of activists fought to be allowed to leave the oppression of the Soviet Union.

***Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* by Timothy Snyder, Basic Books**

Snyder, an award-winning historian, offers a groundbreaking investigation of the purposeful murder of 14 million people by the Nazi and Soviet regimes. From the famine Josef Stalin directed in Ukraine and the Great Terror of 1937 and '38, to the combined German and Soviet destruction of Poland and the Nazi Holocaust, this is a history of genocide and political mass murder.

Fiction and Fun Stuff:

***A Lily of the Field* by John Lawton, Publishers Group Canada**

Set in Vienna, London, Canada and the United States, from 1934 to 1948, Lawton's ninth novel follows the loosely parallel lives of cellist Metek Voytek and physicist Karel Szabo at a pivotal moment in history. This historically accurate novel explores the diaspora of two Europeans from the rise of Hitler to the post-atomic age.

***Book Lust to Go* by Nancy Pearl, Sasquatch Books**

"America's rock star librarian" provides recommended reading for more than 120 destinations around the world. Planning a trip to Rome? Pearl recommends you read Colleen McCullough's *Masters of Rome* series. Going to New York? Pearl suggests Mark Helprin's great novel *Winter's Tale* or Adam Langer's *Ellington Boulevard: A Novel in a Flat*. Great fun for the world traveller.

***Along Interstate-75* by David Hunter, Mile Oak Publishing**

If you're not really a world traveller but do hibernate in Florida, then this guide to the popular freeway is for you. Containing local knowledge, "insider" tips, and lodging and restaurant recommendations, this mile-by-mile coloured road trip contains over a hundred maps, charts and diagrams and all sorts of information. A must for the snowbird.

***Life Unwrapped* by Terri Klein, Celebrate Life Daily Press**

This book of inspirational poetry is written by a lifecoach and motivational speaker. Formatted as an easy to negotiate book of poetic insights and reflections, it invites readers to scroll the table of contents and choose the poem they need to help guide them toward personal enlightenment.

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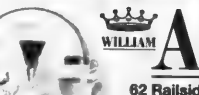

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Food seen as a factor in identity and adaptation

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

When new immigrants arrived in the United States at the turn of the 20th century, they usually acceded to the pressures of assimilation, adapting to new ways and learning English.

As Jane Ziegelman observes in *97 Orchard: An Edible History of Five Immigrant Families in One New York Tenement*, published by HarperCollins, they also went to "extraordinary lengths" to preserve their traditional foods and food customs.

Ziegelman, a food writer and director of the Tenement Museum's culinary centre, has written an altogether fascinating book about the role of food in identity and adaptation.

"Within the immigrant community, food cemented relationships, and immigrants turned to food as a source of ethnic or national pride," she writes.

The focus of her book, the Lower East Side, was a teeming city within a city whose Jewish, German, Irish and Italian inhabitants formed a classic melting pot in urban America.

Ziegelman's account of the German Glockners, the Irish Moores, the Jewish Gumpertzes and Rogarshevskys and the Italian Baldizzis is really a story about the foods they consumed and how they influenced and broadened the gastronomic tastes of Americans.

The Germans brought their taste for herring to a broader segment of the population, introducing Americans to such mouth-watering delicacies as pickled, rolled and smoked herring.

Germans, too, were the progenitors of the delicatessen, which specialized in smoked, brined and spiced meats. In time, however, the New York deli, a beloved institution, would be associated with Jews.

Interestingly enough, the braided challah loaf, hailed as a Jewish invention, was a German staple.

Through the first half of the 19th century, New York's bakers were mostly Scottish and Irish. By the 1860s, the baking industry had passed into the hands of Germans.

Irish immigrants mostly asserted their identity through religion, music and dance rather than food, Ziegelman claims. The exception to this rule was alcohol, mainly Irish whiskey.

In America, as back home, Irish newcomers were attached to a an "oppressively dull" diet consisting of potatoes and buttermilk, oatmeal, turnips, cabbage and bacon, she notes.

Italians revelled in their culinary traditions, regarding them as "cultural touchstones," Ziegelman says.

Apart from pasta, Italians were drawn to olive oil and olives, anchovies, jarred peppers, dried mushrooms, artichokes cured in salt, canned tomatoes and tomato paste, vinegar, herbs like oregano and garlic, cured meats and cheeses.

And Italians, particularly Sicilians, were extremely fond of bread.

At first, Americans showed contempt for Italian fare, but today no national cuisine, as exemplified by spaghetti, is more embraced than Italian.

Jewish immigrants relied at first on a diet of dried peas and beans, potatoes, porridge, rye and black bread, cabbage, turnips and dried and pickled fish.

Like the Irish, Jews depended on the lowly potato because it was cheap and dense in calories and nutrients.

The potato kugel, the mainstay of Polish Jews, was concocted from grated raw potatoes and onions, goose fat, eggs and bread crumbs, all mixed together and baked until golden and crispy.

A Jewish-owned store in New York City in the 1930s.

Chicken noodle soup was a luxury usually reserved for Fridays and holidays.

Goose fat, which represented the essence of goodness, was widely used in Jewish households, but eventually, it was supplanted by chicken fat.

To Jews, the pushcart – a ubiquitous sight in crowded outdoor markets – was a reminder of the old country. Of the 4,000 pushcarts in Manhattan, 2,500 could be found on the Lower East Side.

Ziegelman says that tenement housewives shuttled between the pushcart and the kitchen frequently to ensure the freshness of their meals.

Pickle stands were also popular, with pickles sold individually or fished from the barrel and packed into jars.

By the 1890s, delis were as common "as bricks in a building." But the dairy restaurant, with its focus on vegetarian foods made from grain, vegetables, milk and eggs, soon came into vogue.

Informative and well-written, *97 Orchard* brims with intriguing facts and thoughtful observations, lifting the lid off the melting pot.

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Interactive books for toddlers, teens and parents

By ELAINE COHEN
Supplements Co-ordinator

Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, is an ideal time to present captivating books and an interactive journal. Usually, the younger generation receives a fair share of latkes, coins and dreidels. However, when it's time to settle down, books serve as a permanent memento of the occasion.

***Bear in Underwear* by Todd H. Doodler, aka Todd Goldman, Blue Apple Books**

Preschoolers love to touch everything they see, and the colourful illustrations on the cover of *Bear in Underwear* are sure to catch their eye. A cutout portion of the hardcover includes an insert of soft, white cotton underwear. Once the kiddies touch the fabric, they are eager to turn to page 1.

American author/illustrator Todd H. Doodler is also well known in the art world as Todd Goldman. This is his debut with Blue Apple Books. It's distributed by Raincoast Books in Canada. The talented, modest, author refers to himself as a "professional doodler," and his illustrations and prose are proof of his sense of humour and keen perception of people, places and things. He is the author illustrator of several books and has appeared on MTV.

Sometimes youngsters are reluctant to make the transition from diapers to training pants. There is no guarantee reading *Bear in Underwear* will solve the problem, but witnessing the thrill shared by bear and his furry animal friends when they discover a backpack filled with underwear may well serve as an incentive. Moreover, it may have a positive effect.

The whimsical tale is presented in large, boldface print. The illustrations combined with print prompt children to follow along. Bear has a wide choice of panties. Despite the array of flamboyant styles and hues, this curious creature surprises everyone by picking a conventional pair of plain, white underwear.

***Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll**

Some stories never go out of style, and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is an example of fantasy fiction that bridges the generation gap. Author Lewis Carroll, pseudonym of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, penned this book in 1865 and also wrote another Alice story, *Through the Looking Glass*, as well as T*he Hunting of the Snark*. Alice is such a polite girl that she serves as a model of refinement. Of course, the story is pure fantasy, but like real people, the cast of characters embraces diverse temperaments.

However, the significance of the illustrated edition published by Chronicle Books is Cooper Eden's compilation of illustrations. Eden, with Starsnap Studio, owns one of the largest collections of vintage picture books in the world. This classic edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is distributed by Raincoast Books in Canada. Readers are treated to an extensive collection of images created by artists from different eras, including the original illustrator, John Tenniel, as well as Arthur Rackham, Margaret Tarrant, Charles Robinson, Gertrude Kay, Maria Kirk and Millicent Sowerby.

Readers and art lovers of all ages will be enthralled by the stunning illustrations depicting each illustrator's interpretation of Alice and the other characters.

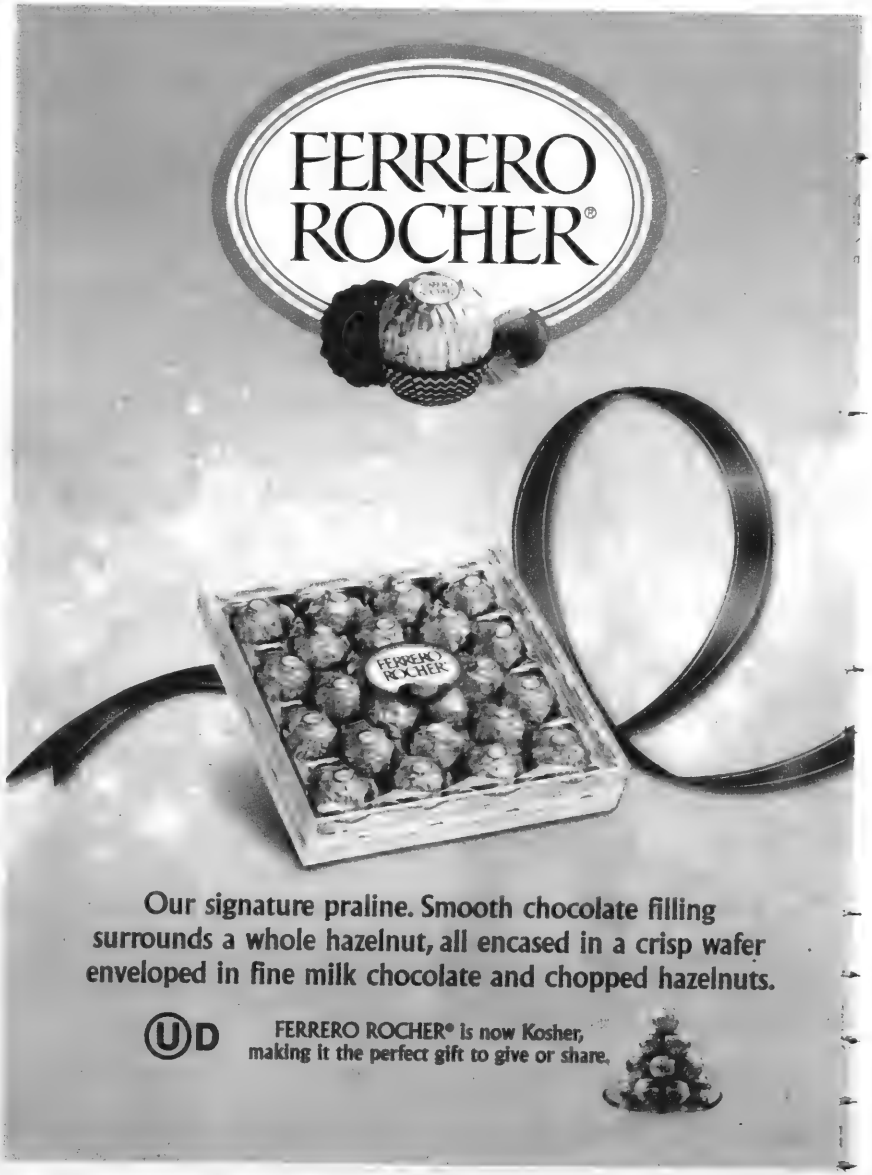
***Just between us: a no-stress, no-rules journal for girls and their moms* by Meredith and Sofie Jacobs, Chronicle Books**

In today's busy world, it's often hard to find the opportune time to broach sensitive subjects with our loved ones. A daughter may be confused or worried, or eager to share exciting news, but at that very moment, her mom may be preoccupied or unavailable. Invariably, people postpone these chats and ultimately fail to interact.

When faced with a similar situation, Sofie, then nine, took the pro-active approach. She immediately jotted down her concerns and placed her prose where her mother would be sure to spot it. Sure enough, Meredith responded and a spirited repartee ensued. Moreover, Meredith recognized the merit in her daughter's jottings and subsequently elaborated on the process. To ensure continuous interaction, Meredith started to include useful prompts in her journal. Here is a sampling: "My first crush (and what I've learned since!)," "Questions I have for you," "My favourite sport to play (or why I don't like sports)."

Now Sofie is a teenager and their engaging solution shows no signs of waning. The dedicated mother and daughter team continue to address each other and plan to save their documentation for future generations. Consequently, today's journal will become tomorrow's memoir and their progeny will gain insight into the kinship, interests and concerns of their matriarchs.

Just between us is a beautifully bound 144-page hardcover journal distributed in Canada by Raincoast Books.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It's time to sing. Dafna is back!

By MORDECHAI BEN-DAT
Editor

In time for Chanukah, Dafna is back. The celebrated, spirited singer, songwriter and educator has just released two new CDs aimed, typically, and engagingly, at the listening senses of young children and their grateful parents.

Eight: Chanukah with Dafna! offers eight songs, one ostensibly to accompany each candlelighting. Her voice partners with the guitar as smoothly as peanut butter does with jam. But, of course, we hear the sounds of more than the guitar. Harmonica, mandolin, viola, banjo, piano and percussion round out the harmonies throughout the collection.

Four of the songs are familiar Chanukah tunes, the traditional melodies of the holiday that we sang when we were youngsters. Dafna sings them with her signature clarity and bold voice.

The other songs are either original compositions or original music to familiar holiday poems by Dafna and her husband, Adam Kotok. The song *Shmona*, for example, sung somewhat in a brassy country and western style is a rallying declaration of freedom.

Ocho Kandelikas by Flora Jagoda and Joshua Jacobson, sung in Spanish with children joining, is a playful countdown of the holiday's candle-lighting.

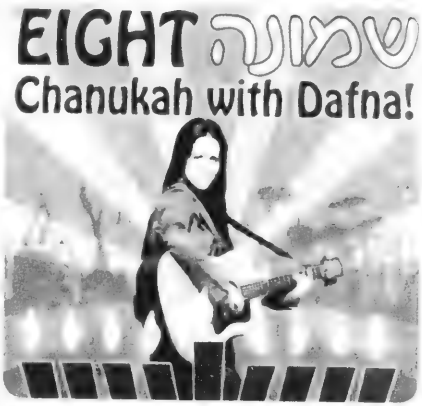
Shelanu is Dafna's characteristic hybrid of musical offerings. Sung in Hebrew in varying styles, beats, and to a mixed array of musical accompaniment, the CD reaches out to children but touches us, their parents, too.

The first song on the disk, *Shelanu*, from which the CD takes its name, is a musical seminar on sharing and caring. The soft harmonies and smilingly mischievous singing ensure the message hits home.

Lo Norah makes the musical point that it's not so bad to fall because falling means we learn how to rise – a lesson for us all.

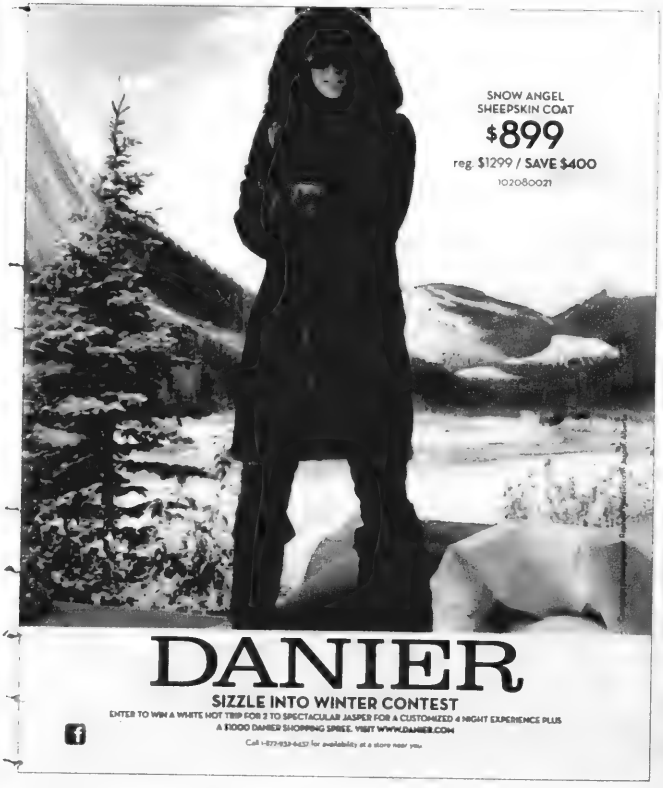
Even Bob Dylan's *Forever Young* is treated in a uniquely Dafna-ian manner: in Hebrew, emphatically, positively with sweet acoustic guitar riffing.

The New York-based artist, who has a degree in music therapy, is a chanteuse for children. Her music combines an infectiously happy, enthusiastic singing manner with a teacher's gentle didacticism. Her "lessons" touch us like sparrow's kisses: tender yet memorable.



Part folk singer, part rock artist, part kindergarten teacher, Dafna is a welcome influence for our children and entertaining listening for us.

Shelanu and *Eight: Chanukah with Dafna!* are available at shirfun.com and dafnamusic.com, as well as at Amazon.com, cdBaby, iTunes and other digital storefronts.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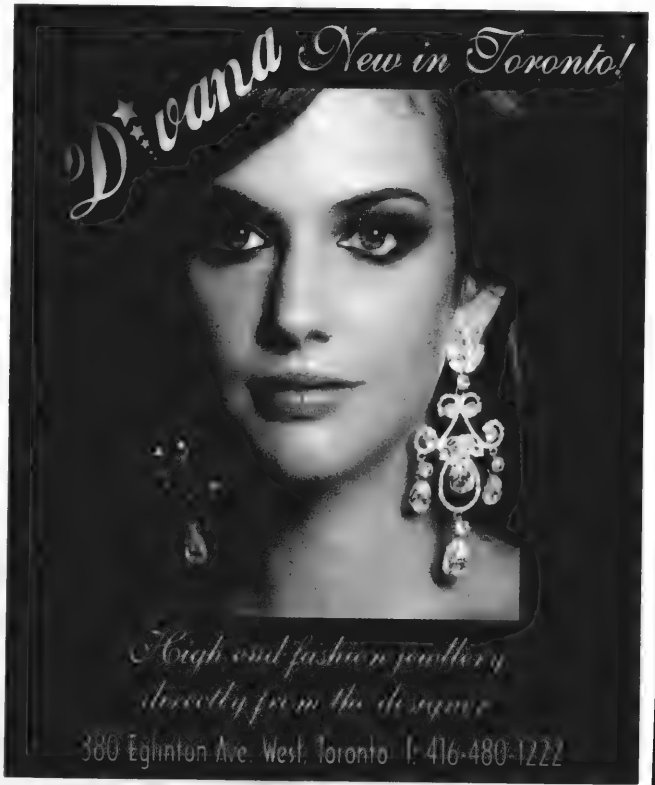

Jewish toys help parents relate the Chanukah story

By EDMON J. RODMAN
JTA

Want to increase your odds for Chanukah fun? Holiday offerings this year feature Jewish toys that flash, spin and challenge – including No Limit Texas Dreidel, a poker version of the classic top game. There's even something for the family pet

With new Jewish designs from niche and mainstream manufacturers, finding something your kids will want won't be a stretch. Or if it is, at least it'll be a wearable one.

"We expect Chanukah silly bands to sell a ton," says Laurie Glusman, founder of the OyToys cyber store, of the Chanukah-themed variation on the fad elastic wristbands being worn by American schoolchildren.

The bands, which feature shapes like the outline of a menorah, Maccabee or dreidel, come in packs of 18 and sell for under $5.

"My three kids come home from school wearing the regular ones," says Glusman, who runs her six-year-old business out of Atlanta. "It's great they now have Jewish ones to trade and wear."

The bands are part of an inventory of children's toys, games, puzzles and craft sets with a Jewish theme that Glusman says has been growing since OyToys.com has been in business. The company ships to Canada and anywhere around the world.

Among the new offerings, the oldest Chanukah toy, the dreidel, is still a "huge seller," she says. "No Limit Texas Dreidel is a distant cousin of the earliest humble versions that were made out of lead.

Will kids test the table limit on gelt?

The Texas version combines the dreidel game with poker, offering kids nine and older the opportunity to "check, bet, raise or fold, depending on the strength of your dreidel hand or how much you like to bluff," according to the online catalogue

Other updated dreidels include a pair of Dueling Bouncing Light Up Dreidels, as well as a Techno Dreidel with Light and Sound.

After surveying the new offerings at this year's wholesale toy shows, Glusman sees a return to "standard popular items" and expects "board games, dreidels and card games such as Chanukah Go Fish to sell well this year."

Big this year are also Jewish toys for the family dog. OyToys sells a blue plush toy bone marked "kosher" and a plush ant marked "*shpilkes*," among others.

Jewish toys are a niche product category that has long been dominated by small, sometimes traditionally oriented companies such as JET, Jewish Educational Toys of Chicago.

JET produces board games with halachically wholesome content and imagery that until recently usually sold in Jewish bookstores.

Now you can buy one of its popular games, Kosherland, which is inspired by Candyland, at Moderntribe.com.

JET, also drawing from the shelf of popular American word games, produces Jewish and Junior Jewish editions of Apples to Apples, that "game of hilarious comparisons."

Until recently these companies have had little competition from larger American toy companies. But since 2004, the year Glusman opened her business, "the number of products have increased dramatically," she said.

During that time, the mainstream toy manufacturer Melissa and Doug, already known to parents for its sturdy line of wooden activity toys, entered the Jewish toy market with several holiday peg puzzles.

Looney Labs, publisher of Fluxx, the card game "of ever-changing rules," also has entered the Jewish market with an expansion pack with "Jewish themes of the Torah and Shabbat."

Continued on page 48

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Rebecca Rubin has a Chanukah-themed outfit

Continued from page 47

Included is a "New Rule" card with a "Judaic bonus": "If you're wearing a Magen David or a chai, you may play an extra card on your turn."

Magnetic Poetry is offering a Yiddish version of its popular line that comes with the shpiel: "Words that will make your bubbie kvell." Perhaps the most famous dive into the Jewish toy box was in 2009 when American Girl, which is owned by Mattel, debuted the Russian-Jewish girl doll Rebecca Rubin.

The doll continues to attract seasonal attention with the addition of a Chanukah-themed outfit, a purple jacquard-striped dress with white stockings and shoes, and an accessory set that comes with a menorah, candles, dreidel and gelt.

Soon after the launch, however, American Girl discovered that its entrance into the Chanukah toy market would not come without a bit of *tzuris*. According to the Product Reviews on the American Girl website, the outfits were "way too snug" and were difficult for a child or an adult to put on.

Not to worry: Rebecca hadn't eaten too many latkes.

An American Girl spokeswoman, Susan Jevens, acknowledged in an e-mail that there were "fit issues" with the popular doll in its first production run, "but they have been resolved."

Glusman, who is also a child psychologist, says Jewish toys can help parents relate the Chanukah story to their children.

"It's a way of parents and grandparents to share their knowledge," she says.

Glusman adds that for households in which one of the parents is not Jewish, "toys are a non-threatening way to introduce understanding of Judaism."

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Lebanon PM to visit Iran over UN Hariri report

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JERUSALEM – Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri is due to pay an official visit to Tehran on Saturday, amid tension in the country regarding an investigation into his father's 2005 assassination, a Lebanese government source said Monday.

The visit comes after Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad visited Lebanon on Oct. 13, where he received a hero's welcome from his allies, the Lebanese Shiite movement Hezbollah, Hariri's rivals on the Lebanese political arena.

Hariri is due to head a large delegation in his two-day visit to Iran. Iran, along with Syria, provides Hezbollah with finances, weaponry and training.

News of Hariri's visit coincided with speculation in Beirut that the UN Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL), which is probing the 2005 assassination of former premier Rafik Hariri, is due to issue its indictment next month.

An investigation by the Canadian Broadcasting Corp., published Sunday, claimed that UN investigators and a Lebanese police officer have unearthed evidence implicating Iran-backed Hezbollah in the 2005 assassination.

The report by CBC News details a months-long investigation which links Hezbollah to the Hariri murder, and faults the UN for having key information on the case, which it failed to pursue further.

According to the report, the UN International Independent Investigation Commission's findings are based on an extensive examination of Lebanese phone records.

According to a phone analysis by Lebanese and UN investigators, the records suggest that Hezbollah officials were in frequent contact with the owners of the cell phones that were allegedly used to co-ordinate the bomb detonation that killed Hariri.

Saad Hariri

The CBC report also points to errors done by the United Nations, such as misplacing the Lebanese phone records which allegedly identify the phones used by Hariri's killers – a crucial piece of evidence in the investigation. The report also faults the UN committee for the inadequate security provided for a key Lebanese officer who was killed after he helped the UN crack the case.

The latest evidence is a major development in the UN investigation which initially implicated Syria, even though recent media reports have already said that the United Nations prosecutor may issue indictments against members of Hezbollah. Hezbollah, however, denies any involvement.

A spokesperson for the United Nations declined to comment Sunday on the substance of the allegations.

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Social media placing IDF soldiers in the crossfire

By AMOS HAREL
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Almost two years after Operation Cast Lead, the Gaza Strip continues to haunt the Israel Defence Forces.

An American or European website, with the likely aid of Israelis, hit the IDF's underbelly last week after releasing a list of "war criminals," soldiers and officers who took part in the Gaza war. On the home front, meanwhile, the trial of a soldier from the Givati Brigade, charged with the most serious allegations thus far, kicked off with a media flurry as the defence uncovered what they claimed was an attempt to cover up the affair.

Attempts by left-leaning groups, both in Israel and abroad, to list those commanders who took part in the Gaza fighting began as soon as the Gaza war ended. But the list published last week, which included 200 names in both English and Hebrew, is a project on an entirely different scale. Apart from the names one would expect to see on such a list (the IDF chief, his incoming successor, the head of military intelligence, the Israel Air Force chief, and others), the register also included battalion commanders, company commanders, platoon commanders and even conscripted soldiers.

Photographs were also attached to many of the names, as well as the soldiers' ID numbers and even updated home addresses.

The senior officers who oversaw the operation are already used to threats and irritations. Many of them avoid travelling to countries such as England or Belgium, where legal actions have been weighed against IDF officers since the Gaza war ended. From now on, however, European travel may entail some risk even to a young platoon commander from the Paratroopers Brigade, who may have in the meantime been released from the IDF and was considering studying abroad. Beyond the threat of arrest, a publication of this nature may trigger some very unpleasant responses with which Israelis may have to contend.

Anyone who was surprised to find his name on the list could have a shot at a libel suit against the site, considering that the information will most likely not be taken off the Internet.

Who's responsible for the publication? While the list is riddled with inaccuracies, such as the inclusion of soldiers who never participated in the Gaza fighting, it remains clear that Israelis – maybe even soldiers – were part of the long-time effort to gather meticulous details concerning those listed.

Some of the data (birthdates, places of residence, certainly of those higher up in the command) is not information that is readily available to the public. Considerable proficiency is in play here: even the names of those who replaced wounded battalion commanders during the war are named.

The IDF was visibly embarrassed as a result of the publication. Maj.-Gen. Avi Zamir, head of the IDF's personnel directorate, vowed to "support soldiers and officers" whose names appear on the list, but the situation probably calls for something more, perhaps even an investigation into whether soldiers aided the list's compilers.

As a side note, it is interesting to note that technology and the Internet have again worked to the detriment of the security forces, as was the case earlier this year with the assassination of Hamas' Mahmoud al-Mabhouh in Dubai, which local police has blamed on the Mossad.

In the case at hand, ordinary soldiers have left digital footprints (Facebook pages, blog entries, photographs, media appearances), which allowed allegations to be hurled against them. Members of the Givati and Paratroopers brigades, who were interviewed more frequently during Operation Cast Lead – or are more active on Facebook – have a much larger stake in the list, compared with other units.

CHAT vice-principal 'shocked' at yeshiva's proposal

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

A representative of an Israeli yeshiva recently offered $1,000 to Rabbi Eli Mandel, vice-principal of Jewish studies at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, for every student who attends the yeshiva after leaving high school.

Referring to the yeshiva, which accepts North American students for a post-high school year, on Nov. 8, Rabbi Mandel wrote on Lookjed – a listserv for Jewish educators affiliated with Bar-Ilan University's Lookstein Center for Jewish Education – "I recognize that recruitment for Israel yeshivot is a cut-throat business, but I was (perhaps naively) shocked at a recent proposal made to me by a somewhat prestigious yeshiva, to remain nameless."

He added that it is the first time he has been approached with this type of offer in seven years of doing Israel guidance.

Rabbi Mandel declined to comment further, but Paul Shaviv, TanenbaumCHAT's director of education, told *The CJN* in an e-mail that he has not come across the phenomenon before either. Others who responded to Rabbi Mandel's posting, however, indicated that such offers are not the only inappropriate practices by Israeli yeshivot.

Todd Berman, associate director of Yeshivat Eretz Hatzvi in Jerusalem, wrote that it is time to draft ethical guidelines for all institutions and recruiters. Issues that might be addressed could include publicly criticizing other institutions, pressuring students before the agreed-upon date for acceptances, stringing along candidates by offering acceptance letters and not delivering, and misleading advertising, he suggested.

Rabbi Mandel was criticized by at least one listserv member for not naming the yeshiva.

Shaviv explained: "The school decided to remain discreet regarding the identity of the institution involved. However, we have informed them that we are not sending them any students for the time being. Our responsibility is to give the best possible, objective and carefully considered advice to our students under all circumstances, which we will continue to do.

"It is self-understood that every school always has to act honestly and ethically," he added.

Plan approved to renovate Western Wall Plaza

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel's cabinet approved a $23-million plan to renovate the Western Wall Plaza and part of Jerusalem's Jewish Quarter.

The five-year plan approved Sunday will preserve and improve accessibility to archeological findings, upgrade infrastructure and provide a place to hold educational activities for students and soldiers, according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

Work is expected to start next year and be completed in 2015.

Some eight million people visited the Western Wall in 2009, up from four million in 2004.

The plan will be administered by the Prime Minister's Office and will be implemented through the Western Wall Heritage Foundation. It will be financed by the interior, transportation, tourism, public security and education ministries, as well as by the Israel Land Administration, according to the statement. "The Western Wall is the Jewish people's most important heritage site," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said. "We are committed to developing and maintaining it so that it may continue to be the focus of visits and a source of inspiration for millions of visitors, tourists, young and old, from Israel and around the world."

THE 3,000,001ST!

Israeli Tourism Minister Stas Misezhnikov, right, greets Pastor Rivhmer Areu Lhadislau as the 3,000,001st tourist to visit Israel this year. Pastor Lhadislau arrived with a group of pilgrims from Brazil on Nov. 22.
[Flash90 Photo]

Jewish groups condemn effort to ban circumcision

JTA

SAN FRANCISCO — San Francisco-area Jewish organizations condemned a proposed ballot measure to outlaw Jewish ritual circumcision in the city.

The Anti-Defamation League, the local Jewish Community Relations Council, the Board of Rabbis of Northern California and the American Jewish Committee together issued a statement expressing "great concern" about the proposed measure, which would make the practice of brit milah, or ritual circumcision, on anyone under age 18 a misdemeanour carrying a $1,000 fine.

"For thousands of years, Jews around the world have engaged in this important religious ritual, which is of fundamental importance in the Jewish tradition," the statement said. "The organized Jewish community is deeply troubled by this initiative, which would interfere with the rights of parents to make religious decisions for their own families."

San Francisco resident Lloyd Schofield is spearheading the effort to collect enough signatures to get the anti-brit milah measure on the ballot next year. At least 7,100 signatures are needed to qualify. Schofield wants to ban the practice of male circumcision, including for Jewish religious purposes. Female circumcision is already illegal. Likewise, Schofield argues, male circumcision on boys under the age of consent should be illegal, too.

"People can practise whatever religion they want, but your religious practice ends with someone else's body," Schofield said in a recent interview with CBS. "His body doesn't belong to his culture, his government, his religion or even his parents. It's his decision."

While the proposed measure has drawn international media attention, the Jewish agencies who condemned the effort said they believed any such measure would be defeated at the ballot box.

"San Francisco has a tradition of embracing the diversity and respecting the religious customs of its citizens," the joint statement said. "We trust that the voters of San Francisco will see this proposed initiative as an affront to that tradition and to their freedom."

Call for Claims Conference ombudsman

JTA

NEW YORK — In the aftermath of the discovery of a $42.5-million fraud at the Claims Conference, a group of Holocaust survivors has called for the appointment of an ombudsman.

The American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Their Descendants called on the Conference of Jewish Material Claims Against Germany to hire an ombudsman acceptable to the survivor community "to advocate on behalf of and represent the interest of the survivors."

Former and current employees of the Claims Conference were among 17 people charged earlier this month by the U.S. Attorney's Office in New York with participating in the fraud, in which claimants falsified information to receive payments from the Hardship Fund. The fund was established by the German government to give one-time payments of approximately $3,600 to those who fled the Nazis as they moved east through Germany.

In all, 4,957 one-time payments totaling $18 million were obtained from the Hardship Fund through the alleged fraud. Another $24.5 million went to 658 fraudulent pension claims.

The alleged fraud, which dates back to the mid-1990s, remained hidden so long because Claims Conference staffers at various levels conspired to hide and manage the false claims.

Israel begins building barrier on Egyptian border

JTA

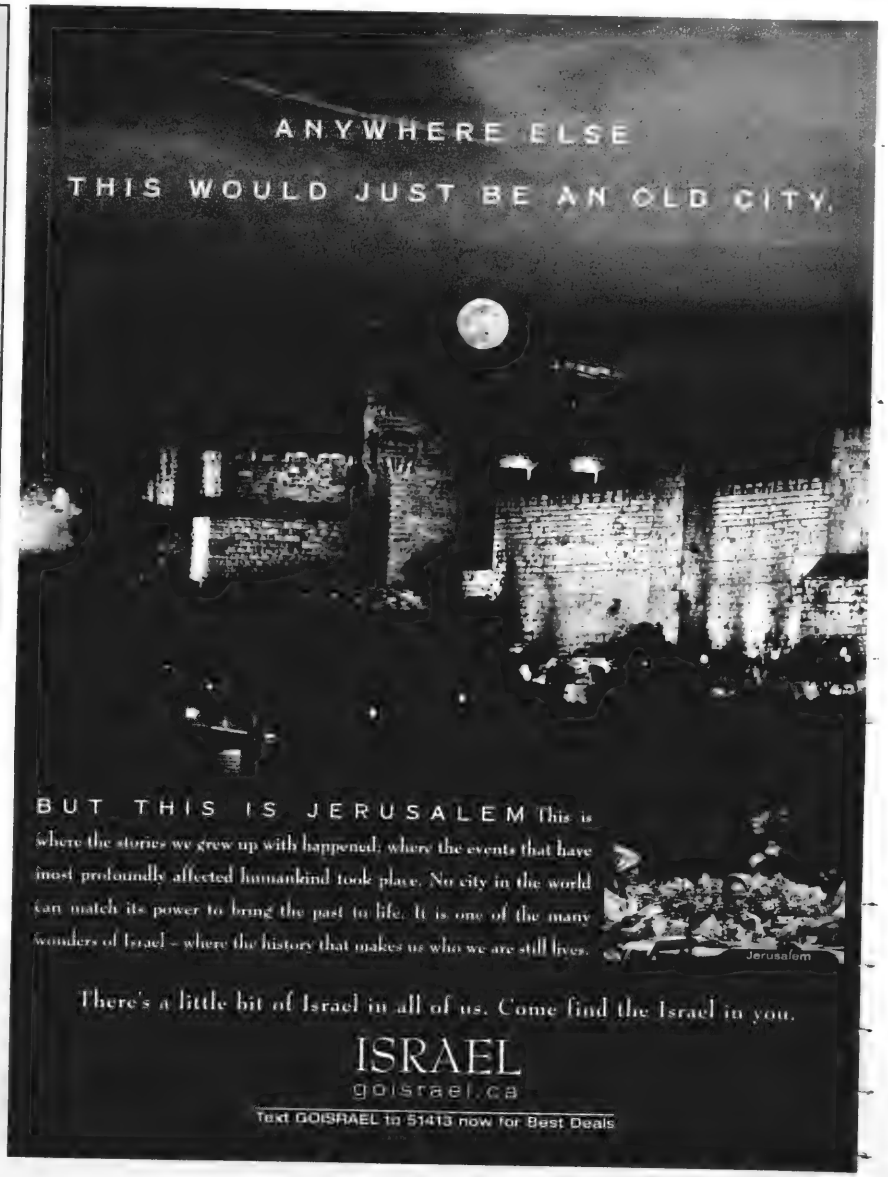
JERUSALEM — Israel has begun construction of a barrier along its border with Egypt.

Engineers were scheduled to fan out along Israel's southern border Monday and prepare the ground for the construction of the barrier and electronic fence.

The nearly $375 million, 155-mile project is being undertaken in order to prevent migrant workers from entering Israel as well as to deter terrorists and drug smugglers.

Hundreds of illegal migrants from Africa enter Israel each week. Nearly 11,000 have entered Israel since January, according to Israel's Population and Immigration Authority. Most are economic migrants searching for work, though a couple hundred asylum seekers have been granted refugee status in recent years.

Dozens of migrants, who pay smugglers thousands of dollars to help them cross the border from Egypt into Israel, have been shot and killed by Egyptian soldiers.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UNESCO needs a course correction

BY DANIEL S. MARIASCHIN
JTA

OPINION

How's this for a philosophical question: can you hold a conference dedicated to the open debate of some of the biggest issues in society in a nation that is among the least amenable to any free and open public discussion?

Apparently the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) thought you could, and chose Tehran to host its ninth annual World Philosophy Day scheduled for this month.

After an international outcry, and just weeks before it was to start, UNESCO withdrew its support from the Tehran location. The decision by director-general Irina Bokova was the right one, and we commended her for it.

Still, it is hard not to wonder about UNESCO's initial choice – just one in a string of recent puzzling UNESCO decisions.

In late October, UNESCO's executive board decreed, in a 44-1 vote with 12 members abstaining, that Rachel's Tomb and the Cave of the Patriarchs should not be included on Israel's list of national heritage sites. UNESCO's resolution read that "the two sites are an integral part of the occupied Palestinian territories."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, responding to the UNESCO decision, said that "The attempt to separate the nation of Israel from its cultural heritage is absurd."

Historians – Jewish, Christian and Muslim – have long recognized Rachel's Tomb as the burial place of Rachel, a matriarch in Jewish history. And historians also recognize the Cave of the Patriarchs as the grave site of Abraham and Sarah; Isaac and Rebecca; and Jacob and Leah – Judaism's forbearers.

The two ancient locations are uncontestable Jewish holy sites.

UNESCO's executive board also concluded its 185th session last month by passing a resolution condemning Israel's security fence, which has had success in preventing terror attacks emanating from the West Bank. The resolution made no mention of Palestinian terrorism.

These incidents demonstrate how this UN body, like too many others, succumbs to political pressures. UNESCO needs to be a better steward of its own mission "to create the conditions for dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples based upon respect for commonly shared values."

It is impossible to fathom how Iran was tapped to host a conference at which philosophers from around the world would, according to a UNESCO official, hold "debates in which each and every person should feel free to participate according to his or her convictions."

That is something not even remotely possible in Tehran, where protesting the government can at best send you to prison and, at worst, end in a state execution. As state policy, Tehran continues to violate even the most minimal standards of human rights.

As the global leader in state-sponsored terrorism, Iran arms and funds terrorists. Its leaders defy the demonstrated will of the international community by continuing to pursue an illicit nuclear weapons program in violation of UN sanctions and numerous UN Security Council and International Atomic Energy Agency resolutions.

Jews praying at Rachel's Tomb Tisha b'Av this year. *[Flash90 photo]*

Hosting a prestigious global event, particularly one with the UN imprint, is an honour and elevates the host in stature. How can any legitimate international institution have considered bestowing this honour on Iran, a nation that much of the free world has condemned?

Iran publicly and defiantly – even proudly – threatens to destroy Israel, another UN member state. And yet a UN body, even if temporarily, deemed it a worthy host to an international gathering.

Choosing Iran to host this meeting of the minds sent a significant message that its authoritarian regime is acceptable, and that a nation can simultaneously defy the United Nations in one arena and be honoured by one of its agencies in another.

This is a moral line that UNESCO should never have crossed. The Tehran government represents the polar opposite of free and open discussion.

Philosophy is the study of wisdom and rational argument. It's about questioning what we think we know and the way things could be. It's about debating ideas. The United Nations should have known that the free will and independence required in philosophy are unknown in Iran.

UNESCO's track record in its just-concluded session bodes ill for its neutrality. Without a serious course correction, UNESCO will soon be defined by these bad decisions, and its ability to provide the opportunities to open doors and minds through cultural exchange will be severely damaged.

Daniel S. Mariaschin is the executive vice-president of B'nai B'rith International.

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Israel Briefs

Seven mild quakes hit north

An earthquake measuring 3.6 on the Richter scale hit northern Israel on Nov. 16, the seventh tremor in two days. The morning's earthquake hit near the border with Lebanon, and marked the highest magnitude quake of the seven that began on Sunday evening with a 2.7 tremor, *Ha'aretz* reported. Residents of the Upper Galilee reported feeling the quake on Nov. 16, according to the newspaper. No injuries or damage were reported. Israel sits on the Syrian-African fault, and mild earthquakes aren't unusual in the region. Most schools and hospitals in Israel were built before new building codes were enacted, which include earthquake safety regulations, and at least 50,000 residential buildings in Israel don't meet earthquake-proof standards, according to *Ha'aretz*.

Bnei Brak decree condemned

U.S. Jewish groups condemned rulings by rabbis in the Israeli city of Bnei Brak that ban residents from renting apartments to African refugees. The Anti-Defamation League called the decrees, issued this month, "biased pronouncements." Six leading haredi rabbis in Bnei Brak issued a ruling that followed a similar call in July by rabbis in nearby Tel Aviv. "We encourage the rabbis to follow the Jewish tradition of tolerance and empathy toward other human beings. We call on the religious, political and civic leadership in Israel to stand by the democratic values of acceptance and understanding and speak out against these biased pronouncements," ADL's Israel office said. The American Jewish Committee also condemned the decrees.

Israeli firms win GE contest

Two Israeli companies were among the five winners of the GE Ecomagination Challenge. The challenge, launched last July, is part of General Electric's work to accelerate development of the next generation power grid and global energy transformation through open collaboration. An independent panel of judges selected the ideas, which are designed to create a smarter, cleaner and more efficient electric grid. The winners each will receive $100,000 (US) to develop their ideas. The GridON company of Givatayim created a fault-current limiter to protect the electric grid from disruptions and power outages. The technology was developed in collaboration with Bar-Ilan University and Ricor Ltd. WinFlex of Kiryat Yam produced rotors for wind turbines from light, flexible, inexpensive cloth sheets made of composite materials. Some 4,000 ideas were generated during the challenge.

Israel leaves town

Israel will unilaterally withdraw from Ghajar, a town on its border with Lebanon, Israel's security cabinet decided. The pullout from Ghajar, situated half in Lebanon and half in Israel's Golan Heights, will take place in co-ordination with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon within the next 30 days. The final agreement, including the withdrawal date, will be brought to the Israeli cabinet for a vote to redeploy Israeli troops. The withdrawal satisfies the terms of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 passed after the Second Lebanon War in 2006.

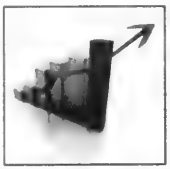
– *from JTA*

Business

Hand-made golf clubs a family affair

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It may be golf's off-season, but one big box store has already started marketing new clubs. One name-brand high-tech driver starts at $449, but that's not the highest of the high-end products available. A single Maruman Prestigio Gold Premium Driver can be purchased for the mind-boggling sum of only $2,999.99.



Golf equipment prices include pretty substantial markups, but you don't have to spend an arm and a leg to get good quality clubs, said Daniel Sherkin.

Sherkin, part of the family-owned company, MDgolf, makes custom clubs for tournaments, businesses and even individuals. The price points for various clubs and apparel come in far below even the sale-priced equipment available in retail chains.

Individual clubs range in price from $25 to $35 when batches of 150 are purchased, while drivers sell for $90 to $100 a club. Entire sets, from driver to putter, go for $300 to $400.

Sherkin, who's in business with his brother, David, and father, Marc, painstakingly puts the clubs together himself and guarantees their quality.

Drivers, utility clubs and wedges are the main sellers. Sherkin, who can hit a nine-iron 150 yards, said the longer clubs will give you 15 yards greater length and are 15 degrees straighter than off-the-shelf merchandise.

Sales of the custom-made items have been growing since the business was launched almost seven years ago. Four years ago, the family group added Blue Ice Hockey to its inventory of sporting goods equipment, featuring lightweight sticks employing nano-technology in the shafts.

MDgolf is primarily aimed at the business market. "It's corporate promotional solutions, branding solutions and marketing expertise through sporting goods and events," said Sherkin, 23.

Corporate and charity golf tournaments are a regular feature on the spring sports calendar and participants usually come home with all sorts of giveaways, inlcuding golf balls stamped with corporate logos, hats and assorted golf tools. Sherkin said the utility of that sort of promotion is limited, as the balls and other items are often lost within a few weeks.

Instead, why not offer participants a $30 club bearing the corporate name etched permanently by laser. Not only does that sort of giveaway have a greater impact than balls or a hat, but every time the golfer reaches into his or her bag, the company's name stares back at them, Sherkin said.

Apparently the idea has caught on. Five years ago, the company sold a total of 1,500 clubs. This year, Sherkin expects sales to hit 15,000, and that doesn't include sets made for friends and family.

Data compiled in 2009 by the Strategic Networks Group (SNG) for the National Allied Golf Associations, (Golf Canada is a member), showed that "Canadian golfers spend an estimated $13.1 billion annually on golf, which includes [$2.1 billion in] related equipment."

SNG also found that golf is Canada's largest participatory sport with six million Canadians playing – 2.5 million of them averaging 28 rounds per year.

Adding his own stats, Sherkin said from 2001 to 2006, the market for golf equipment in Canada more than quadrupled and has grown substantially since then.

MDgolf's share of that remains quite modest, as it must be when "every club is made by a Sherkin hand."

Sherkin acknowledges the company's artisan-style manufacturing limits it to a niche market, but it's one with room to grow as more corporations see the value in providing a branded item that lasts for years.

Sherkin got the idea for custom clubs a few years a ago after receiving stamped balls at a tournament and losing them within a few weeks.

"I thought, they spend money for promotional advertising and I said, 'I have a high-quality product that has the ability to be labelled and that people can put in their bags for 10 years,'" he said.

By then, he had already been making his own clubs for a few years. When he was around 16, his dad, a physician and an accomplished golfer, wanted to outfit Daniel with his own set of clubs. When they priced a full set with bag, it came to $3,500.

"My dad wanted to pay, but I said, 'No. I'm only going to play twice and I'm not going to pay $1,700 a round.'"

"My dad said, 'Okay, let's make our own clubs.'"

The two travelled to Montreal where they took a club-making course.

Back in Toronto, with the club head, shafts, grips and other equipment in hand, Daniel started to put together his own clubs. He quickly learned that "it's really easy to screw up a club."

Through a process of trial and error, he found a winning formula. He felt tremendous satisfaction "when I hit a gorgeous shot five feet from the hole."

Friends asked about his new clubs and asked him to make some for them.

Marc Sherkin, left, and son Daniel

When he took his micro-production to the next level, he started with three putters that resemble Scotty Cameron, Halo and 2-ball putters. They've added two utility clubs that resembled the Ping G5, but Sherkin is especially proud of his wedges, which he said look great and are accurate.

Cold calls led to corporate interest, and now the company boasts a prestigious roster of clients that includes IBM, BMW, BMO and, ahem, Hooters.

They've added salespeople and will shop equipment throughout Canada and the United States, though the primary market remains the Golden Horseshoe.

Summer is the busy production season, and Daniel spends long hours at the firm's assembly plant. "I try to produce $5,000 to $6,000 of inventory in one hour," he said.

"It gets redundant," he acknowledged, "but I'm focused on every square inch of the golf club and I double-check every part of the club maybe 10 times. I do really put a seal of quality on all the golf clubs."

About half of sales are to repeat customers, which prompted MDgolf to expand its line. And the firm now operates a satellite sales office in Florida, one of the biggest markets for golf equipment.

A few years ago, they expanded into hockey sticks as Blue Ice Hockey, using a technology suggested by his dad. Employing microscopic nano-technology, the process binds the shaft's carbon layers with nano-particles instead of glue, making it lighter and stronger and reducing the frequency of breaks.

About 5,000 sticks leave the shop each year, most of which are sold at trade shows or through word of mouth.

While Sherkin enjoys both sports, guitars are his passion – although that part of the business is still in the pre-development stage.

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

A different kind of 'vacation'

By MICHELLE BITRAN
Special to the CJN

Lisa Urbach doesn't go on regular vacations anymore.

"My mom says, 'Why can't you go sit on a beach somewhere,'" Urbach said, laughing.

But Urbach, 39, just can't do that. The last two trips she's taken have been charity missions to some of the poorest communities in the world.

"Most people wouldn't think of this as an ideal vacation... but it's the perfect way to travel," she said, explaining that there's nothing better than getting immersed in a culture while helping people in unfortunate circumstances.

Urbach travels and volunteers with Ve'ahavta, a Toronto-based humanitarian and relief organization that focuses on the principle of tzedakah. Two years ago, she went with a Ve'ahavta team to Buenos Aires, Argentina, for five weeks to help underprivileged Jewish children in a daycare.

That trip got her hooked on helping, and just last month, Urbach decided to give it another try, this time in Kenya. She was one of four volunteers who boarded a plane to Kenya's capital, Nairobi, stocked with "kinder kits," bags packed with school supplies, as well as wheelchairs and walkers.

Urbach said that what she saw in Argentina helped prepare her for the desperate conditions in Kenya. "When I went to Argentina, I saw a new level of poverty. I knew what I was going to be experiencing in Kenya would be far worse," she said.

Still, she tried to go into the trip without any expectations. "I really kept an open mind. I didn't want to come with any preconceived notions."

Urbach and her teammates went to help Kenyans who are living in poverty in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps after the violence that erupted as a result of the corruption in the 2007 Kenyan federal elections.

Though Urbach now works as a freelance journalist, she used to be a social worker. She credits her initial training in social work with helping her to communicate with the families in Kenya.

The Ve'ahavta team was based in Nairobi and stayed with local families, but they spent a lot of time in the many IDP camps of Rift Valley Province. While there, they distributed 2,500 schoolbags filled with supplies to local children at schools and orphanages.

The school supplies were donated by one of the volunteer team members, Mark Gavin, and his company Ecojot. Since many of the older children in the IDP camps have at least a three-kilometre walk to school each day, without knapsacks, they weren't able to bring home books and supplies to study, Urbach explained.

Excited children hold kinder kits – school bags with supplies inside – at a school in Rift Valley Province, Kenya. ***[Lisa Urbach photo]***

Lisa Urbach is seen with Mumbi, a five-year-old girl who lives with her family in an Internal Displaced Persons camp in Rift Valley.

The arrival of the Ve'ahavta team and the supplies they brought coincided perfectly with standardized testing in Kenyan schools and gave children the pens, pencils and rulers they needed to write the tests, as well as the schoolbags to carry them in.

Without the help of the Israeli Deputy Ambassador to Kenya, Maor Elbaz-Starinsky, the supplies probably wouldn't have made it through customs on time. In fact, the Ve'ahavta group was assisted by the Jewish communities in Canada and in Nairobi, as well as by Israel and a Kenyan NGO called Marafiki.

For Urbach, it was important to be on a trip organized by the Jewish community. "I think it's important as Jewish people to get out there and help communities that may not know Jewish people other than what they read in the papers," she said.

Urbach's role on the trip was mainly to tutor and play with the children, many of whom weren't able to go to the overcrowded schools. She explained that, although the children were living in abject poverty and many of them didn't even have shoes, their spirits were as playful as those of children you'd see anywhere else.

"It's hard to believe that these were the same little faces that witnessed the trauma that they did," she said, clearly moved by their strength.

Many of the children in the IDP camps are orphans. Others have seen their parents get violently attacked, and still more are living with diseases such as AIDS.

"It was hard at times not to cry," Urbach said about seeing the children in such terrible conditions, "but it didn't feel right [to cry] because they were so happy and so excited to see you."

Urbach was equally surprised at how positive the adults in the IDP camps were. "They didn't seem depressed, they seemed hopeful," she said, adding that, though conditions in the IDP camps are deplorable, the people who live there are safe from the violent enemies that were pursuing them during the post-election chaos. In the camps, they have the opportunity to begin rebuilding their lives in peace.

Organizations like Ve'ahavta give them some of the help they need to do this. Urbach's team member Corinne Farber brought knitting supplies and set out to teach the women suffering from HIV a new skill. "She gave them the needles and the yarn and they just lit up," Urbach said.

Urbach also noticed how the people in the camps were quick to help one another, especially the children. She explained that older siblings took care of their younger brothers and sisters the way parents care for a child. "It really humbles you a lot," she said of how the kids share what little they have and look out for one another.

Though it was not easy for Urbach to see the poverty faced by the people in Kenya, she is glad she went on the trip and is already itching to do another charity mission. "You get so much out of it and you give so much back," she said.

Urbach thinks her next destination may be Haiti. But for now, her mind and her heart are still very much with the people she met and helped in Kenya.

"They're hopeful that things will get better," she said, "and I'm hopeful for their sake too."

Provoking questions asked in *Forgiving Dr. Mengele*

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Forgiving Dr. Mengele is a remarkable documentary about an incredible woman.

As young girls, Eva Mozses Kor and her twin sister, Miriam, were two of the Jews subject to brutal medical experiments performed by the ruthless Dr. Josef Mengele on twins at Auschwitz.

Amazingly, archival footage exists of a group of children being led out of the camp on the day of liberation in which Eva and her sister can be seen – in the very front row.

Today Kor, who runs the Candles Holocaust Museum in Terre Haute, Ind., is at odds with some other twin survivors because of one life-changing experience: in 1995, she publicly declared her forgiveness for all Nazis – including Mengele.

After the war, like many survivors, Kor got on with her life, moving to Israel, getting married and then moving to the United States, where she became a successful real estate agent.

Her sister, Miriam, however, became very ill in the 1980s due to an injection she was given at Auschwitz which caused her kidneys to stop growing. Miriam's doctors wanted to treat her but needed to know what drugs she was injected with.

So Kors took it upon herself to find Mengele's files, founding an association of surviving Mengele twins in order to network and facilitate her task. Although this was a fruitless endeavour, and her sister died in 1993, something else happened that changed her outlook.

While researching Mengele she came into contact with another SS camp doctor, a Dr. Munch, who was acquitted of any crimes after the war. She met him at his house in Germany and found him warm and understanding. Also, he, too, suffered from nightmares of Auschwitz.

Eva and her sister lead the children out of the camp.

Remarkably, she decided to invite him to Auschwitz for the 50th anniversary of the camp's liberation in 1995 and walked under the infamous camp gate holding onto the arm of the former SS doctor.

It was there at Auschwitz, with the doctor by her side, that she read her declaration of amnesty. This didn't go over too well with many of the other survivors, who wanted nothing more to do with her. But Kors was unfazed. Her blanket forgiveness gave her complete freedom. "Getting even has never healed a single person," she said.

But Kor's unconditional forgiveness was criticized by many, and she is shown in this film being attacked, challenged and debated for her views by students, academics and other twins who were the subjects of Mengele's experiments.

The documentary has an unnecessary, misguided turn close to the end when Kors visits Israel's West Bank and engages in a debate with some Palestinians. She comes across somewhat poorly, especially when she tells the group that she didn't want to listen to their stories of hardship anymore and wishes that she stayed back at the hotel.

I'm not sure what she intended to accomplish there, but it was clearly a poor decision, both for Kors to attend and for the filmmakers, Bob Hercules and Cheri Pugh, to include the encounter – unless maybe they're just trying to show that she is a human being, imperfect like the rest of us.

Still, though, *Forgiving Doctor Mengele* is a unique Holocaust documentary that asks some provoking questions. What does it mean to forgive? Are there any limits to forgiveness? And are some deeds simply beyond forgiveness.

See Forgiving Doctor Mengele *on Nov. 29 and Dec. 4 at 9 p.m. on ichannel (197 on Rogers, 514 on Bell, 95 on Shaw and 593 on Shaw Direct).*

Biblical musical takes on sibling rivalry

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Thornhill, Ont., native Daniel Greenberg plays Dan, Joseph's half-brother in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, which returns to Mississauga's Stage West.

This updated production of the musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice has an all-Canadian cast, including Greenberg.

This is only his second professional production. He was in *The Wedding Singer*, also at Stage West, earlier this year.

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat takes audiences back to the ancient land of Canaan for the retelling of the biblical story with technicolour twists.

"Dan is one of the middle children, a full-brother of Asher," says Greenberg, who, himself is one of seven children from a blended family.

"Brother Dan is very envious and jealous of Joseph because Joseph gets star treatment with Jacob, their father. Dan lives in the shadow of Joseph, among the rest of his brothers."

Daniel Greenberg ***[Jonathan Tan photo]***

After Joseph's 11 jealous brothers sell him into slavery, he lands in prison, but then he decides to capitalize on his ability to interpret dreams. When he correctly interprets the Pharaoh's dream, the Pharaoh appoints Joseph to oversee food rationing, which saves Egypt from starvation. As a result, Joseph becomes one of the most powerful men in Egypt. The plot thickens when Joseph's brothers go to Egypt in search of food and come upon their brother Joseph, although they don't recognize him.

"It is a really great family show. It is full of different styles of music. You've got a country song, a take on a hip-hop song and a disco mega-mix at the end of the show," Greenberg says. "It is a lot of fun."

He says that the show tells us that if you have any envy toward your siblings, to buckle up and deal with it, and then it should all turn out well in the end.

"Growing up Jewish, you learn to work as a family unit and that translates to a "T" into everyday life and theatre especially, because when you work on a production, you learn your role and you learn to work together in your theatre family," Greenberg says.

He got his acting start with a Thornhill group called CharActor's Travelling Troupe, in which he says he honed his skill of acting and developed a love for the craft, before attending the musical theatre program at Sheridan College in Oakville, Ont.

In addition to Greenberg, this production's cast includes Liam Tobin as Joseph, Janna Polzin as the narrator and Shawn Wright as Joseph The show is directed by Lee MacDougall, the musical director is Anthony Bastianon, and the costume designer is Ivan Brozic.

Joseph and the AmazingTechnicolor Dreamcoat *runs from Nov. 25 to Feb. 14. For tickets, visits www.stagewest.com or call the box office at 905-238-0042 or 1-800-263-0684.*

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Arts & Travel

Copper is Chilean town's theme and miners are heroes

By NANCY WIGSTON
Special to The CJN

An estimated one billion TV watchers cheered in mid-October as "Los 33," the Chilean miners trapped deep below the earth's surface since Aug. 5, shot up in a capsule, one by one, from their gold-and-copper mine near Copiapó, capitol of Chile's mineral-rich Atacama region. Each man emerged a hero, and each was embraced by his family, the president, the minister of mines – and, by extension, the world.

Capiapó's mayor voiced his hopes for an increase in tourism - the town boasts history dating back to gold-rush days in the mid-19th century – after the world watched this tale of suspense. Perhaps officials in San Pedro de Atacama, 1060 kilometres north of Copiapó, near the Bolivian border, can advise him.

The oasis of San Pedro attracts thousands of adventure tourists each year to view natural wonders amid the driest desert on earth. Despite the dryness and the elevation (2438 metres above sea level), a visit to Atacama, in the foothills of the Andes, reveals unworldly beauty: clear light, Martian-like landscapes, geysers spewing from the earth.

My personal bit of serendipity in this adventurer's paradise was the discovery of a family connection: the mine where my father got his first job as a newly minted mining engineer. While thumbing my guidebook, looking up "copper" in the index, I realized San Pedro de Atacama was barely an hour's drive from the mine where my dad had landed in 1940. American-owned Anaconda Copper hired him as a straw boss at what was then the world's largest open-pit copper mine. This 20-something Canadian found himself in charge of men more than twice his age, while living in the company town of Chuquicamata (Chuqui for short, pronounced "CHOOchi").

As much as Dad needed the job, he was shocked by working conditions. Breaking his contract, he returned home to Montreal. Some decades later, a young Argentine, Ernesto (Che) Guevera, touring South America on his motorcycle, arrived at the same mine. Che was also shocked by working conditions in the mine. (Among Dad's Chilean tales was the one about the miner who cut off a finger to secure a few weeks' holiday.) In his travel memoir, *Motorcycle Diaries*, Che recalls meeting a Chuqui Communist who alerted him to "the unsung heroes of this battle," the miners, while disparaging the "blond, efficient, and arrogant managers" who informed him that this was no tourist town.

How times have changed. Nationalized during the presidency of Salvador Allende, the Chuqui mine attracts 40,000 tourists a year. Before I had closed my guidebook, one thing was clear: I had a date with a copper mine. During my childhood, Dad had shown me his treasured photos of the open-pit mine with walls like inverted skyscrapers dug deep into the earth. Despite the harsh conditions, he'd retained a lifelong fondness for his Chilean co-workers, for the Spanish language and for Latin-flavoured jazz. Still, after Chuqui he devoted himself to desk jobs.

A tourist gazes out at Moon Valley Sunset.

With help from my guide, I took a break from touring natural and man-made wonders around San Pedro and reserved a (free) mine-tour ticket. Joining young backpackers on an air-conditioned bus to Calama (population 138,000), the closest town to the mine, I arrived there an hour later, to find Internet cafés, markets, and a myriad of inexpensive shops. Esthetically, copper is the town's theme. The metal decorates everything from church spires to friezes on public buildings. Judging by the statue dominating the main shopping street – a copper miner posed with his drill – miners are local heroes.

A taxi drops me at Chuqui, just as Paula, today's interpreter-guide, introduces the mine's history and geology. Workers have been moved away from Chuqui's polluted air to healthier Calama, leaving intact original buildings from the 1920s and '30s. To my surprise, the tour attracts a capacity crowd, mostly Chileans, with a sprinkling of gringos; we fill the room that was once the company's office-supply store. Mural-sized photographs line the walls, showing men who worked here in an era my father would have recognized. Finishing her spiel in Spanish, Paula switches briefly to English, explaining that the mine, going strong for more than 90 years, will go on for another 90. Each statistic Paula offers is overwhelming. The mine, for instance, is 900 metres deep. Amazed to be here, I photograph everything around me, including adorable five-year-old Stefanie, who is visiting the mine with her mother and grandmother.

A short bus ride later, we all don hard hats as we climb onto the viewing platform at the edge of a mountain-high pit; below us yellow trucks chug out of the earth, in a constant parade. This platform is as far as we get to the inner workings of the mine. We are a disparate group: Americans, Norwegians and Swiss among the Chilean majority, we all take turns posing in front of a giant (but outmoded) truck by the wayside. At 3181 metres above sea level, in bright, dust-laden air, I try to imagine working here. (I fail.) Yet the group's mood is joyful; after all, we are gathered at the edge of a true wonder of the mining world.

Returning by bus to San Pedro, I change out of my dust-laden clothes – enjoy a brief desert shower – and walk across the road to the Awasi Hotel, where a friend is staying. The whole place has only eight rooms, each a self-enclosed luxury apartment. Gourmet fare is served in an open courtyard under leafy trees; we sink down onto linen couches, the better to observe tasteful decorating touches. Could my dad or Che – after my long day they're confused in my mind – imagine this place? Yes and no. No to the prices (room rates begin at $390). But yes to the traditional style: thatched roofs, stone and mud walls, wooden floors, alpaca blankets and lanterns flickering in the courtyard.

In the western-movie set that is San Pedro, stores stay open late selling ponchos, Bolivian weavings, and original pieces of silver and lapis jewelry. There's pasta to eat, Chilean wines to taste and cappuccino to be sipped while Van Morrison on the sound system sings about being born before the sun. Tomorrow beckons with a visit to the splendid local museum devoted to the area's oldest inhabitants, some of them vividly mummified by drifting sand. But for now we are content to wander the unpaved streets, to gaze up at the jewelled heavens, where the Southern Cross – another memory of my dad's – sits low in the night sky.

If you go: check out www.visitChile.com, www.sanpedrochile.com and www.calamachile.com. A good guide is essential in booming San Pedro; Juan Almendras, a Sussex University grad, is such a guide (juanalmendras69@yahoo.com).

Going deluxe? Indulge at the Awasi Hotel (www.awasi.cl) in San Pedro. In Calama, I happened on the charmingly old-fashioned Hotel El Mirador with its open courtyard, fireplace and white tower (www.hotelmirador.cl). Caution: drink only bottled water in this desert – the other kind contains arsenic, for starters.

Air Canada flies non-stop from Toronto and Montreal to Santiago. Lan Chile offers excellent service from several departure points and will help you arrange flights within Chile. The mining towns Calama and Copiapó are two hours apart by plane.

The Chuqui Copper Mine ***[N.Wigston photos]***

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

STEPHEN SONDHEIM TO MAKE RARE APPEARANCE IN TORONTO

The legendary Broadway composer-lyricist **Stephen Sondheim** celebrates his 80th birthday, the publication of a new book, and the local revival of an old work with an appearance in Toronto – an onstage conversation with journalist **Robert Cushman** presented by Mirvish Productions.

Sondheim is expected to reminisce about his career, the state of the musical theatre, the differences between film and theatre, and his own creative process on works such as *Gypsy*, *West Side Story*, *Company*, *Follies* and *Sweeney Todd*. Princess of Wales Theatre, 300 King St. W. Monday, Dec. 6, 8 p.m. $22 to $69; premium $99. 416-872-1212, www.mirvish.com

* * *

Sweetest Sounds: Acting Up Stage Company and the Toronto Centre for the Arts present *The Sweetest Sounds – A Century of Song from Rodgers to Guettel*, with **Adrian Marchuk**, **Sara Farb**, **Tony MacRae** and **Jeigh Madjus**. One performance only. George Weston Recital Hall, Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. $25 to $45. Sunday, Nov. 28, 7 p.m. 416-872,1111, www.tocentre.com

The Sisters of Sheynville

* * *

Chanukah Concerts

• Children's recording artists **Judy & David** present their 10th annual *Chanukah Live!* show with some 60 performers, including the CharActor's Travelling Troupe, **Toronto Jewish Chorus** and Judy & David's usual assortment of characters. City Playhouse, 1000 New Westminster Blvd, Vaughan. Dec. 4 and 5. 905-882-SHOW.

• **The Sisters of Sheynville** perform their annual Chanukah concert at the Rex Hotel, featuring latkes and Yiddish swing and klezmer music. 194 Queen St. W. Dec. 12, 12 noon. http://therex.ca

• Friends of Yiddish and the Toronto Workmen's Circle present *Come Light the Menorah*, featuring Yiddish folk and theatre songs by **Aron Gonshor** of Montreal's Dora Wasserman Yiddish theatre troupe. As a solo performer and leader of the **Shore Brothers Orchestra**, Gonshor has performed across North America and Europe. Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W. Sunday, Dec. 12, 2 p.m. Refreshments. $10; $5 for members of Workmen's Circle and Friends of Yiddish. RSVP to Sandy, 416 458-1440 or 416 736-8073 by Dec. 8.

* * *

Film Events

• Media Mondays presents Surfing the New Waves: Contemporary Foreign-Language Cinema, a lecture with film clips by critic **Adam Nayman.** Titles discussed include *The Death of Mr. Lazarescu*, *Yi Yi*, *A Taste of Cherry* and *The Holy Girl*. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Nov. 29, 7 to 9 p.m. $12 drop in per lecture, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *God Is Great . . . I Am Very Small*. The charming **Audrey Tatou**, who starred in *Amelie*, stars in this honest, unpredictable and sharp comedy of manners; guest speaker **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. Sunday Dec. 5, 4 and 7:30 p.m. $15, $10. 416-924-6211, ext. 606

• The Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents a screening of *Jaffa*, director **Keren Yedaya**'s take on "*Romeo and Juliet*, Middle Eastern style." A co-production of Israel, Germany and France, the "Chai Tea" film is in Hebrew and Arabic with English subtitles. Cineplex Oden Sheppard Centre Cinemas, Sunday, Dec. 12, tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. $15, 416-599-8433. www.tjff.com

* * *

Literary Events

• **Harold (Hesh) Troper** discusses his new book *The Defining Decade*, at a '60s-themed Book Salon and Coffee House. With **Dan Mendelsohn Aviv** and musical performances by **Marcia Beck** and **Annie Gilbert**. Miles Nadal JCC, co-presented with the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School. Free. Thursday, Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m.

• New Star Books and the Miles Nadal JCC present the launch of *Every Day in the Morning (slow)*, a new book by **Adam Seelig**. Miles Nadal JCC, Jacobs Lounge. Free. Monday Nov. 29, 7 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 154, www.mnjcc.org

Chanukah Live! with Judy & David

* * *

Musical Events

• Miles Nadal JCC Active Seniors presents Broadway Great Jewish Composers. Music historian **Jordan Klapman** talks about the life and music of the great **Harold Arlen** (*Over the Rainbow*). Thursday Nov. 25, 1:30 p.m. 416-924 6211, ext. 155.

• *Renee Barda – Life Begins Again!* is a concert featuring mezzo-soprano **Renee Barda** singing the classics of **Gershwin**, art songs and more. With guests **Dorothy Krizmanic** (piano), **Gideon Wilk** (clarinet) and **John Lettieri** (accordion). Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Saturday, Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. $22. 416-924-6211, ext. 0. www. algreentheatre.ca

* * *

At the Galleries: Paintings by **Rose Lindzon** and other artists are on view in the M2 Project Space, Burroughes Building, 639 Queen St. W., third floor. By appointment until Dec. 1. 416-504-5445.

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ACTING UP STAGE COMPANY

Philip Roth paints visceral portraits of a time of fear

By NORMAN RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

In recent years Philip Roth's novels – *Everyman*, *Indignation* and *The Humbling* – have been called minor works by reviewers, often in contrast with such earlier masterpieces as *The Human Stain* and *American Pastoral*.

By Norman Ravvin
Special to The CJN

These two books, reviewers recognize, encapsulated their era, finding in the lives of eastern American Jewish characters experiences that allowed Roth to interpret the political and social shifts of the post-World War II era.

His new novel, *Nemesis* (Hamish Hamilton), is receiving familiar treatment as a minor work – even J.M. Coetzee, a serious and sensitive reader of Roth's work, took this approach in a recent review essay in the *New York Review of Books*.

If this way of categorizing Roth's later work was appropriate for *Indignation* or *The Humbling*, it is not for *Nemesis*, which is a cunningly constructed book, a narrative puzzle offering both suspense and the kind of lyrical nostalgia for decades past that Roth has proved himself a master at.

The novel takes place in the sweltering summer of 1944, as the neighbourhoods of Newark watch an outbreak of polio jump unpredictably from one quarter to the next. Weequahic, the section populated by children of Polish Jewish immigrants, is at first unscathed, but in the course of the novel, the disease moves inexorably and mysteriously among the children of Weequahic's Jewish families.

Roth is canny in his treatment of the disease. Earlier books have offered readers detailed essays on glove-making, on boxing and acting, but *Nemesis* is not a source book for understanding polio. Instead, it portrays the events of 1944 much as they were experienced, in a haze of paranoia, panic and ignorance. No satisfactory prevention existed, since the causes of polio were not known.

The mystery associated with a disease that can paralyze and kill children leads Roth's characters to muse about the meaning of ill fortune. His lead character is Bucky Cantor, a young and beloved teacher of children, who is spending the plague summer overseeing a playground full of neighbourhood kids. Once the disease has killed one of these children, Bucky wonders "where does God figure in this? Why does He set one person down in Nazi-occupied Europe with a rifle in his hands and the other in the Indian Hill dining lodge in front of a plate of macaroni and cheese? Why does He place one Weequahic child in polio-ridden Newark for the summer and another in the splendid sanctuary of the Poconos?"

The novel moves in its second half to the "splendid" Poconos. There Bucky, taking the opportunity to escape the epidemic haunting the city by hiring on at a summer camp, feels he has abandoned his responsibility to his playground charges. It is at Indian Hill camp where the narrative takes a surprising turn. In the *New York Review of Books*, Coetzee allows that "a reviewer will try not to spoil the impact of a book by giving away its proper secrets," and then adds that he sees "no way of exploring *Nemesis* further without breaking this rule."

Roth's narrative twists need not be revealed here in order to convey his novel's writerly mastery and it existential punch. The narrative voice in *Nemesis* is unlike any in Roth's previous work, and so, its way of mining the American past is not comparable to works like *The Human Stain* and *American Pastoral*. It includes visceral portraits of a time of great fear; a description of the countryside, which is reminiscent of other great works that set the pastoral alongside urban catastrophe; and a quietly funny portrait of a Jewish summer camp whose philosophy and outdoor rituals follow its director's belief in "the red man as the great prophet of the outdoor life." There is nothing slight or undeveloped about the way Roth concludes his story.

In *Nemesis*, as well as in the other so-called minor books, one senses, again and again, a tone and point of view reminiscent of Roth's breakthrough book, *Goodbye, Columbus*. It is the romance of an innocent time of life – of heightened, transformative experience – that *Nemesis* explores. The way such romance is demolished by adult experience is one of Roth's enduring themes.

Norman Ravvin's new novel is called The Joyful Child. *He is chair of the Concordia Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.*

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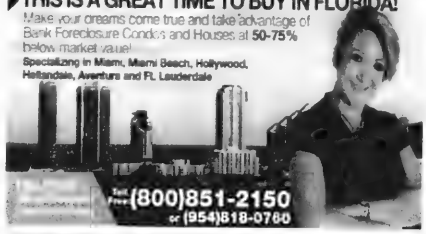
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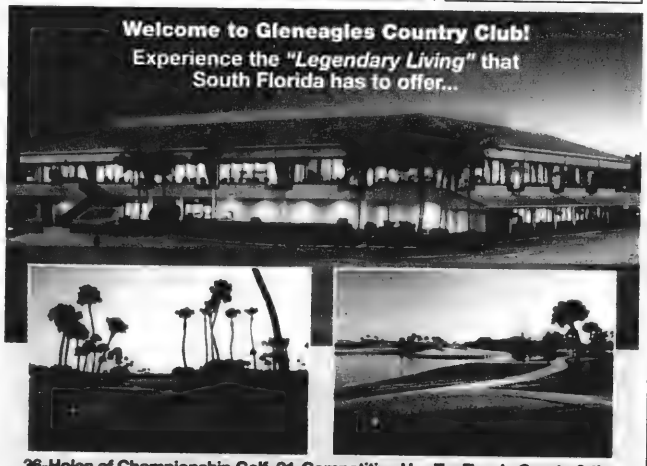

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Greater Toronto Area

AJC holds biennial meet

BY JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — The theme of the biennial conference of the Atlantic Jewish Council – What Will Our Future Hold – is a dilemma facing every small community in Canada.

The answers coming from panellists and almost 100 delegates from the four Atlantic provinces at the Nov. 20-21 event echoed every discussion. Representatives from St. John's, Nfld. to Fredericton and from Charlottetown to Halifax all stated the same mantra.

"We need more people in our communities. We need more programming. Camp Kadimah plays a major role in keeping our youth together and connected to Judaism. We have to get along with our [non-Jewish] neighbours. We have to get along with ourselves."

Arnold Bennett of St. John's, who emigrated from the United States 15 years ago, told how he and fellow Jews in his city have worked with leaders of various other church groups for a common cause – to stamp out poverty and lessen the gap between rich and poor. The combination of religious backgrounds has tightened the sense of good feeling between all communities on the island.

Jerry Costa of Annapolis Royal, N.S., who emigrated from New York 40 years ago, discovered "major differences between New York City with eight million people and thousands of Jews, and Annapolis Royal with 900 people and nary a Jewish person," has worked to bring Jewish knowledge and understanding to the community and many people in surrounding towns by hosting them at Chanukah, Passover and Rosh Hashanah celebrations to explain Jewish tradition.

"We want everyone to learn everyone else's culture so we won't look so different to each other," she said, stressing the importance of "getting along with our neighbours."

However, there were concerns that smaller numbers in both small and large communities is in major need of attention. Even Halifax has its problems despite having the largest Jewish population in the region at about 2,500 synagogue members and countless unaffiliated Jews, plus at least 1,000 Jewish students attending local universities, 800 at Dalhousie University alone.

In his final report to the community, outgoing Atlantic Jewish Council president Howard Conter of Halifax talked of divisions in both Halifax and St. John's.

"Halifax rallies around its two synagogues [Orthodox and Conservative] and has not come together as a strong unified Jewish community or voice. If it cannot be a strong beacon, there will not be much left for our children and grandchildren. A committee trying to unify the Jews of Halifax into a community first and a place of religious choice second is hard at work, and I applaud it."

He said a division between groups in St. John's "makes moving forward on initiatives as one community almost impossible." Yet, Bennett, part of Jewish Community Havura of Newfoundland and Labrador, stressed the co-operation between that congregation and the Conservative Beth-El Synagogue in many initiatives, including a Holocaust Yom Hashoah ceremony each year.

Immigration of Israeli families with Russian backgrounds to Halifax, Fredericton and Moncton, with new expansion to Saint John, N.B. has generated enthusiasm and hope. There was discussion of lack of integration of these families into Jewish life, but Nana Steinberg, a newcomer to Halifax two years ago, emphasized the concern for her family initially was finding living quarters, furniture, food and work, while trying to master English. Integrating into the community was a lesser concern.

Dov Harris
[J. Jacobson photos]

Mila Voihansky from Toronto is executive director of JIAS Canada. She is a Russian immigrant from a few decades ago, and asked the communities to be patient in seeking immediate congregational, and even community, involvement.

"Immigrants suffer a loss – of family, familiar surroundings, comfort – when they move here. Their culture is different. We have to allow time and be patient for them to get settled in new communities."

Rabbi Josef Goldman of Fredericton, a member of that community's immigration committee, said working with newcomers is an obligation for Jews. "It's a positive opportunity for us to give back as people did when our grandparents and parents came to Canada."

Another highlight of the event was the recognition of four individuals with the AJC Community Service Award.

Bennett, Shirley Burnstein of Halifax, Arnold Chippin of Fredericton and Francis Weil from Moncton, were honoured for their lifelong commitment to both Jewish life and the work they have done in the broader communities.

At a Sunday brunch sponsored by United Jewish Appeal Canada, CEO Linda Kislowicz praised Atlantic community leaders for what has been accomplished in the last two years, including the proactive immigration effort, the development of the Simon and Reva Spatz Chair in Jewish Studies at Dalhousie University, the continued strength of Camp Kadimah and the volunteerism of young people to the newly-elected board of AJC.

Dov Harris, retiring after 35 years as a fundraising executive with UJA, including 25 years of concentration in Atlantic Canada, was honoured for his special connection and affinity to the region.

In an emotional thank you, Harris said, "I don't see donors in front of me today. I see friends. What a community! You have so much to be proud of, your sense of vitality, the strong campaigns you've had. This vitality is you," he emphasized.

Shulamith Medjuck of Halifax, left was elected president of the Atlantic Jewish Council at the organization's biennial conference Nov. 21. To read story, please go to cjnews.com

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Toronto freshman makes Cornell soccer starting lineup

By BEN FISHER
Special to The CJN

For many, the first year of university is a time for new experiences. That is particularly true for Daniel Haber, a Toronto-born freshman at Cornell University whose first-year experiences happen to include tallying a critical goal and assist in his first game as a member of the Big Red men's soccer team.

Down 2-1, Haber's first goal with the team tied things up in the 77th minute of Cornell's home opener against Hartwick College. An assist on junior Will Ogden's game-winner a little more than a minute later keyed the 3-2 comeback victory and earned the 18-year-old co-rookie of the week honours amongst Ivy League squads.

But for Haber, the fondest memory came right after the goal as he was hoisted in the air by celebrating teammates.

"As I was sitting on the shoulders of my teammates and looking back at hundreds of fans cheering in the crowd," recalled Haber, "all I could think was, 'These next four years are going to be fun.'"

Just reaching this point has been an incredible journey for the youngest in a family of three soccer-playing brothers.

With oldest brother Jeremy attending Tufts University and Dylan enrolled at Queen's University, Daniel, a graduate of York Mills Collegiate Institute, knew he wanted the experience of branching out and living on his own. After a three-day camp for potential soccer recruits on the Cornell campus, the decision of where to go was an easy one.

"It was always important to me to use my soccer abilities to get the best education possible, and I knew where I wanted to be once I saw the beautiful campus," said the 5-10, 165-pound Haber. "Standing next to my father on the last day of the camp, I immediately accepted the coach's roster spot offer."

Life on the pitch seems to have come easily for Haber since joining the men's team. Earning a spot in the starting lineup after a strong pre-season showing, the forward is one of only two Cornell freshmen (along with Jake Rinow) to have played in all 16 Big Red games thus far this year. On an offensively challenged team, he's scored one of Big Red's 13 goals.

Daniel Haber is only one of two first-year players to start every game for Cornell.
[Cornell Athletic Communications photo]

Off the field, his Ivy League experience has been distinctly multicultural, studying alongside students from all over the world.

"Being at Cornell has given me the opportunity to get to know people from all over Europe, Asia, the Middle East and even a few from Africa," Haber said. "My best friend here is a girl from Sri Lanka who has taught me so much about her side of the world."

That's not to say that Haber is new to international experiences. In fact, his soccer talents brought him to Israel in 2009 to represent Canada's Under-18 team as part of the 18th Maccabiah Games. His Canadian side fell 3-0 to Mexico in the quarter-finals, but it was the connections he made with other Jewish athletes from all over the world that will stay with him.

"[The Games] gave me a great opportunity to meet Jewish athletes from all over the world," said Haber. "Whether the athlete was from Canada, the United States, England or Sweden, they all played the game with respect and a humble attitude while maintaining a high level of competitiveness."

Despite a level of soccer skill that has already taken him to Israel and is now helping him thrive at an NCAA Division-1 school, Haber has shared the same humble trait he observed in his fellow Maccabiah athletes, thanks to strong outside presences in his life.

Family has played a major role in Haber's life, with his parents – Lorie Haber and Reena Berlind – stressing the importance of a good education and grandfather Ben Haber serving as a constant source of support for his soccer passion.

The younger Haber can always rely on his grandfather to be cheering from the sidelines while keeping him motivated with tips on how to improve his game.

Beyond family influences, Haber credits his coaches at the Thornhill soccer club Spartacus – coach Alex Shikov and club president Yuri Studin – with helping him prepare for competition at the next level. Shikov preached the importance of strong technical skills and all-around play, while Studin first recognized the potential in his former protégé at the age of 12, telling Haber he "has the potential to be great."

Not that Haber is at a point where he can rest on his laurels. Despite the success of the home opener, the Big Red stumbled to a 4-8-5 record and their eighth losing season in the past nine. Haber will be a key element of Cornell's attempted return to respectability in the coming years.

Looking further down the road, soccer should remain a major part of Haber's life for a long time to come.

"I love to play soccer," said Haber, "and I will continue to play as long as it remains enjoyable."

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A raw deal

NEW TO CANADA

By NINA SHENHAV

I'm not a sushi person. In fact, I'm not a sophisticated gourmet at all.

But I pretend to be one, so when you invite me over, I'll praise and extol dishes with names I can't pronounce (usually French), but all in all, I'm a simple gal. Serve me a plate full of scrambled eggs, a soft cheese side and savoury country bread, and I'm the happiest creature in the kitchen. You can even serve me a plate of flavourful hummus with fresh pitas, and I'll get all giddy. (What can I say? You can take the girl out of the Middle East, but you can't take the Middle East out of the girl.)

So when Meir suggests paying a visit to a new "all you can eat sushi" place, I react coldly.

The problem is that while I'm indifferent, the kids are already jumping up and down in excitement. Yep. I've managed to raise some fineshmekers in my home. Especially the little one, who makes my life miserable when I try to feed her an innocent sandwich, yet makes me open my eyes in horror to the sight of huge pieces of raw salmon being swallowed by her little crater.

As we enter the restaurant, the hostess (who has good instincts) demands to measure the girl's height. My baby fails the test. She needs to pay as an adult. I take the hostess aside and convince her to measure her again, while ordering Meir in Hebrew to take off the girl's shoes and socks immediately. "Bend a little," I whisper to the girl.

"She has a difficult life, so that's her natural posture," I explain sorrowfully. No luck. People here are so suspicious!

We head to our table and start ordering. Very pleased with ourselves, we watch the portions pile up on our table. Gosh, we know how to spend our money wisely!

"Just a note," says the waitress. "What you don't finish eating, you pay for. Have a nice meal!"

We're shocked. I review the loaded table and look at Meir in horror. We start eating, as if the world is coming to an end, or at least food is. "Everything must go!" I shout nervously, recalling a commercial slogan. "Eat up, eat up! For God's sake!" Meir cries to our frightened kids.

We can hardly taste the food. All we know is that if we don't finish everything on the plate (hello, Jewish moms), bad things will happen.

"I can't eat any more," weeps my son after a few hectic, tense minutes.

"I have a shiver!" says the girl, her mouth full of raw tuna, her eyes glassy.

"Less talking, more eating!" I say to speed the people up. Meir glares at me.

"She'll throw up," he says as he tries to keep me from stuffing the girl's face. "It's only money," he adds, unconvincingly.

I'm on a mission. "You wanted sushi? You'll finish it!" I holler."

"Maybe we can shred some piece so it'll look like we started eating them," suggests my genius son, and right away we all start crushing and mashing some poor tofu and avocado slices. Finally, we're done.

We look at an abstract spot on the wall, our tongues drooping heavily out of our open mouths, and ask for the bill.

But instead of the bill, out come four large portions of tempura, dumplings and salmon teriyaki that we forgot we'd ordered.

"Sorry, those dishes take time to prepare", explains the waitress with a cruel smile. "Would you like to pay the bill now or later?"

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FITNESS CORNER

By FELYCE ZOMPARELLI

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However, a recent study published in the *British Medical Journal* concludes that calcium supplements increased the risk of heart attacks by 30 per cent in people over 40. Dr. Mark Bolland completed an analysis of 15 randomized studies involving 12,000 participants.

The data collected showed higher levels of calcium in the blood can lead to the hardening of arteries, damaged blood vessels or blood clots. An increase in dietary calcium did not show the same results and previous studies have reported that an increase in dietary calcium does not increase cardiovascular risks, leading to the conclusion that the risks are associated with the supplements.

The data collected for this analysis involved studies using calcium supplementation alone, without vitamin D. Vitamin D is very important as it increases the absorption of calcium in the blood. Other studies have found vitamin D decreased the risk of heart disease and should always be taken with calcium supplements.

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Bshas had'chak?

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

Our community has arrived at a place where it's safe to be critical of our surroundings, city hall and our police force. Or has it?

This question is not a trite one, a simple one, as it was only a few short years ago Jews felt totally uncomfortable criticizing the broader community structure, quietly believing we were guests here in Toronto, in Canada.

This sense encouraged fear of public expression. We remembered that history shows when we are comfortable, Jews suffer a short time later. While we carried with us, as well, an appreciation of the non-Jew for caring for our huddled masses, nothing jarred the phrase "None is too many" from our minds.

And from time to time we were reminded of our often tenuous position in society when a sloppy government minister or a cashier at a dollar store let an antisemitic gaffe slip down and off his/her tongue oh so unceremoniously.

I think about all of this when I consider writing an article about our local police force and its reputation for using excessive force.

To this day I struggle with the impact a written piece criticizing Toronto would have on the Jewish people.

I lug that baggage around, that trepidation. I ask, "Will we be unprotected by the police should antisemitism slide its serrated blade out of its scabbard of hatred"?

This hesitation and fear weighs heavily upon me particularly because I have listened to horrendous testimonials of abuse men and women have suffered at the hands of local police officers.

(I take a little comfort knowing this same tension has been faced by Jews of conscience throughout history.)

So when does a person place greater value on self/community security over writing an article about injustices?

Perhaps we should look at the Jewish concept of "*bshas had'chak"* (in a time of danger) to answer this.

In a time of danger, much changes within the Jewish community. As an example – our sages tell us during such times we should not advertise our Chanukah menorah in our window so as not to bring danger to our family and community.

In this case, our security is more important than promenading the light of Chanukah – a very big mitzvah.

But are we in Canada living in such times? Must we consider the laws of *bshas had'chak* when reporting?

It is correct to say that the Jews of Iran are in imminent danger – living in an environment of *bshas had'chak*. Positive quotes from Jewish community leaders defending the regime seem to suggest they are in grave danger. Stating the obvious, the brutal Iranian regime is a very real enemy of the Jewish people and Israel and would bring them death and suffering.

We, however, in Canada are not in fear for our Jewish lives, or fearful of the collapse of our democratic process. Persecution is not imminent.

While Israel is at the centre of ugly campaigns in many corners of our town, the Jewish community of Canada cannot, I believe, remove itself from acting as a witness to injustices happening within our broader ranks.

Antisemitism does exist here, of course, and we must always gauge our written and spoken words, so as not to place our community in a perilous situation. It is not, however, encroaching on our freedom to be a Jew. It is therefore imperative we speak out when able and never shy away from assisting our brothers and sisters, be they Jewish or otherwise. We have that luxury and must take advantage of it.

Our police force needs change. Long live Canada.

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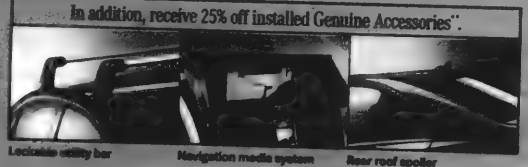

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The Canadian Jewish news

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March of the Living inspires Jewish identity

A recently released report confirms that participation in the March of the Living program helps inspire Jewish identity and concern for human rights. In this file photo, a young woman places a sign stating "We will never forget" on railroad tracks leading to a Nazi death camp. ***Please see related story on page 36.***

Toronto community funds IsraAID's cholera clinic in Haiti

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

JERUSALEM — An Israeli-run cholera clinic in Haiti funded by the Toronto Jewish community is stepping up its operations.

Since it opened in September, the cholera clinic in Leogane, Haiti, has served primarily as an educational outreach facility, training physicians and community members on how to identify, treat and reduce the spread of the disease, which has claimed 1,250 lives and seen the admission of more than 20,000 patients to hospital since the earthquake in January.

The clinic is operated by the Israeli NGO Tevel B'Tzedek (The Earth – In Justice), one of 17 organizations under the umbrella of IsraAID – the Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid. It went into full operation last week as a patient treatment centre in time for an anticipated hike in the rate of infection, which is expected to peak in the next week or two. The facility will handle the overflow of patients from the main hospital in Leogane.

"We're proud to partner with IsraAID on this initiative and many others in which IsraAID has demonstrated its extraordinary skill, courage and compassion on behalf of hundreds of thousands whose lives have been devastated by natural disaster," said Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, which raised $1 million to support IsraAID's operations in Haiti.

These funds have gone to several programs run by IsraAID-affiliated NGOs, among them Fast Israeli Rescue and Search Team, which sent an emergency medical delegation to Port-au-Prince four days after the earthquake; the Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development, which launched water management and agricultural production programs in Jacmal,

Continued on page 46

A member of the IsraAID medical team stands among patients outside the clinic. *[Shachar Zahavi photo]*

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Communal advocacy restructuring nearing completion – please see page 37

The News in Brief

Canada

Rae Denies Rumour

OTTAWA — Liberal MP Bob Rae last week denied rumours he was about to be named Canada's next ambassador to Israel. Calling the rumours "completely false," the outspoken supporter of Israel told the *National Post* he'll run again in Toronto Centre in the next election. Canada has already appointed Paul Hunt as the successor to outgoing ambassador to Israel Jon Allen

World

Store Forced To Close

LONDON — An Ahava store in London was forced to close again after pro-Palestinian activists blocked the entrance. Two activists reportedly chained themselves Nov. 22 to a cement-filled barrel and had to be removed by police, the *Jerusalem Post* reported. Ahava produces lotions and bath crystals using Dead Sea minerals on West Bank land claimed by the Palestinians. It has been the target of boycotts and protests worldwide. Similar protests forced the same London store to close twice in 2009.

Return Art: Panel

VIENNA — An Austrian government panel urged that the Leopold Museum in Austria return seven paintings looted from Jewish owners by the Nazis. The art commission set up by the Austrian ministry of culture said Nov. 23 that the paintings – five by Egon Schiele and two by Anton Romako – should be restituted to the heirs of their former owners, Karl Maylaender and Maurice Eisler. The decision is nonbinding, Bloomberg News reported. The paintings are currently part of the Leopold Museum Private Foundation. The museum paid $19 million earlier this year to settle another restitution case. It's currently completing research into the origins of its entire collection.

Boycott Urged

OSLO — Some 100 leading Norwegian figures in arts and culture have signed a petition for a cultural and academic boycott of Israel. The effort is being led by Egil Drillo Olsen, coach of the national soccer team, the *Jerusalem Post* reported. Olsen wrote in *Aftenposten*, the country's second-largest newspaper, that a boycott of Israel would be "in line with what 90 per cent of the world's population believes. There cannot be many other opinions."

Islamic Textbooks Slur Jews, BBC Reports

LONDON — Textbooks used in a network of Islamic schools in Britain promote antisemitic views, the BBC reported.

The textbook says Jews were cursed by God and "looked like monkeys and pigs," and it asks children to list the "reprehensible" qualities of Jews. The curriculum also contains homophobic views and instructs children on where to amputate the hands and feet of persons convicted of theft, in accordance with Islamic law, the report says.

The report was broadcast Nov. 22 on the program *Panorama*.

The textbooks, which are part of a Saudi Arabian government curriculum, are used in more than 40 British part-time Islamic schools and clubs with 5,000 students, the report found. The schools reportedly are overseen by the cultural bureau of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in London.

Saudi officials quoted by the BBC said passages from the Qur'an often are "taken out of their historical context." British officials quoted in the report said they would not tolerate any antisemitic teachings in British schools.

Jailed For Threats

CHICAGO — A dual Jordanian-U.S. citizen was sentenced Nov. 24 to 25 months in jail for mailing a bomb threat to a Chicago Jewish day school. Mohammad Alkaramla, 26, of Chicago's North Side, was jailed for mailing a letter to the Ida Crown Jewish Academy that threatened to blow up Jewish educational institutions as well as injure or kill Jewish individuals in the city. The letter, received on Dec. 31, 2008, during Israel's war in Gaza, was addressed to rabbis and community leaders.

Nazi Dies Before Trial

BERLIN — Samuel Kunz, one of the world's most wanted Nazis, died in Germany before he could be brought to trial. Kunz, 89, was charged earlier this year with assisting in the murder of 430,000 Jews during the Holocaust at the Belzec death camp. He died Nov. 18, the court in Bonn said Nov. 22. He was third on the Simon Wiesenthal Center's list of most wanted Nazis.

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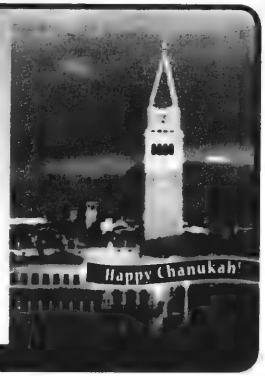

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Israel faces new threat, ex-Spanish PM says

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israel faces a new and insidious threat to its existence as a sovereign nation, says Jose Maria Aznar, the former prime minister of Spain.

"It's not a conventional war as in 1948, 1956, 1967 or 1973," he told a UJA Federation of Greater Toronto dinner on Sunday night. "It's not the kind of terrorism [Israel] endured during the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and after 2000."

Describing the threat as "a war against the idea of Israel," Aznar said, "We're dealing with a new form of attack against Israel's legitimacy, against Israel's right to exist."

Branding it a campaign of delegitimization, he observed, "It's a 'soft war' in which the enemies of Israel use legal tricks, exploit multilateral bodies and use dubious non-governmental organizations to portray Israel as an illegal state, a barbaric state, one that must be isolated and turned into a pariah state."

Aznar, Spain's prime minister from 1996 to 2004, pledged to combat efforts to delegitimize Israel and its right to live in peace within secure borders.

"I have always thought that a politician's actions speak louder than words," he declared, unveiling a plan to counter such attempts.

Aznar launched the Friends of Israel Initiative in Paris at the end of last May, on the day a pro-Palestinian flotilla approached the coast of the Gaza Strip in an attempt to breach Israel's siege.

Jose Maria Aznar

"It was a real coincidence that convinced us even more about the need to fight against the increasing delegitimization of Israel," said Aznar, a conservative politician whose final days in office were marred by an Islamic terrorist attack on a commuter train in Madrid that killed 191 people.

By all accounts, the bombing was in retaliation for Spain's decision to send troops to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Aznar, who was also due to speak at York University on Nov. 29 at an event sponsored by UJA Federation and Hillel of Greater Toronto, said his initiative is supported by private donors and was founded under his leadership by such figures as John Bolton, the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, and Alejandro Toledo, the former president of Peru.

"We don't defend nor do we justify specific policies of current governments in Jerusalem, nor do we promote the particular interests of any political party," he said in a prepared speech.

"What we aspire to defend is the State of Israel, its right to exist peacefully and to be treated with fairness – nothing more, nothing less."

Currently executive president of a Spanish think-tank known as the Foundation for Social Studies and Analysis, Aznar said the Friends of Israel Initiative is guided by several principles: Israel's right to exist should not be questioned, and that Israel is an integral part of the west, shares western values and should not be weakened.

In an opinion piece in the *Times* of London shortly after the group's formation, Aznar – a board member of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation and of the Atlantic Council – wrote, "Israel is our first line of defence in a turbulent region that is constantly at risk of descending into chaos; a region vital to our energy security; a region that forms the front line in the fight against extremism."

He added, "If Israel goes down, we all go down… The West is what it is thanks to its Judeo-Christian roots. If the Jewish element of those roots is upturned and Israel is lost, then we are lost, too. Whether we like it or not, our fate is inextricably intertwined."

In his article, Aznar ascribed "the real threats" to stability in the Middle East to the rise of radical Islamism.

Continued on page 37

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Greater Toronto Area

They're not joking

Not surprisingly, merely days after the government of Israel announced that it had set aside funds to renovate the Western Wall plaza, the Palestinian Authority (PA) announced that the Western Wall had never been part of the structure of a Jewish temple.

Al-Mutawakil Taha, deputy minister of information in the Palestinian Authority and also a renowned poet and writer, last week released a five-page study on the PA website that categorically denies any connection between the Western Wall and the Temples that once stood in Jerusalem.

"This wall has never been a part of what is called the Jewish Temple," the report claimed.

And with that tightly phrased, curt conclusion, the distinguished Palestinian poet, writer and legislator cavalierly dismissed centuries of history, science and archeology. He purported to throw out the window of the PA Palace of Propaganda and Expedience certain inconvenient details that underpin much of western civilization itself.

The tone of the report is sneering and dismissive. He essentially spits the words as if to emphasize the fact that he regards the Jewish claim to a historical connection to Jerusalem as so much detritus.

"The Zionist occupation falsely and unjustly claims that it owns this wall, which it calls the Western Wall or Kotel."

Taha writes his own history.

"Al-Buraq Wall [the name given by Arabs to the Western Wall] is in fact the western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque... One can only conclude that Al-Buraq Wall is a Muslim wall and an integral part of the Aqsa Mosque and Haram al-Sharif [the Temple Mount]."

The report also contains a warning aimed primarily at the Jewish People – in Israel and beyond.

"No one has the right to claim ownership over it or change its features or original character."

And then, either ominously as a threat, or cleverly as a tactic as a way to "box in" PA President Mahmoud Abbas' negotiating room, with Abbas' connivance, of course, Taha added: "No one has the right to agree with the occupation state's racist and oppressive measures against history and holy sites ... no Muslim or Arab or Palestinian had the right to give up one stone of Al-Buraq Wall or other religious sites."

From the editor's desk...

To ensure that the world knows that the report was written and released ex-cathedra, as the policy of the PA, Taha told the Associated Press that the views in the study reflected the official Palestinian position.

He punctuated his remarks with what we can characterize only as dry, droll irony.

"It was Islamic tolerance," he added, "which allowed the Jews to stand before it and cry over its loss."

When we read and hear such statements emanating from the Palestinian leadership, our first instinct is to dismiss them as insensitive political posturing.

But we would be wrong to do so.

The PA is not joking.

They do not utter the pronouncements for the benefit of the Arab street with tongue-in-cheek, all the while winking and nodding their acknowledgment of and belief in the true facts of history to western officials standing off to the side of the room.

They firmly believe in the truth of their narrative of history. Former PA president Yasser Arafat, it will be recalled, without shame or embarrassment, made the very same ignorant remarks to U.S. president Bill Clinton at Camp David more than a decade ago.

In response to the PA study, we should not simply shrug in disbelief or disgust. We must reiterate for the record, for the sake of preserving truth and for the sake of the Jewish People, the facts of history.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu criticized the study at two very crucial levels: substantively and politically. Regarding the substance of the PA's conclusions, he said: "Denying the link binding the Jewish People and the Western Wall by the Palestinian information office is a travesty."

Regarding the political implications that arise from these views, he said: "When the Palestinian Authority denies the connection between the Jewish People and the Western Wall, it raises serious questions as to its intentions to reach a peace deal founded on coexistence and mutual recognition."

Even legislators to the left of the prime minister cannot abide the PA's disfigurement of history. Labor party Knesset member Einat Wilf was reported by *Ha'aretz* to have said that Palestinians are stupidly trying again and again to somehow create an alternative reality in which the Jewish People are strangers in this land.

All peoples who are part of, belong to, benefit from and champion western civilization should prevent this from happening.

–MBD

Correction

The caption with the photograph "Colourful welcome to men in uniform," on the front page last week, included incorrect information. Walter Natynczyk, whose name we misspelled, is chief of the defence staff of the Canadian Armed Forces. We apologize for the errors and for any embarrassment we may have caused. –*MBD*

SeeJN

PAYING TRIBUTE FOR HUMANITARIAN WORK

The Canadian Armed Forces' Disaster Assistance Relief Team (DART), the Canadian people and the medical relief team of the Israel Defence Forces recently received the Meir 2010 Humanitarian Awards Of Distinction from the Canadian Friends of Meir Medical Center (CFMMC), in Kfar Saba, Israel, for their work in Haiti after the earthquake there last January. Standing, from left, are Sam Primucci, dinner co-chair; MP Derek Lee; MP John McKay; MP Rob Oliphant; MP Joe Volpe; MP Ken Dryden. Seated from left are a member of DART Haiti; chief of staff of DART Haiti, Maj. David McQueen; CFMMC president, Arie Raif; CFMMC national director, Daliah Raif; Canadian military assistant, Maj. Michel Lavigne. At right, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas) Peter Kent presents the Award of Honour to Lt.-Col. Dr. Asher Elhayany, CEO and chief of staff of Meir Hospital.

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Greater Toronto Area

Israel ambassador enjoying current posting

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Israeli ambassador to Canada Miriam Ziv is enjoying her time in the Great White North.

In an interview with *The CJN* from her Ottawa office last week, Ziv said that the first two years of her four-year term – she was installed in September 2008 – have been "a pleasure," more so because of Canada's friendly stance towards Israel.

Asked about how Israel perceives the support being shown it by Canada, she said Israelis read about Canadian support in their daily newspapers and have been struck by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's strong statements of friendship and backing of their country and Canada's quick enactment of economic sanctions against Iran this year.

Miriam Ziv

"Canada also [announced last week] that it will boycott the so-called Durban III conference in New York next year. That will be noticed and appreciated by Israelis. Israelis know of Canada's friendship. It's no secret," Ziv said, adding that Israelis are now much more exposed to Canada because of the multiple economic missions to Israel by various provincial leaders and captains of industry over the last year.

Ziv said one of her priorities upon arriving for her post in Canada was to focus on how to get the individual provinces more involved with Israel.

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty and Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger both made trips to Israel this year and numerous Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) have been signed between Israeli and Canadian medical and tech-sector companies in 2010.

She said she's also met with the premiers of Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia – Brad Wall and Darrell Dexter respectively – and noted they both expressed interest in visiting Israel in the near future and that she had extended invitations to both.

Dexter has traveled to Israel previously, but never as premier, Ziv added.

But she is not content to rest on past laurels and doesn't gauge the embassy's success by how many Canadian officials it can convince to visit Israel.

Ziv said she's now focused on the next two years of her ambassadorship, in which she will try and bring Canadians and Israelis "even closer" to each other both culturally and economically.

"We can do much more. And since Israel leads the world in science and technology innovation… and since Canada invests a lot in research but does less well than Israel in commercialization, there is an interest for more work together."

She said initiatives like the recent announcement of joint Israeli-Canadian collaboration on the new Ontario Brain Institute are just the "launching pad for a new process of working together on so many levels."

The expectation is that both Canadians and Israelis, through the growing exposure of researchers, scientists, businesspeople and diplomats to one another, will know the value of the "special relationship" between the countries.

Ziv is quick to give credit to "all the various Israeli agencies" in Canada who do the hard work of promoting their country across the nation.

"I don't have to tell you that seeing Israel [firsthand] changes people's perceptions and makes them more eager" to want to do business and meet with Israelis.

The time is opportune, she said, for Canadians to do business with Israel.

Ziv said she's not surprised by the willingness of Canadians to trade with and embrace Israeli innovation.

One of the traditional detriments to Canadians doing business with Israel was the physical distance between both countries, she said. Ziv noted that these distances are now smaller due to advancements in technology as well as the opening up of free trade agreements between Israel and its other trading partners.

Canadian Minister of International Trade Peter Van Loan recently announced that Canada and Israel were looking to expand on the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA).

On another front, Ziv said the growing Israel Apartheid Week (IAW) movement on Canada's university campuses is "very worrisome" to her.

She said there is now a dedicated staffer at the embassy to do outreach to the various Jewish campus organizations to help them respond to IAW pressures.

Of the many diplomatic achievements she's achieved thus far, Ziv said to date she's most proud of the Canada-Israel 60th anniversary commemorative stamp issued in April this year, which was achieved through the efforts of the embassy.

The stamp depicts a red maple leaf and a blue Magen David made up of people and was a joint product of Canada Post and the Israel Postal Company.

"This will be something collectors will always have in their albums. This is the highlight so far."

On a personal level, Ziv said that while she doesn't ski or skate, that hasn't affected her appreciation of what Canada has to offer.

"I do watch hockey and I do know some of the rules now," she said, laughing.

Asked about her impressions of the Canadian Jewish community, Ziv said she was "impressed."

"It's a vibrant community."

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Sadly, the cedars are being uprooted

We can only imagine what Saad Hariri truly thought as he stepped onto the tarmac of the airport in Tehran last Saturday. And we can only shake our heads in empathetic sorrow at the surreal role in which the Lebanese leader has been cast.

Hariri was in Iran on a two-day state visit to try to ensure that his country does not soon break apart into its sectarian components. In his heart of hearts, however, he knew the trip was a widely visible, publicly humiliating display of subservience and obeisance by the government of Lebanon – and especially its western-oriented, Christian constituency – to the Shia rulers in Iran.

Although he used different words on the eve of his departure to say so, Hariri explained that the reason for his trip was to conscript Tehran's help in controlling Hezbollah. Hariri is worried about Hezbollah, because its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, recently warned that he would overthrow the Lebanese government, of which his party sits as a coalition member, if the United Nations investigation into the murder of Hariri's father, Rafik, concludes what everyone already knows, namely, that Hezbollah was responsible for the killing.

"Impairing the stability of any country of the region is a threat to the interests of Arabs and Iran at the same time," Hariri told reporters before his trip. "Therefore, I consider that Iran is concerned… to provide elements of stability in all countries of the region, including Lebanon."

The irony of Hariri's appeal to Iran is rich with Alice-in-Wonderland inversion and incongruity. The Shia rulers of Iran are the main financial, military and spiritual benefactors of Shia Hezbollah.To a large degree, Hezbollah is Tehran's surrogate in Iran's attempt to control events in Lebanon. It is hardly likely that the Hezbollah assassins would have murdered Saad's father without prior approval from Tehran.

Hariri was greeted on Saturday by Vice-President Mohammad Reza Rahimi, who vowed to deepen ties with Lebanon. "We should use all of our capacities to expand the ties… and to take giant steps in line with our interests," Rahimi said.

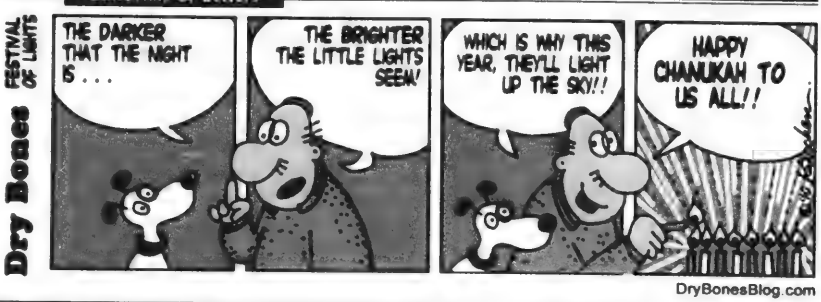
"The visit will expand ties between Iran and Lebanon and will surely strengthen the resistance movement against the Zionist regime," said deputy Foreign Minister Reza Sheibani, the state-run *Iran Daily* newspaper reported.

It requires no fecundity of imagination to see in Rahimi and Sheibani's words the sinister image of spidery Iran casting its web ever more intricately and constrictively over the freedom-seeking people of Lebanon. As of this writing, Hariri had not yet met with Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei or with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. But he was scheduled to. Oh how triumphant they must have felt. Alas, we can only regret Hariri's visit to Tehran.

The tall and strong cedars of Lebanon, symbols of a proud, independent country, are now becoming uprooted.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israel issued an apology to U.S. secretary of state George Shultz after U.S. Navy counter-intelligence officer Jonathan Pollard admitted that he had provided Israel with classified U.S. military intelligence since the spring of 1984. Shultz said he was satisfied with Israel's statement.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Community's restructuring (1)

As *The CJN* has reported, the way that advocacy on behalf of the Canadian Jewish community is delivered is being restructured ("Congress wary of CIJA restructuring," Nov. 25; "Advocacy revamp coming soon," Nov. 4).

Because I am a member of the restructuring committee that is charged with recommending what these changes will look like, I have not up to this point made any public comment on the issue. It now is appropriate that I do so.

The restructuring committee has been working on a continuously evolving document that is meant to serve as a "Road Map" for the path forward, and that will soon be made public.The process to get to this point has been an iterative one, marked by considerable discussion of important issues. Input has been solicited and received from a wide range of community organizations and from the professionals and lay leaders of our current advocacy agencies.

While such a process is ongoing, it is a challenge to provide information to the public. An unsurprising though regrettable consequence is that people may become concerned about the process or its potential outcome. It is also not surprising that people and organizations with strong views will want to advocate on behalf of what they consider to be the best interests of the Jewish community.

Through all this, however, the committee has been making considerable progress, which I find encouraging, and consensus has been reached on many of the key fundamental issues. Other issues remain to be tackled, and there are still important details to fill in. I intend to be fully engaged in that continuing process. What I can clearly state is that the current document provides a constructive framework for the way forward toward an effective and efficient advocacy voice, and on that basis, I support it and commend it for consideration to the broader community.

Mark J. Freiman
National President
Canadian Jewish Congress

* * *

Community's restructuring (2)

As a member of the restructuring committee involved in the reorganizing of the current community advocacy structure, I would like to clearly state that I support the current document and recommend it to the broader Jewish community as a Road Map toward an effective and efficient advocacy voice.

Moshe Ronen
Chair
Canada-Israel Committee

LET THEM GO…

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1622

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

* * *

Community restructuring and Congress

I was somewhat shocked to read the article "Congress wary of CIJA restructuring" (Nov. 25), concerning the transition of the Canadian Jewish Congress from the effective voice for Canadians into some kind of public-relations advocacy group.

I observed the CJC during a six-year undercover investigation into the world of white supremacists. Between 1988 and 1994, I was able to see the good work Congress was doing on behalf of all Canadians in monitoring and reporting the activities of these domestic terrorists.

The effectiveness of the CJC is one of the main reasons the right wing was set back 20 years in Canada and why Canada became a much safer place as a result. Wolfgang Droege, the now-deceased former leader of the Heritage Front, once told me that he felt that his biggest obstacle was the "chronic observation he was under by [Congress CEO] Bernie Farber and the CJC." The CJC was many times described by Heritage Front members as one of its biggest enemies.

I urge the decision-makers to take a long hard look at the good work that the CJC has done to ensure that government investigations were being done so that Canadians could be protected from this homegrown cancer.

Grant Bristow
Edmonton

* * *

Survivor appreciates Congress

On April 11, 1945, I was liberated from Buchenwald Concentration Camp. I was 14 years old and one of only 426 children to survive Buchenwald. I was the youngest of six children. My immediate concern was to be reunited with my family, but it was too dangerous to return to Poland. Returning Jews had been attacked and killed. The two options left were Canada or Australia. Canada was my number one choice, and it was the CJC that sponsored us. I can't thank Congress enough for allowing me to become a human being again; for allowing me an opportunity to rebuild my life.

I hope that any discussions about the future of Jewish advocacy organizations in Canada will take to heart the importance of the name "Canadian Jewish Congress" ("Congress wary of CIJA restructuring," Nov. 25). This name is crucial to us Holocaust survivors who it brought to Canada and to Canadians whose lives have been touched by its work.

Robert Waisman
Founder and Past President
Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

For more letters, see cjnews.com.

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Perspectives

New theatre pits left vs. right over hurting Israel

By LESLIE SUSSER
JTA

Residents of the arid West Bank town of Ariel got a taste of Paris last month.

Defying left-wing calls for an actors' boycott, the Beersheba Theater group inaugurated a new cultural centre with a moving performance of *Piaf!*, a musical tribute to the undisputed doyenne of the French chanson.

The very staging of the show went to the heart of a bitter argument between left and right over which side can claim to be today's true Zionists. Each accuses the other of betraying the Zionist heritage and giving succor to a rising tide of delegitimization that calls for Israel's dismantlement or at least questions its right to exist.

Israeli Culture Minister Limor Livnat

For the left-wingers, the tricky dilemma is how to criticize the government and the occupation without providing ammunition for Israel's foes.

Right-wingers argue that sharp left-wing attacks on the settler project, such as calling for a cultural boycott of the settlements, play into the hands of would-be delegitimizers, who also use the boycott weapon. Left-wingers retort that only by ending the occupation, the target of virtually all their criticism, will Israel finally be able to put to rest the growing rumblings against its international legitimacy.

In the run-up to the *Piaf* performance, left-wing actors, directors, authors and academics wrote letters calling for a boycott of the Ariel cultural centre to make crystal clear their opposition to the ongoing settlement enterprise.

"It was essential to remind Israeli public opinion that there is no consensus on the legitimacy of the settlements," playwright Yehoshua Sobol, one of the leaders of the protest, told JTA. "It's a case of Ariel or Israel. Ariel will destroy Israel if it goes on like this."

Israeli Culture Minister Limor Livnat responded with two proposals, both of which enraged the left: that government financing for theatre groups be dependent on prior agreement to perform anywhere under Israeli control, and that a prize be created for "Zionist" work.

Outraged left-wingers argued that it would be wrong to attach government strings of any kind to creative work. Moreover, they asked, who would define what was or was not "Zionist"?

"There is a semantic confusion here," Gadi Baltiansky, director of the Geneva Initiative, a 2003 blueprint for peace with the Palestinians, said in an interview with JTA.

"When Culture Minister Limor Livnat says her answer to those who don't want to perform in Ariel is to give a prize to a 'Zionist' work, she is turning things upside down. The true Zionists are the people who don't want to keep the West Bank, and those who do are the ones undermining the legitimacy of the Zionist enterprise."

The right-wingers contend that Israel, surrounded by irredentist enemies and facing growing international criticism aimed at delegitimizing its very existence, desperately needs a single unifying ideology based on the justice of its cause. Otherwise, they say, the country might not survive.

"If we are to withstand everything the Israeli Arabs, the Islamic world and the post-modernists who see nationalism as outmoded and immoral want to do to us, we need a defining ideology that highlights the justice of our cause," Yisrael Harel, chairman of the Institute for Zionist Strategies, told JTA. "Otherwise, over time, there won't be a Jewish state because there will be no one left to fight for it."

Left-wingers respond that it is precisely the monolithic ultranationalism pushed by people like Harel that could make Israel an international pariah. On the contrary, they say, a place of honour for Israel among the nations depends on a commitment to universal, humanistic ideals and an end to the occupation.

For the past few years, Eran Shayshon of the Tel Aviv-based Reut Institute has been working on strategies to combat Israel's would-be delegitimizers. In an interview with JTA, Shayshon argued that vocal Israeli left-wing critics can actually play a key role in the fight against delegitimization. Coming from them, he said, criticism of the delegitimizers carries more weight.

The new cultural and sport centre that opened Nov. 8 in Ariel. *[Flash90 photo]*

But Shayshon says that not all left-wingers take a helpful stance. Some are wary of even acknowledging that a delegitimization problem exists, he says, because they fear that to do so might compromise their freedom to criticize the government. Others go too far, using terms such as "apartheid," which plays into the hands of delegitimizers.

"We need people from the liberal left first to acknowledge that a delegitimization problem exists and then to distance themselves clearly from the phenomenon," Shayshon said.

Shayshon maintains that while the ultranationalism on the Israeli right is clearly a response to delegitimization, it is not a very effective way of fighting it. In some cases, he says, it even helps the delegitimizers depict Israel as an intolerant and close-minded society.

In Shayshon's view, what Israel needs is to make a very clear distinction between delegitimization of the state and legitimate criticism of government policy, and then to be receptive to the criticism while isolating and marginalizing the delegitimitizers.

The trouble is that this requires a subtlety of mind that Shayshon says doesn't readily exist in Israel.

"Israelis tend to adopt a 'narrow tent' mindset, which says, 'If you are not with me, you are against me,' whereas the delegitimizers do the opposite, embracing anyone who is not against them," he said.

"That is a much more effective strategy, and I think we should adopt it. The narrow-tent approach could push critics who care about the country into the arms of the delegitimizers who don't."

Nevertheless Shayshon – who has been focusing on areas such as London, the San Francisco Bay Area, Madrid and Montreal, where delegitimization groups are strong – predicted the beginnings of a positive turnaround.

He said that "2011 is going to be the first year we fight back. When I say we, I mean the government as well as pro-Zionist groups in Israel and abroad.

"There is a much greater awareness of the potential power of delegitimization, and we are finally gearing up to meet it."

Left-wingers insist that it's relatively easy for them to be against the occupation but for the Israeli state and against the delegitimizers who would destroy it.

"I, for example, came out against the boycott calls and wrote a letter to the University of California at Berkeley when it was necessary," Baltiansky said. "I also came out against those who are in favour of a Palestinian state but forget there is another state here, too."

Baltiansky does not think the delegitimizers pose an immediate threat to Israel's existence, but he is worried about longer-term trends.

"It could start with an isolated academic boycott, which turns into a much larger economic boycott, followed by refusal to meet Israeli officials," he said. "People could start asking, 'Why is Israel necessary?' And that could lead to really damaging isolation. That's why we are so strongly against BDS" – the term used to describe the campaign for anti-Israel boycotts, divestment measures and sanctions.

In Baltiansky's view, a credible peace process would help arrest the negative trend, and achieving a two-state solution as envisaged by the left would finally remove questions about Israel's legitimacy and marginalize the remaining hard-core delegitimizers.

"The two-state solution gives legitimacy to Israel, to Zionism and to the right of the Jewish people to self-determination," Baltiansky maintained. "And the lack of such a solution puts our legitimacy at risk."

Selective free speech

In his Nov. 20 *National Post* column, political commentator David Frum reflected on York University's double standard in its approach to invited speakers.

In February of this year, when Daniel Pipes, the noted historian and founder of Middle East Forum, was scheduled to speak at York, the students who invited him were required to pay the high cost of providing police security for the event. When they declined to do so, Pipes' appearance was cancelled.

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

Former British MP George Galloway, notes Frum, was likewise invited by a student group, this time the York Federation of Students, which was similarly expected to cover the cost of policing the speaker's appearance. This group is amply funded and readily complied. Galloway's speech went ahead as planned Nov. 16, but, eerily, not before the university threatened legal action not only against anticipated disrupters of the event, but also against a Toronto rabbi, Ahron Hoch.

With Rabbi Hoch, the York administration, through its legal counsel, went so far as to demand that he immediately disavow, and remove, a web posting wherein he'd criticized Mamdouh Shoukri, York's president, for defending the decision to allow (Galloway) to speak on campus. In addressing Shoukri, Rabbi Hoch had remarked that "the concept of freedom of speech was never meant to be used as a vehicle to spread support for terror, murder and genocide" and that "Mr Shoukri has again shown his amazing tolerance for anti-Semitism and lack of vigilance regarding the feeling of safety for Jewish students, [which] needs to be strongly protested."

York's differential treatment of Pipes and Galloway speaks to a moral incoherence that defies rational interpretation. But even more so, it illuminates a flawed and patently absurd mindset that pervades academia well beyond York. What this tries to enforce is that, under the facade of free speech, content cannot be controlled. This means that short of breaching the Criminal Code, speakers can more or less say whatever they like, regardless of whether their words are false, misleading, intimidating, divisive, discriminatory or even hateful.

Conversely, however, behaviour can be controlled. Loosely translated, this allows penalties against anyone who "disrupts" it talk. Such obvious asymmetry gives a free pass to the speaker while abjectly shutting down any protest from the audience that goes beyond what's regarded as "respectful" disagreement. In this way, provocation by the speaker, no matter how egregious, is tolerated, but reaction by the audience, beyond what's minimally indignant, is not.

Consequently, until such hypocrisy is effectively deconstructed, we should expect to see much more of the sort of travesty that defined Galloway's boorish romp across Canada.

What does Israel owe the Jews of the Diaspora?

The relationship between Israel and world Jewry – or more accurately the diminishing relationship – is at the fore of Jewish institutional and leadership concern today. What can be done to combat the perceived disengagement from and increased alienation toward Israel?

One focus of the efforts is on improved public relations and education of world Jewry as to the case for Israel. An increased ability by Jews to defend Israel to others will lead to a parallel increase in affinity toward and possibly affiliation with Israel.

Dauniel Hartman in Jerusalem

Israel, however, cannot combat alienation unless it ceases to generate it and be one of its primary causes. If Israel wants a Jewish world with a strong affinity toward Israel and its needs, it must also take into account the impact of its policies on world Jewry. At issue is not only legislation on issues of conversion and the rights of liberal Jews to pray at the Kotel. Israel must recognize that its foreign policy moves equally affect both Jews' relationships with Israel and their relationship to their home countries.

A world Jewry engaged with Israel is a world Jewry impacted Jewishly and personally by Israel. It's a world Jewry that connects its identity as Jews with the State of Israel. As Israelis, we yearn for this type of engagement. It's time we recognize the responsibility that it generates.

An example is the recent talks between Israel and the United States about an additional three-month settlement freeze. If reports are accurate, Israel has bartered a freeze in return for F-35 fighter jets at a bargain price and written U.S. assurances on security issues.

Let's leave aside the political debate on the legitimacy of the settlements, their importance or lack thereof for the future security of the State of Israel, and the dangers or benefits of further unilateral Israeli gestures toward the Palestinians for the future of the peace talks. The deal between Israel and the United States is so bizarre and troubling on so many levels that short of a blanket condemnation of both the United States and Israel for short-sightedness, it begs for an explanation.

One cannot question the intelligence of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton or President Barack Obama. If the settlement freeze is tolerable to Israel's security and political interests, why not agree to it when our most significant ally asks? On the other hand, if a 10-month freeze was ineffectual, why is an additional three-month freeze the object of such desire that the United States is willing to bribe Israel to achieve it?

The purpose of the promises is to provide Netanyahu with a bribe for his coalition partners, many of whom see no value in negotiating with the Palestinians, nor with ensuring that Israel and the United States are in sync with each other.

This not only extracts a price from the U.S. administration, but from Jews around the world. It's embarrassing for Jews to see the Israeli government haggle with a friend who has been at our side.

Jews around the world have for decades argued for the consistency and coherency of their loyalty to Israel with the loyalty they have to their home countries. Loyalty to Israel has been a source of pride and enhanced Jewish identity. When Israel sacrifices the identification of Jews around the world with Israel on the altar of short-term coalition interests, it belittles Israel and makes a case for alienation.

Let Netanyahu lead with principles, whatever they may be, and Jews around the world will at least be able to respect Israel and their affiliation with it. Let Netanyahu take responsibility for implementing the two-state solution that he publicly advocates and put the future of his coalition and his government on the line for his principles. When he does this, he will find himself less worried about Israel delegitimization and will find a Jewish community around the world at his and Israel's side.

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Robert Bernstein's human rights reality check

On Israel, "Human Rights Watch's attacks on almost every issue [have] become more and more hostile." This stark judgment and the detailed evidence to prove it did not come from wild-eyed Zionist fanatics, but from Robert Bernstein, the founder of Human Rights Watch (HRW).

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

Bernstein has dedicated more than 35 years to fighting on behalf of democracy, freedom and human rights, while looking beyond the hype to discern actions on the ground. From this perspective, he realized that HRW had become ethically bankrupt, and began to speak out, first in the *New York Times* and now in the Goldstein Lecture on Human Rights, delivered at the University of Nebraska.

He told students and faculty how he decided to establish Helsinki Watch (as it was first known) in 1976, following business trips to the Soviet Union. As a book publisher, he met and encouraged dissident scientist Andrei Sakharov to write his autobiography. Sakharov came under increasing harassment, including exile to Gorky, while Natan Sharansky was jailed and sent to the gulag for his activism. Bernstein actively provided them with support, and the Soviets cancelled his visa.

Bernstein fought back by founding HRW, which became the "gold standard" for promoting universal human rights and accurate reporting. But, after three decades, he saw that this movement had been hijacked by a biased political framework, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) division. Bernstein realized that "Human rights organizations, including the one I founded," as well as Amnesty International, the Carter Center, and other groups, are leading the political war against Israel.

Instead of championing democracy and demanding the opening of closed societies, HRW and the human rights movement has used their power to attack democracies and support dictatorships. MENA director Sarah Leah Whitson went to Saudi Arabia in 2009 to raise funds for expanding the attacks on Israel. Bernstein doubts that she discussed textbooks published and distributed by the Saudis that call Jews "apes and pigs."

These failures led Bernstein to resume an active role at HRW after many years focusing on China. Upon returning, he observed the close co-operation between HRW officials and the UN Human Rights Council, which was "so critical of Israel that any fair-minded person would disqualify them from participating in attempts to settle issues involving Israel." He also realized that HRW has little expertise in many key areas, while its officials use legal language that consistently "faulted Israel as the principal offender."

Like journalists, diplomats and academics, Bernstein was "inclined to believe what Human Rights Watch was reporting. However, as I saw Human Rights Watch's attacks on almost every issue become more and more hostile, I wondered if their new focus on war was accurate." When HRW's "senior military analyst" who wrote most of the reports on Israel was fired and forced to remain silent, the credibility gap increased.

HRW played the central role in promoting retired South African judge Richard Goldstone – a close ally of executive director Kenneth Roth, and an HRW board member – as the head of the UN's assault following the Gaza war. "Human Rights Watch has been, by far, the biggest supporter" of this campaign to "bring war crimes allegations against Israel – based on [Goldstone's] report." As Bernstein observed, HRW has ignored "many responsible analyses challenging the war crimes accusations made by Goldstone," as well as the detailed refutations of HRW's own reports filled with unverifiable and false claims.

HRW is not alone in having lost its moral compass in waging warfare against the Jewish nation. Aided by cynical public relations machines, many groups that claim to promote liberal agendas actually engage in poisonous activities, such as the boycott, sanctions and divestment movement, that are neither moral nor liberal. But in sharp contrast to Bernstein, their leaders, including professors, jurists and rabbis, lack the courage and clarity to confront these ethical failures and fight for a return to universal justice, including for Israel.

The Kirshner File

The struggle in and for Afghanistan

The twin announcements were coordinated, signalling a fresh and uncertain phase in the protracted and increasingly unpopular war in Afghanistan. Two days after the United States announced it would end its combat mission there by 2014, leaving behind a residual force to train, mentor and assist Afghanistan's untested army and police, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper confirmed that Canada's military role in that strife-torn country would conclude by 2011, as planned, and that the bulk of Canada's 2,700 troops would be withdrawn. But in an important disclaimer, Harper said that 950 Canadian soldiers would remain in Afghanistan until 2014 to support reconstruction and aid efforts.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

These announcements were followed by the news that NATO – which has some 130,000 troops in Afghanistan in the International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF – will gradually transfer responsibility for security to the pro-western Afghan government of President Hamid Karzai by the close of 2014.

The NATO communique, issued at a meeting in Lisbon last week, cautioned that the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan will depend on conditions on the ground and the ability of Afghan forces to assume their responsibilities. NATO, in other words, has committed itself to an open-ended struggle against Islamic radicalism in Afghanistan. But ISAF's decision to redefine its mission from combat to nation-building is a sure sign that fatigue has set in after nine years of warfare and that virtually all its members are anxious to leave.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper

When the United States and its allies invaded Afghanistan in October of 2001, in response to Al Qaeda's terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in Manhattan and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 11 of that year, the general consensus was that the battle to oust the Islamic fundamentalist Taliban regime in Kabul and its ally, Al Qaeda, would be of short duration.

True to this sober analysis, U.S. forces unseated the Taliban in less than a month, driving its leadership and Al Qaeda into the rugged mountains of Afghanistan and into the remote tribal areas of northwest Pakistan. The successful military campaign to rid Afghanistan of the Taliban – which had gained power a few years after the ignominious retreat of Soviet forces – and Al Qaeda was greeted positively by the majority of Afghans.

The Taliban had alienated Afghans, especially women, with its imposition of a strict and austere form of Shariah law and with its cavalier decision to harbour and assist Al Qaeda, which jeopardized Afghanistan's hard-won sovereignty.

With the Taliban having been unseated, Afghans could be forgiven for thinking that Afghanistan – a desperately poor and underdeveloped nation that fought off British and Russian invasions in the 19th and 20th centuries – could be transformed into a viable and progressive Islamic state.

Yet nine years on, Afghanistan, although a work in progress due to improvements in infrastructure through public works projects and the advancement of women's rights, continues to be mired in feudalism and corruption at the highest levels.

And despite an infusion of 30,000 new American troops to Afghanistan in the past year, mimicking the U.S. surge in Iraq in 2007, the Taliban has grown stronger. As a result, the security situation has deteriorated and Afghanistan is now more dangerous than it has been in years. "Afghanistan is a trap for the [western forces] that are there," Alain Juppe, the French defence minister, said in a sombre assessment recently.

The shifting sands in Afghanistan have prompted the United States and its allies to seek a peaceful solution, even as they escalate the war and shift the burden of the fighting to the Afghan government.

With Karzai's approval and encouragement, the Obama administration is trying to end hostilities through negotiations with the Taliban, a scenario that would have been unthinkable and inconceivable not too long ago.

But Washington's desire to devise a workable exit strategy is clouded by its alignment with Pakistan, which has been accused of pulling its punches in confronting the Taliban, pursuing an agenda at odds with that of the United States and acting like an unreliable and untrustworthy ally.

As the war grinds on, perhaps the biggest problem facing the Obama administration is the perception that the Karzai government is hopelessly corrupt and that ordinary Afghans are ashamed of and disgusted by it. The Karzai regime brings to mind the venal and doomed South Vietnamese government the United States once propped up.

According to Transparency International, Afghanistan ranks 179th out of 180 countries in terms of corruption. Only Somalia, a failed state, is worse off. Richard Holbrooke, the U.S. special representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan, has described corruption as a "malignancy" that could destroy well-intentioned American efforts and drive Afghans into the hands of the Taliban.

A case in point is Ahmed Wali Karzai, one of the president's brothers. He is widely suspected of being a principal in the country's booming drug trade, which produces 90 per cent of the world's opium, reportedly supports 1.4 million households and financed Taliban military operations to the tune of $600 million from 2005 to 2008.

President Hamid Karzai

At one point, ISAF's high-minded policy was eradication of poppy fields. But in recent years, ISAF has not destroyed the poppy harvest, fearing that eradication will anger farmers and give the Taliban a recruiting tool.

Karzai's older brother, Mahmoud, is also under a cloud, with prosecutors having accused him of taking advantage of his family status by engaging in insider dealing in real estate and the cement industry.

The president himself has not been tainted by personal corruption, but the Obama administration has criticized Karzai, a prickly figure, for having tolerated it and manipulated the last general election.

In an attempt to deal with this extremely troubling issue, the United States launched a campaign against the pervasive culture of corruption, but soon backed off after realizing it would antagonize the powers that be and thereby create an intolerable political vacuum of authority that the Taliban would exploit to its advantage. In the same spirit, U.S. officials have been careful not to press Karzai too hard over the question of women's rights.

Four years ago, the Taliban was active in four of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. Today, however, the Taliban operates in all but one of its provinces.

ISAF has stepped up its offensive against Taliban fighters, boasting that the enemy body count has risen, Vietnam-style. The Taliban has responded by escalating attacks. ISAF's commander, Gen. David Petraeus, claims he has "regained the initiative," but the war is far from over, as NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen suggested recently.

Acutely aware that military pressure alone will not bleed the insurgency to death, ISAF has allowed Karzai to negotiate with the Taliban in the hope that a peace agreement can be signed. But the Taliban may hold out for an unequivocal victory.

With bases in Pakistan, the Taliban may be impregnable. Pakistan's leadership officially opposes Islamic jihadism, but its intelligence service, ISI, has reportedly helped the Taliban. The Pakistani army has gone after the Taliban, but not in North Waziristan, and Pakistan has complained about U.S. drone strikes on Taliban forces on its soil. The United States wants to prevent the region from turning into a launching pad for terrorism, but Pakistan is most concerned about its nemesis, India.

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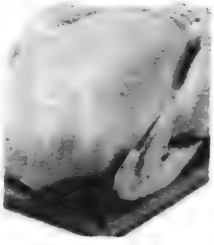

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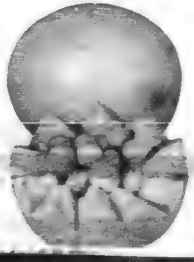

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Magna founder honoured by JNF

BY CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Frank Stronach, the founder and chairman of Magna International Inc., the world's largest auto parts supplier, was the 2010 honoree at the Jewish National Fund's annual Negev Dinner in Toronto recently.

"I am more blessed than honoured that I can make a meaningful contribution to the Jewish National Fund on behalf of Israel," Stronach told *The CJN* at the Nov 21 dinner.

In the 62nd tribute dinner book, Stronach wrote that he is pleased he can lend a hand to help raise funds for projects in the Negev. "[These] initiatives [are] designed to encourage settlement and stimulate economic growth," he wrote.

The money raised at the 2010 Negev Dinner campaign will be directed toward two projects for the people of Halutziot, Israel: the Naveh Entrance Development and the Besor Negev Research and Development Station.

Naveh is the new home of former Gaza Strip residents from Atsmona, who are building a new future in the western Negev.

The Besor Negev Research and Development Station is in the southwestern region of the Negev Desert, where agriculture is one of the main methods of protecting land. The station will play a major role in creating sources of income for the new settlers and encourage people to come to the Negev.

The MC for the evening was Belinda Stronach, the honoree's daughter. Well-known in her own right, she spoke about her father as a role model, and the importance of being a good person and giving back to the community.

The Jewish National Fund's Negev Dinner honoree Frank Stronach and his daughter, Belinda.
[Darren Levant photo]

Frank Stronach has served on numerous corporate, government and university boards. He is the recipient of an honorary doctorate from Haifa University in Israel, and in 2005, he received the B'nai Brith Canada Award of Merit for distinguished humanitarian service.

He has been inducted into the Canadian Business Hall of Fame and won the Richard Ivey School of Business 1997 Business Leader of the Year Award. He was named a member of the Order of Canada in 1999.

Stronach was born in Weitz, Austria, and immigrated to Canada in 1954 with nothing more than a suitcase, a few hundred dollars and a dream to one day start his own business.

In 1957, with a background in tool and machine engineering, he formed a tool and die company, Multimatic Investments Limited, which subsequently expanded into the production of automotive components. In 1969, Multimatic Investments Limited merged with the Magna Electronics Corporation Limited, and became known as Magna International Inc.

Magna currently employs 74,000 people in 240 manufacturing operations, and has 76 product development and engineering centres in 25 countries.

Regarding Israel and other democracies around the world, he said, "We should not take democracy for granted. We must support democracies everywhere."

Stronach said that people blame others because things are so bad in their countries. "The key is where there is poverty, it is easy to inflame people. Therefore, you have to put money where there is poverty," he said.

Lawrence Bloomberg and Michael Harris were the co-chairs of the dinner. Nathan Disenhouse, Jewish National Fund Toronto president, and Josh Cooper, JNF Toronto executive director, presented the JNF citation to Frank Stronach.

The Renanim Youth Singers opened the evening's program with *O Canada*, and soloist Samantha Cooper ended the evening with *Hatikvah*. The dinner's musical presentations included performances by Jeff Madden, who portrays Franki Valli in the Toronto production of *Jersey Boys*, and other members of the show's cast .

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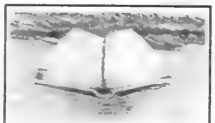
Jewish Life

Civilization: learning to be kind

By RABBI YONAH BERMAN

Why didn't Joseph send word to his father that he was alive and well in Egypt?

It's understandable how a servant in Potifar's house or an inmate in an Egyptian jail wouldn't be able to contact his family in the faraway land of Canaan. But Joseph's lot changed substantially when he became the viceroy of Egypt. One would expect that he would have found the time and the means to contact Jacob and say, "Dad, I'm alive and well, and in fact, I've made it to the top of the Egyptian political pyramid."



Rabbinic Reflections

In order to understand Joseph's actions (or lack thereof), we must identify the pattern that has developed heretofore in Genesis. The stories of the patriarchs are rife with the theme of chosen and rejected children. Isaac emerges as Abraham's chosen son, while his brother Ishmael is cast away. And of Isaac's two sons, Jacob ultimately becomes the bearer of the family legacy, to the exclusion of his brother Esau.

Rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun, a leading Bible teacher in Israel, proposes that Joseph thought that he had been rejected, just as his uncles Ishmael and Esau had been in the preceding generations. Knowing that Jacob sent him to his brothers before they threw him in the pit, Joseph figured that he was meant to try to make his own way in the world, without any further connection to his family.

Joseph had no way of knowing that in his generation, all of the sons would share their father's blessing, together becoming the progenitors of the future Nation of Israel. Joseph, in other words, thought that he was simply – and bluntly – unchosen.

Chanukah is the decisive response to Joseph's mistaken assumption.

Symbolizing the victories of Chanukah, the menorah is placed where people can see its candles burning, for the sake of *pirsumei nisa* – publicizing the miracle. Furthermore, the obligation to light Chanukah candles is defined as *ner ish uveito* – a requirement for the head of the household together with the entire family. These two concepts remind us that Chanukah's warmth and light are meant to be shared, both within the family and with the larger world. The Chanukah celebration's response to Joseph is to remind him that each and every person can – and must – be included in the celebration.

I was recently privileged to travel to New Orleans with a group of 22 idealistic and very mature teenagers from Montreal, as part of the new Jewish Eco-Leadership Training program. In addition to volunteering at wetland restoration projects and joining the Canadian delegation to the Jewish Federations of North America's General Assembly, we spent Shabbat with Congregation Beth Israel.

This Orthodox community's beautiful synagogue was flooded during Hurricane Katrina, its Torah scrolls damaged beyond repair and its building destroyed by water and mould. We were most inspired by the congregation's response to these overwhelming losses: they leased space from the local Reform congregation, Gates of Prayer, and have begun building a new home for their community on that synagogue's campus.

The two congregations function as separate entities in the areas where their customs diverge, but constantly strive to work together in the many areas of shared values and celebration. This united community exemplifies the finest values of Chanukah – reaching out to as many people as possible in the beauty of Jewish life and peoplehood.

May Chanukah inspire us to share Judaism's unending warmth and light with every member of the children of Israel, and with the larger community beyond.

Rabbi Yonah Berman is associate rabbi at Congregation Shaar Hashomayim in Westmount, Que.

The seven marks of a wise person

***Wisdom From Philosophy to Neuroscience* by Stephen S. Hall, Knopf Publishing.**

Bookmarks
Bernard Baskin

Wisdom is a rare and precious commodity. The biblical Book of Proverbs asserts: "Wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it." In Pirkei Avot, the tractate from the Mishnah, it is asked, "Who is wise?" and the answer is given, "He who learns from every man."

Avot also indicates that there are seven marks of the wise person. "He does not speak before one greater than he is in wisdom; or break in upon the words of his fellow; or hasten to make reply. He asks what is relevant and gives a proper answer; he speaks on the first point first and on the last point last; if what he has heard lacks tradition, he says, 'I have heard naught,' and he agrees to what is true."

Obviously, wisdom is more than the sum total of our accumulated knowledge, but a unique mixture of experience, understanding, insight and humanity.

Some years ago, according to the author, Canadian psychologists asked a random group of college undergraduates to nominate persons, historical or modern, who struck them as especially wise. Here are the names they came up with: "Mahatma Gandhi, Confucius, Jesus, Martin Luther King Jr., Socrates, Mother Teresa, Solomon, Buddha, the Pope, Oprah Winfrey, Winston Churchill, the Dalai Lama, Ann Landers, Nelson Mandela and Queen Elizabeth II, in that order."

It is significant that not one person was chosen from the worlds of science, literature or North American history. Another troubling surprise is the relative absence of women, and the questionable wisdom of some of those chosen.

Stephen Hall is a veteran science journalist who has written extensively and in a popular fashion about the intersection of science and society.

What is noteworthy, and even exciting, about this book is how modern brain science can explain some of the most important facets of mental activity, such as language use, reasoning, moral judgments and imagination. The advent of MRI scanners has for the first time made possible burrowing down into successive layers of the brain and observing it actually at work.

The demand for wisdom is thrust upon us on a daily basis, in matters significant and mundane, in settings as private as the bedroom, or as public as a jury room.

Hall writes of a prominent neurosurgeon who spotted unmistakable signs of early Alzheimer's disease in U.S. president Ronald Reagan while he was still in office. Watching him nod off during president George Bush's inauguration he said to himself, "Brain stem gone." He added, "I was convinced that a significant portion of Reagan's second term had taken place in the shadow of his slippage toward early dementia."

Recent findings, writes Hall, indicate that older adults are more supple in their assessments of problems and are able to perceive the social context of a situation better than younger adults. And perhaps most important, when it comes to settling on a strategy of action they display greater flexibility.

Perhaps, ultimately, the quest for wisdom must remain a chimera. It involves subjective judgments, the values and mores of a particular time or place and often a range of ambiguous possibilities. Socrates should give us pause with his apothegm, "If you think you're wise, you're probably a fool."

Nonetheless, this ambitious, informative and well-written study is an invaluable guide to a complex and many-sided subject.

Jewish Life

Did we make a difference?

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

When the *CJN* abruptly informed me two weeks ago that, after 14 years, this would be my last column of "Jewish Education – The Next Generation," because the paper wished to use this space for other purposes, I was left with an interesting dilemma. I had to decide what I'd like to ultimately say, given the 500 or so words allotted to me.

As everyone knows, there are many serious issues facing all forms of Jewish education. Perhaps at the top of the list is the ever-worrying problem of money and the skyrocketing, and often unaffordable, tuition that parents now pay and will continue to pay in the future. Interconnected with this is the perennial doubt about what one is receiving for those dollars. Is the education inspiring? Sophisticated? Identity-building? Worth it? Are we training teachers to meet the challenges of guiding Jews in a contemporary context? Is there enough emphasis on the Hebrew language? Too much emphasis? What role should the Holocaust and Israel play in educating students about Judaism? Why don't most Jewish adults learn any Jewish texts at all – not once a week, not once a month, not even once a year?

The questions are endless, the solutions difficult. But I'd like to conclude this final piece with one basic idea: that education is not about comfort, but perhaps the reverse – the discomfort of challenging one's preconceptions in the search for truth.

To many, this sounds counterintuitive in today's educational universe. The plan is to "facilitate" and avoid conflict, not to go down the road to confrontation. And while I'm all for progress and happiness – can one say one is against these things? – there's a heavy price to pay for real growth if all interactions have to be comfortable.

Mark Edmundson puts this very well in the prologue to his memoir, *Teacher*, where he remarks that "our mythologies make us forget that the great teacher is not always a bringer of sweetness and light… a great teacher is not necessarily a friend, much less a facilitator. He can be a spiritual antagonist and a goad as much as an ally."

My students insist, again and again and again, that most information they receive rolls in one ear and then gets swallowed up by the next test, never to return, as though it's a burden they need to carry for a while until they can lay it down at the teacher's feet, a sacrificial offering to the marking gods.

What do they remember? Here's the list I've compiled. Feel free to fill in your own.

Were we nice to them? Did we give them a break when they were in the throes of growing-up craziness? Were we patient when they couldn't think of an answer and encouraging when they could? Did we give them something real to think about to help chart out a voyage on a new sea – and that if they wished, they could follow that boat to a different horizon than they would have chosen? Did we manage to help them negotiate part of their world, even their destiny, for now and forever?

Thank you for reading.

For the love of latkes, Part 2

The light it lasted for eight nights
Relieving people of their plight.
Yes, fry the latkes in the oil
To celebrate ancestor's toil
Chanukah is here at last

Let's all go and have a blast! **[http://bit.ly/latke19]**

Frying up a latke is a wondrous thing. But having your bubbie do it for you is sublime. Unfortunately, not all of us have a bubbie at our beck and call. If you fall into that category, just remember Bayla Sher of "Feed Me Bubbie" fame. Bayla is the star of a delightful series of Jewish cooking videos in which she pairs up with her grandson, Avrom Honig. In the latke episode, watch her whip up a batch. **[http://bit.ly/latke20]** You can find many more video recipes on YouTube. **[http://bit.ly/latke21]**

At the All Recipes site, there are tips about what kind of potatoes to use (russet), how to keep them from turning pinkish-brown (keep them under water) and how to make sure they don't fall apart when you're frying them (squeeze the potato mixture in a cheesecloth.) **[http://bit.ly/latke32]**

If you ever tire of bubbie's traditional potato latke, don't despair. The Jewish Food latke archives have 113 varieties to tempt you including Drunken Apple, Cauliflower-Cheddar and Sephardic Bonuelos. **[http://bit.ly/latke23]**

Over at the RFCJ Recipe Archive, there are dozens more such as Chestnut Flour, Risotto and Norwegian Lox. I think I'll pass on the Brain Latkes. **[http://bit.ly/latke24]** People who cannot tolerate gluten will appreciate Karina's Potato Latkes. **[http://bit.ly/latke25]**

Every year, amateur cook Roger Mummert holds court in his Long Island kitchen for chefs with the tastiest and most extreme latke recipes. The event has been covered by National Public Radio, which archived its radio report along with recipes for Larry's Firecracker Latke Poppers, Spana-Latke-Kopita and Mexi-Latkes with Jalapenos & Red Peppers. (Click the link at the bottom of the page for a recipe for Mushroom Pecan Levivot with Smoked Salmon and Pickled Ginger.) **[http://bit.ly/latke26]**

Rather than oil, the Zenchef fries his latkes in duck fat. "I expect a cease and desist letter from the potato latke council any day now. I have nothing to say for my defence except that 1) I can't help being French and 2) potato's best friend is duck fat." **[http://bit.ly/latke27]**

What should you do if you love latkes but not the fat? The American Institute for Cancer Research recommends the no-oil Lean Latke. Coat a skillet with cooking spray and smooth grated potatoes into a large plate-sized pancake. One serving contains 162 calories and less than one gram of fat. And if a latke just isn't a latke without oil, then go ahead and splurge. Add one tablespoon. **[http://bit.ly/latke28]**

Those calories don't seem to scare Pete Czerwinski. He wolfed down 46 potato pancakes in eight minutes to take top spot at the National Potato Latke Eating Championship in 2008. "I'm just a power eater. My brain never signals that I'm full," said Czerwinski, who had never eaten a latke before. **[http://bit.ly/latke29]** Watch him in this video. **[http://bit.ly/latke30]**

I'll leave the last word to Marjorie Ingall, whose wishes for a modern-day Chanukah miracle are probably shared by latke fans everywhere. **[http://bit.ly/latke31]**

"My hope is that a miracle will occur and the calories of eight days will count as the calories of one."

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based website producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be contacted at highway@rogers.com.

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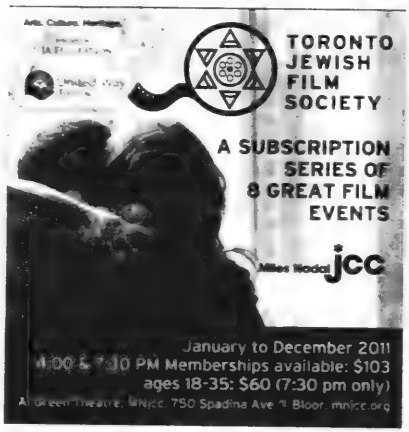

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Greater Toronto Area

Beit Rayim moves to Lebovic campus

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Beit Rayim Synagogue is moving to the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus.

It will hold its first Shabbat services there this weekend with New York-based Rabbi Moshe Edelman of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, who also led Beit Rayim's High Holiday services this year. The congregation will meet in the beit midrash of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Kimel Centre.

This weekend's services – including Friday evening and Saturday afternoon – will be part of a Chanukah Shabbaton.

Following Havdalah, there will be a children's Chanukah study session, then congregants will join UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's community Chanukah celebration in the same building.

The egalitarian synagogue, which is affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, has been holding services at the Reena Battle Centre since 2006. Its administrative offices and Hebrew school will continue to be housed in separate locations for now.

"Our goal is to establish a home where we can get all three operations under one roof," synagogue president Irving Siegel told *The CJN* last week.

In the new location – in addition to weekly Shabbat morning services led by Cantor Eli Bard – there will be monthly Kabbalat Shabbat services as well as festival and holiday services. Rabbi David Eligberg, who joined the shul four years ago, is no longer with the congregation.

The move to TanenbaumCHAT is considered short-term. Beit Rayim is negotiating with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto about the possibility of renting space at the Schwartz/Reisman Centre, the Jewish Community Centre expected to open on the campus in Vaughan in September 2012.

"Our long-term goal is to have a building on the Lebovic campus," said Siegel, "We're working towards that with a capital campaign."

Last year, the synagogue, which has 240 member households, was planning to partner with Robbins Hebrew Academy to move to the campus by spring 2010 in a shared building, but the school was not prepared to go ahead by that time.

The shul's history goes back to 1975, when a few couples in Richmond Hill started a group that became the Richmond Hill Jewish Community, and then Congregation Shaareh Haim under the leadership of the late Rabbi Sol Tanenzapf. The synagogue folded in the early 1990s due to financial difficulties, but was reborn as Beit Rayim.

Further information is available online at beitrayim.org.

Chanukah party in the Beaches

Chabad House of Danforth-Beaches welcomes author and teacher of inner Jewish wisdom Rabbi Tzvi Freeman. Rabbi Freeman, a classical guitarist and composer, performs at the shul's Chanukah celebration on Dec. 8 at 7:30 p.m. Latkes and soup will be served. Suggested donation is $12. Chabad of Danforth-Beaches is at 2273 Queen St E. in Toronto. If you wish to attend the event, RSVP to Rabbi Sholom Lezell at 416-809-1365.

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The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

• Prof. Shmuel Wygoda of Jerusalem will be the keynote speaker Dec. 5 at the Centre ALEPH, during a day of study of the work of philosopher Emmanuel Levinas.

• Spanish author Leopoldo Ceballos recently spoke in Montreal about his new book on Tangier, at a meeting organized by the Féderation Sépharade du Canada.

• In an interview, French Rabbi Marc-Alain Ouaknin talks about his recent book in which he explains the Torah for children.

Also this week on the web:

• Cantor sings anthem at Canadiens home game.

• Canadians hike through Golan to support terrorism victims.

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(Back row, l to r) Adam Pivnick, Craig Walters (Chair), Nuni Altman, Jonathan Segal, Stephen Diamond (Chair), Fran Gevantsmoller

(Front row, l to r) Jordan Meckinger, Leslie Salmon, Cory Rosen, Alexandra Khazzam

Absent: Leonard Abramsky, Jonathan Sitrin (Chair), Aaron Sinclair, Orli Weiner

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Greater Toronto Area

Israeli public speaker seeks peace through PR

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Neil Lazarus has defended Israel's right to security and peaceful borders on a gaggle of major TV news programs worldwide over the years.

And earlier this month, he brought his message on how to promote Israel to Toronto's Jewish community, mainly its youth.

The colourful British ex-pat made aliyah in 1988 and has been working as an expert public relations consultant for the Israel government.

Director of the Israel advocacy website AwesomeSeminars.com, Lazarus describes his site as an "arms-length" partner with the Israeli Foreign Ministry and the Jewish Agency for Israel. The site is an initiative whose goal is to increase the ability of world Jewry to engage in hasbarah effectively, with particular emphasis these days on combating the growing boycott, divestment and sanctions movement (BDS).

In a sit-down interview, Lazarus, 43, told *The CJN* it's no longer strictly an Israeli responsibility to promote itself as a place of innovation, tourism and culture. It's now up to all Jews worldwide to speak on its behalf if perceptions of it as merely a conflict zone are to change, he said.

"We have to get the message across that Israel is seeking peace. We're encouraging people to get more involved, especially with digital diplomacy" through vehicles such as Facebook and YouTube to reach out, make friends and start dialogues with other faith groups and communities, he said.

But he insists he does not represent the pro-Israel side, per se, as much as he does the pro-peace side.

"My house is one kilometre away from what would be an independent Palestinian state. So I'm pro-Palestinian. I want to have a border, but peace would be even better," Lazarus said, adding that the reality is that there needs to be talk about Israel's security.

He said a "loud majority" of Israelis alongside a "silent majority" of Palestinians want to build a better future for both peoples. But the Palestinians face obstacles the Israelis don't.

"On the [Palestinian] side, they can't march on the streets because they're oppressed by Hamas and others who disagree" with moderates, Lazarus said.

One of the primary issues at hand, according to Lazarus, is that there isn't enough integration between Israelis and Palestinians "on a contact level."

"A lot of what doesn't make the media is what goes on daily between Israelis and Palestinians," he said. "I drive through the West Bank every day and you see very strange things. You'll see Palestinians selling food to Orthodox Jews from the settlement next door. You can go to Gush Etzion where a new supermarket was opened, and you'll see Palestinians and Israelis together.

"That stuff is kinda boring and doesn't make headlines, but it's the reality on the ground and perhaps a reality the Palestinian [representatives] don't feel happy to talk about."

With regard to projecting a new, positive image of Israel on the world stage, Lazarus said it's necessary to depict Israel beyond the confines of the seemingly ceaseless regional conflict.

The Israel-Palestine conflict that makes news headlines is "only a small part of the reality on the ground" in Israel, he said.

"The most dangerous thing in Jerusalem this past summer was the fact that it was full of Americans and Canadians looking for Häagen Dazs ice cream, only to discover it had been replaced by Ben & Jerry's," he quipped, adding that the most dangerous thing in Tel Aviv is the game of *matkot* (beach paddleball).

Neil Lazarus

Lazarus said in his efforts to pitch Israel in a different light to the world, he avoids the use of the term "branding."

"There's something more fundamental [that needs to] go on, and that is... making friends," he said.

The message Lazarus is espousing is one that says that if one supports a critical press, a liberal agenda, the right of women, of gay rights, then Israel has to be a place you support.

At the same time, he said, if you support the spread of technology and medical development, it's all coming from Israel.

"That's the message that's coming across now. That Israel isn't a threat, it's a partner, even with all its faults. But at the end of the day Israel has to be recognized as a Jewish democracy."

To watch the complete interview with Lazarus, visit *The CJN*'s YouTube channel: http://www.youtube.com/canadianjewishnews.

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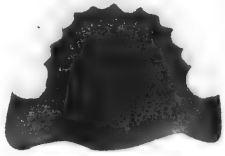

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Prime Minister Harper holds the Carol Deutsch Portfolio, presented to him by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem as "The Guardian of our Children's Future Award."

(STANDING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT)
JAMES ADAM GOTTDENKER, FRAN SONSHINE, NATIONAL CHAIR; THE RIGHT HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER; YARON ASHKENAZI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; JOE GOTTDENKER, VICE CHAIR

CAROL DEUTSCH
[illegible]

About the Carol Deutsch Porfolio

In Antwerp of 1942, when Jewish existence was threatened with extinction, Deutsch created his last work, 99 original illustrations, depicting heroes and narratives of the Bible. Deutsch lovingly placed them in a handmade ornamented wooden box, as a birthday present for his two year old daughter, Ingrid. As a father who understood the tenuousness of his own continued existence, Mr. Deutsch sought to leave Ingrid with a legacy of his Jewish identity.

Carol Deutsch and his wife, Fela, were transported to Auschwitz, where Fela was immediately selected and sent to the gas chambers. Deutsch was eventually sent to Buchenwald and died of exhaustion. At war's end, five-year-old Ingrid, who was hidden with a Catholic family in the countryside, returned with her grandmother to her home in Antwerp. While their apartment was completely looted by the Nazis, the wooden box miraculously survived.

Further to Ingrid's wishes following her death, the Carol Deutsch portfolio was bequeathed to Yad Vashem, where it is on display in the Yad Vashem Museum of Holocaust Art in Israel. A father's personal bequest to his daughter has become a symbol of stalwart resistance to everything the Nazis attempted to obliterate.

The Carol Deutsch Portfolio replicates Deutsch's oustanding artistic expression and is presented to world leaders and individuals who demonstrate the highest commitment to "Zachor" (Remembrance).

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About Yad Vashem

Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Remembrance and Education Centre in Jerusalem is the universal guardian and imparter of the Shoah's (Holocaust's) legacy and the protector of human values. Visited by over 1 million people annually, Yad Vashem is internationally recognized as being at the forefront of Holocaust commemoration, education, documentation, and research.

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Shul's 'Prayer-O-Plan' aimed at getting a minyan

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

A minyan is "an essential service that a shul has to provide its congregants," says Abe Glowinsky, chair of Beth Sholom Synagogue's minyan committee.

For those who are saying *Kaddish* – the prayer that mourners recite at twice-daily services for 11 months following the loss of a parent – Beth Sholom's new minyan incentive program called "Prayer-O-Plan" was implemented recently to increase the chances of having a minyan at the end of the day.

Kaddish is recited only in the presence of a minyan – the traditional prayer quorum of 10 men (or 10 men and women in egalitarian congregations).

Beth Sholom's traditional Conservative services are non-egalitarian. Women make up about 15 per cent of the worshippers at weekday minyans, and can use the incentive plan too.

Abe Glowinsky

A former three-day-a-year shul-goer, Glowinsky began saying *Kaddish* after his mother died in December 2008, never imagining the impact it would have on him. He still attends minyan "pretty much every morning, and a chunk of evenings."

He said he is committed to being there to help make sure that mourners don't have to leave without saying *Kaddish*.

Glowinsky was instrumental in forming the shul's minyan committee, lobbying board members to commit to attending one evening service a month, among other efforts. Prayer-O-Plan was the result of a minyan committee brainstorming session.

"We tried numerous things," Glowinsky told *The CJN*.

To encourage attendance, he said, the shul has instituted a monthly "Minyan night at the movies," with dinner and a Jewish-themed film following services at a cost of $10. "We've had some pretty good turnouts."

Larry Shilling – the shul's chazzan sheini, who runs the daily minyan and the Prayer-O-Plan program – said that Beth Sholom has between 18 and 25 worshippers on an average morning, but that it can be difficult to get a minyan later in the day.

When there are not enough people, he said, "We tell them we're really sorry, and try to send them elsewhere."

As well, he said, the synagogue, which has almost 1,000 member families, sends reminder letters to people who will be saying *Kaddish* for the yahrzeit of a loved one, and invites them to light a yahrzeit candle at the service on the first evening of the yahrzeit day.

Before this year's High Holidays, Beth Sholom members received cards for the new incentive plan in the mail, along with a letter from Cantor Eric Moses and Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich introducing the program.

Adult members whose card is stamped 12 times receive a free High Holiday ticket, to a maximum of two per household. The shul charges between $125 and $250 per reserved seat, depending on its location. As well, once 50 cards are completed, they will be entered in a draw for two air tickets to Israel.

Glowinsky said that many congregations face similar challenges.

At nearby Beth Tzedec Congregation, which has 2,700 member families, ritual director Lorne Hanick said things are fine, with rare exceptions. "Generally it's not a problem because of our central location, and there are a lot of people saying *Kaddish*."

As well, he added, there are Jewish men who work in the building or who live nearby who can be called on if necessary. At this time of year, when afternoon services are early and people are away for the winter, he encourages members to bring family and friends to the minyan.

"Sometimes we wait five or 10 minutes," Hanick said. He added that it can be embarrassing for women who are not counted, if they raise the number of worshippers to 10. Some women have commented to that effect, he noted.

Another factor at afternoon services is that people who work downtown can attend early Minchah minyanim in office buildings.

Beth Tikvah Synagogue, also a non-egalitarian Conservative congregation, is holding its own, according to ritual director Irv Kirshenblat. "During weekdays, we are probably averaging 15 males and approximately five to six females, both morning and afternoon."

Because of its location – "not [in] a central Jewish area" as well as on a high-traffic main street – Beth Tikvah also faces challenges getting a minyan on occasion.

Recently, a member of the band Safam, who was performing at the shul that night, stepped in to complete the minyan. Kirshenblat was away at the time.

At Beth Sholom, Prayer-O-Plan seems to be working, said Glowinsky. "We have a number of people who've had eight stamps, and I think we have four or five completed."

However, he added ruefully, "I can't tell you how many people never even saw it." Instead, he said, many people took their High Holiday tickets out of the envelope, but paid no attention to other items in the same package. "We just recently told people they can come in and get the card if they have lost or misplaced it."

Rabbi Flanzraich told *The CJN* he likes the message of Prayer-O-Plan, linking minyan attendance with other mitzvot.

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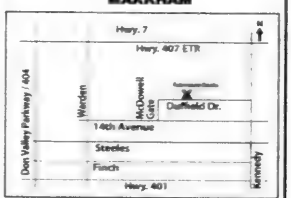

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Refreshments at 8:30 p.m.

Fulfilling the Promise

BAYT's Rabbi Taub retires after 30 years

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Baruch Taub, founding rabbi of Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation (BAYT), is now rabbi emeritus of the synagogue, following a celebratory dinner Nov. 21. He will retire at the end of December and make aliyah.

Rabbi Asher Vale will serve as interim rabbi beginning in the new year.

Rabbi Taub, who declined to be interviewed for this article, was feted by 830 people at the dinner held at the Thornhill synagogue he has overseen from its inception 30 years ago. The shul, which originally met in the rabbi's home, has grown from 13 families to between 600 and 700.

"Tonight is to say thank you to our rav, and to pledge to build on the very solid foundations that Rabbi Taub built," said Shloimie (Perry) Romberg, one of the dinner MCs.

As well, a Torah was dedicated in the rabbi's honour earlier that day, a project that raised $300,000 for the Orthodox synagogue.

In a post-dinner speech, Rabbi Taub thanked his congregants and recalled the shul's beginnings, paying tribute to developer Joseph Tanenbaum, who was the driving force behind the shul, as "a true dreamer and builder of Klal Yisrael."

In the early years, Rabbi Taub noted, Toronto was "a strongly non-Orthodox community." However, he said, the BAYT became "an extraordinary catalyst for tshuvah [return to observance]" for many families who made weddings at the shul, because young brides had to learn the laws of family purity to get married there.

Rabbi Baruch Taub

Thornhill MP Peter Kent, Canada's minister of state of foreign affairs, paid tribute to the rabbi as "a man of inspirational faith, boundless compassion, and impressive learning."

Peter Shurman, the MPP for Thornhill, lauded the rabbi's ability to build bridges between people of different religious philosophies, and Vaughan councillor Alan Shefman spoke of his wisdom and leadership.

Rabbi Yacov Felder, speaking on behalf of the Vaad Harabonim of Toronto – the city's Orthodox rabbinic umbrella group – spoke of Rabbi Taub fulfilling the main task of a rabbi through his care and concern for every member of his congregation.

As well, he said, Rabbi Taub's outreach has extended to the community at large. On a personal note, he added that Rabbi Taub has been "a friend to whom I can turn for advice and encouragement for his keen perception and understanding of all issues."

Rabbi Taub's son, Rabbi Shmuel Taub, spoke on behalf of the family, crediting the shul for its "blazing fire" of love of Torah, the land of Israel and the people of Israel, and his father as the "candle" that lit that flame.

Guest speaker Rabbi Nota Schiller, dean of Ohr Somayach Institutions in Jerusalem, also spoke metaphorically, likening Thornhill to a one-time desert, Judaically speaking. But, he said, there has been a "reforestation program."

Rabbi Schiller also praised Rabbi Taub's leadership and ability to inspire people "to transcend particular agendas for the greater good."

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CBC story stirs the pot on Hariri assassination

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

A major CBC News investigation of what it claims has been a substantially bungled and compromised UN inquiry into the February 2005 car-bombing assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri has made waves internationally.

CBC's investigative report, which was posted online Nov. 21 and aired under the title "Getting Away With Murder" the following night, alleges that Iranian and Syrian-backed Hezbollah planned and carried out the assassination. The report further argues that the UN's commission of inquiry, though having mishandled key telecommunications evidence implicating Hezbollah, will likely reach this conclusion. (The Beirut-based UN commission was transformed in March of 2009 into the Special Tribunal for Lebanon based in The Hague. With the power to indict and arrest suspects, the STL is headed by chief prosecutor Daniel Bellmare, a Canadian.)

The CBC report was picked up by media around the world, including in Israel. It has been denounced by Bellmare, and was criticized also by current Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri, the son of Rafik.

In the aftermath of Hariri's assassination, when Syrian President Bashar Assad was compelled by the "Cedar Revolution" to remove his military occupation from Lebanon, Saad blamed Assad for his father's murder. His accusation was in line with the finding of the UN commission in late 2005, led by German prosecutor Detlev Mehlis, that Syrian security forces, along with Lebanese officials, were responsible.

Four Lebanese suspects were arrested in Beirut but released years later for lack of evidence. However, under Mehlis' successor, Serge Brammertz, the investigation stalled. It was not until late in 2007 that the UN commission finally started to act on critical evidence, provided in a Lebanese police officer's report that the commission had misplaced during the previous 18 months.

The police officer, Wissam Eid, had tracked the cellphone records of those involved in the assassination. The data pointed unmistakably to members of Hezbollah. But following UN commission meetings with Eid to review this evidence, Eid himself was assassinated in a 2008 car bombing. Hezbollah was assumed responsible.

Neil Macdonald's investigation for the CBC revealed that, according to anonymous claims by former UN investigators, in eliminating Eid, Hezbollah had relied upon a source who knew the intimate details of the UN inquiry – the head of Lebanese intelligence, Col. Wissam Hassan.

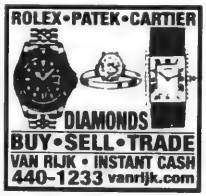
As evidence mounted against Hezbollah and as it appears likely (according to the CBC) that Bellmare's tribunal will point the finger at the radical movement, Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has gone on the offensive. Nasrallah tried to convince the UN inquiry that Israel was responsible for the Hariri assassination. This charge was not taken seriously.

Then, on Nov. 11, Nasrallah threatened to "cut off the hand" of anyone who tried to arrest any of his group's members. This was seen as a threat not only to the UN inquiry, which Nasrallah has alleged is a U.S.-Israeli conspiracy, but also to leading Lebanese "pro-western" figures including Saad Hariri. (Gabi Ashkenazi, the outgoing chief of the IDF, recently warned that an indictment from the tribunal against Hezbollah could lead to Hezbollah's violent takeover of Lebanon. No wonder that Hariri voiced criticism of the CBC report. But what he really believes is almost certainly something else entirely.)

Complicating the picture of internal Lebanese politics is the fact that in September, Saad absolved Syria of any involvement in his father's murder. For his part, Bashar Assad, who opposes the UN tribunal, warned last July (according to the Lebanese newspaper *Al-Akhbar*) that any accusations against Hezbollah in the murder of Hariri could lead to the destruction of Lebanon. This dismayed those who believe that Syria is re-aligning itself with Saudi Arabia against Iran's involvement in Lebanon and support of Hezbollah.

In the meantime, while some continue to suggest that Israel might have been behind the Hariri murder, Macdonald was unequivocal in his report: "Nothing the UN has uncovered points remotely at Israel. Everything points at Hezbollah. But invoking Israel always gains traction in the Arab world."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.



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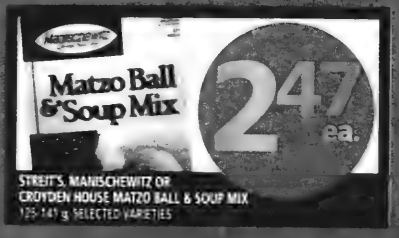

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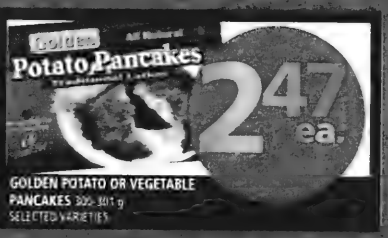

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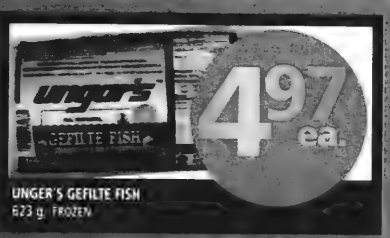

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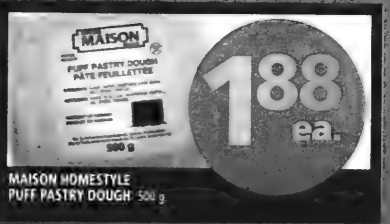

MAISON HOMESTYLE PUFF PASTRY DOUGH 500 g
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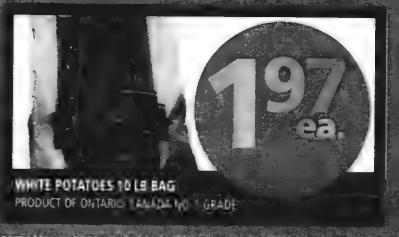

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WHITE MUMS
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Gaza evacuees get help starting a new life

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Israel's evacuation of Gaza's Gush Katif settlements in August 2005 was a traumatic event for the country, but particularly so for the 10,000 Jewish residents forced to leave homes that some had lived in for 30 years.

Judy Lowy

At the time, the government pledged to ease the transition to life outside Gush Katif, but five years later, 85 per cent of the former residents of the southwestern Gaza region, plus others from the northern West Bank, continue to reside in trailers and 18 per cent remain unemployed, far above the country's jobless rate of 6 to 7 per cent.

That's the bleak picture painted by Judy Lowy, a British-born olah who was in Toronto last week to raise the profile – and perhaps some funds as well – for an organization created to help find employment and promote self-sufficiency for the former residents of Gush Katif.

Lowy is executive director of JobKatif, a grassroots organization founded by Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon to help integrate the displaced residents of Gush Katif into mainstream Israeli life.

Lowy believes the Israeli government was guilty of poor post-evacuation planning for the residents, who found themselves with no jobs, few prospects, and living permanently in what were supposed to be temporary shelters.

Rabbi Rimon, who like Lowy resides in Gush Etzion, a settlement south of Jerusalem, tried to convince the government to integrate the former residents, but he ran into a virtual brick wall.

"I don't think it was callousness," Lowy said. "It's government bureaucracy. Everything takes longer than it should."

Instead of relying on the glacial speed of bureaucrats to get things done, Rabbi Rimon "became a one-man employment agency," Lowy said.

He set up a website, placed ads in papers and with the help of volunteers using their personal contacts found jobs for the displaced Gush Katif families. In March 2006, JobKatif was formally created as a non-profit agency to carry on the rabbi's work. Over time, it added professional staff so that today, it employs 20 people and boasts a budget of $2 million (US).

It can also boast some successes: 1,600 full-time jobs have been found; 179 new businesses have been started; more than 300 former residents have attended vocational training, and in 2008, Rabbi Rimon received the President's Award for Volunteerism.

The success of the organization has also attracted the attention of the Netanyahu government, which last summer set up an inquiry into the handling of the Gush Katif displaced families. The inquiry, which heard testimony from JobKatif, issued its final report a few months ago. "It was pretty devastating," Lowy said. "In a line, 'the people got a raw deal.'"

The state had encouraged them to move to the region and then, after forcibly evacuating them, did not adequately prepare for their welfare, she added.

In 2009, the government offered to provide some financial support to JobKatif, matching shekel for shekel all sums allocated for job placement. A little under two months ago, satisfied with JobKatif's achievements, the government upped the ratio to three to one, matching every shekel spent by the private agency with three from the government.

Finding jobs has numerous spinoff benefits that go far beyond merely statistical improvements in the jobless data, Lowy suggested.

Many of the former residents were over 45, and 70 per cent had been self-employed in various small businesses, which they had created from nothing.

Particularly noteworthy were the bug-free lettuce and flower hothouses. Altogether, Gush Katif accounted for 15 per cent of Israel's total agricultural exports, and that sector supported various spinoff service industries as well.

Many of the older residents were at a stage in life that made it difficult to find new jobs.

Lowy said JobKatif raises 70 per cent of its operating budget from the Diaspora, mostly the United States, but she believes Toronto could be fertile ground for support.

"I invite people to take the opportunity to trigger the three-to-one government money to help people get back to normal," she said.

Funds can be allocated through UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, which is acting as a conduit for moneys raised for JobKatif, she added.

You are cordially invited to attend the
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No Frills Ontario *Represented by Al Tornatore* **&** **John Ciarallo** *John's No Frills*

Recipients of the
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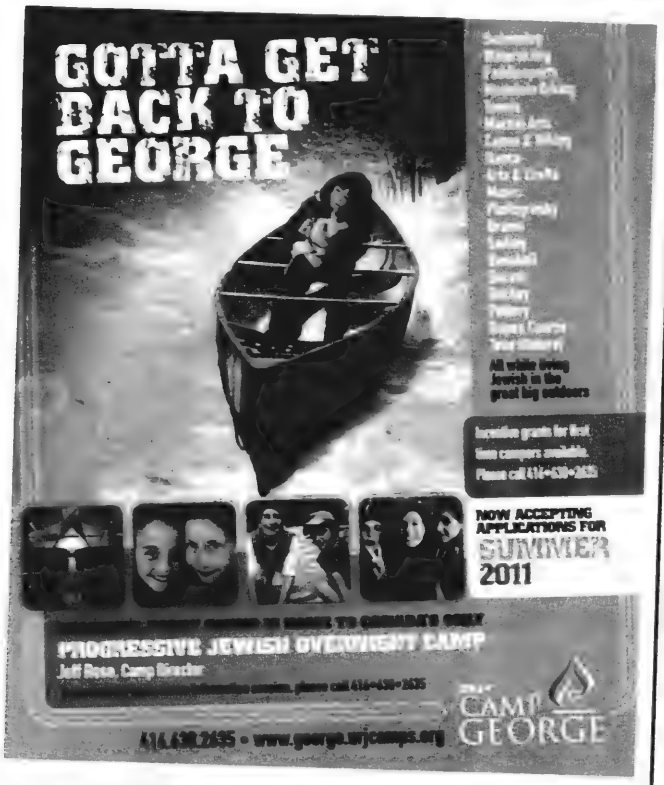
which will be presented
at the Toronto Centre for the Arts
on Sunday December 12, 2010
Gala Dinner Reception 5:00 p.m.
Followed by the Concert 7:30 p.m.

featuring
Eli Gerstner and the YESHIVA BOYS CHOIR

NCSY ORTHODOX UNION

Funds raised by this event will go in part to scholarships for Jewish teenagers who cannot afford to participate in Jewish educational programs.

For Dinner Ticket Information please call 905.761.6279 ext. 232
For Concert Ticket Information please call 905.761.6279 ext. 230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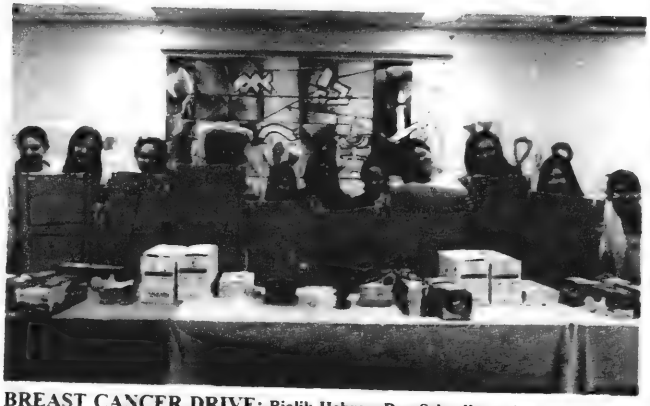
Class Acts

MATH CHALLENGE: Junior high students Noah Ifergan, left, Shon Ziner, middle, and Jonah Haber of the Toronto Heschel School all ranked among Canada's top 100 students on the www.mathletics.ca math challenge. Pictured with them is Daphne Rosenwald, their math teacher. Heschel ranked seventh overall.

CHANUKAH STORY: Senior kindergarten student Jory Gladman, from Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin Education Centre in Thornhill, displays the beautiful Chanukah book she created. Her class learned and wrote about the story of Chanukah, and then each student made their own illustrations using colourful geometric shapes.

MIRACLE OF CHANUKAH: Robbins Hebrew Academy nursery students – from left, Layla Browman, Danielle Zylberberg, Makenna Gillick and Joseph Alkon – are pictured in their classroom's model Beit Hamikdash as they re-enact the miracle of Chanukah.

MITZVAH MONDAY: Netivot HaTorah Day School launched its Mitzvah Monday program, a monthly opportunity to give back to the community, with its first initiative, a present-wrapping project to benefit Chai Lifeline. Students from grades 1 through 8 took part in gift wrapping and card making, while preschool students made cards. Pictured, back row from left, are Tamar, Tanya and Talya, and front row, from left, are Daniel, Avivit, Eli, Shalom and Mendy. *[Rebecca Ansel photo]*



BREAST CANCER DRIVE: Bialik Hebrew Day School's student council held its annual Think Pink campaign in support of Canadian breast cancer research. The event saw the entire senior division dressed in pink. Funds raised from the sale of chocolate and pop went directly to breast cancer research. Volunteering at the lunchtime event are, from left, Jordyn Rochwerg, Danielle Nisker, Jordana Colomby, Brooke Sonshine, Lauren Weintraub, Jordyn Kimel, Maddie Brown, Laura Schwartz, Jillian Elman, Jennifer Glied-Goldsteine and Jordyn Selznick.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Happy 64th anniversary. Rose & Jack Silverberg's family wishes them mazel tov and all their love.

Syma & David Forberg celebrate their 66th anniversary after marrying in a displaced persons camp. Mazel tov and love from your whole family.

Aggie & Joel Geller announce Rebecca's engagement to Jesse, son of Brenda & Hersch Rosenberg. Happy grandmothers are Birdie Geller, Ethel Rosenberg and Jean Kowalski.

Announcing the marriage of Ann-Barbara Graff, daughter of the late Ted & Yetta Graff, and Jamie Blustein, son of Joseph Blustein and Benita & Don Langdon.

Whitney & Stuart are overjoyed with the birth of their daughter Kyla Lauren Sherman. Grandparents, Jeannie Berg & Kevie Sherman and Mirah & Howard Detsky.

Mazel tov to our precious mench, Michael Ryczke, on your first birthday. You are absolutely amazing. Love and kisses, Savta Ariela and Mommy Orit.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to **WWW.CJNEWS.COM** and click the **Family Moments** button!

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What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

Our regular columnist, Leila Speisman, is away on medical leave.

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Deadline for Dec. 16 is Dec. 6. Deadline for Dec. 23 is Dec. 13. Note: there is no paper on Dec. 30. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Dec. 2

DEAD SEA SCROLLS

"Bringing the Dead Sea Scrolls to Toronto," presented by **Alex Gropper**. 7:15 p.m. Room 403, Carr Hall, 100 St. Joseph St., University of Toronto. Gropper gives a brief history of finding the scrolls and explains the process in bringing them to Toronto for the Royal Ontario Museum exhibit last year

ISRAELI ENGINEERS

"Engineering With Soul: Achievements of Israeli Engineers Without Borders." With **Mark Talesnick**, associate professor in the Technion faculty of civil and environmental engineering. Beth David. 7:30 p.m. All welcome. Free.

Friday, Dec. 3

SHAAR SHALOM SINGLES

Shaar Shalom Singles invites the public to a special Chanukah Oneg Shabbat, led by **Ben Silverberg**. 8 p.m. Shaar Shalom Synagogue. Kiddush and mix and mingle following. **David**, 416-224-9494.

Saturday, Dec. 4

TOT SHABBAT

Junior congregation and tot Shabbat – service with songs and a parshah play. 10 a.m. Pride of Israel

CHANUKAH PARTY

Pride of Israel Chanukah party. 7 p.m. With DJ **Howie T**, games and prizes for every child. Latkes and sufganiyot served. $2 for adult members, $5 for adult guests, $1 for kids and teens. Purchase tickets in advance. 416-226-0111 ext. 10.

Sunday, Dec. 5

ISRAELI MOVIES AND TV

Shaar Shalom adult education program, Israel At the Movies and TV, 7:30 p.m. *Srugim* season 1, TV series that follows the lives of a group of observant Jews as they try to find a suitable mate.

Monday, Dec. 6

AFTERNOON BOOK REVIEW

Harriet Morris reviews *Blooms of Darkness*, by Israeli writer **Aharon Appelfeld**, a story set against the backdrop of an unnamed Ukrainian city during World War II. Dessert 1 p.m., review 1:30 p.m. $15 at the door. Beth Tzedec Synagogue. 416-781-3511.

Tuesday, Dec. 7

JOHN TORY SPEAKS

John Tory, Canadian businessman, political activist, former Conservative Party of Ontario leader and radio broadcaster, brings insights to issues that matter to Torontonians. 12 p.m. Beth Tikvah. Advance reservations. 416-221-3433.

TEMPLE SINAI CHANUKAH

Celebrate Chanukah with lights, latkes and laughter. Featuring klezmer band **A Touch of Klez**. 7:30 p.m. Refreshments served. $10. Reservations by 12 p.m. Dec. 7. education@templesinai.net, 416-487-3281.

TAX CLINIC

Temple Har Zion Brotherhood's annual tax clinic with **Alan Dessau**, on getting your documents ready for your 2010 tax return and tax planning options. 7:15 p.m. RSVP: harzionbrotherhood@gmail.com.

LINE DANCING

Line dancing with **Annie Wilder-Sharpe**. Beth David, 8 p.m. sisterhood@bethdavid.com.

CHANUKAH POTLUCK

Chanukah veggie potluck party and candlelighting. 7:30-10 p.m. Miles Nadal JCC, Room 318. $10. Join Kulanu to light the menorah, sing traditional Chanukah songs and eat latkes and other vegetarian dishes. Kulanutoronto@gmail.com. RSVP by Dec. 5, specifying what vegetarian or dairy food item you would like to bring.

Continued on page 29

The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada
& Young Polish Canadian Professionals Association
Present
Toronto Premiere of
IRENA SENDLER
In The Name of Their Mothers

The true story of how a brave group of righteous Poles risked their lives to save over 2,500 Jewish children from certain death in Nazi occupied Warsaw
The Director
Mary Skinner
will introduce the film and stay for Q&A
www.irenasendlerfilm.com
Sunday, December 12th, 2010 – 8:00pm
Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Avenue
(one block north of Bathurst & Glencairn)
The screening of this film is made possible through the generous support of Tridelta Financial Partners (www.tridelta.ca)
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With the support of
Tridelta Financial Partners is the sponsor of the 2010-2011 Habonim Documentary Film Series

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700-1000 FINCH AVE. W., TORONTO

Continued from page 28

Wednesday, Dec. 8

TAREK FATAH SPEAKS

Tarek Fatah discusses his new book, *The Jew Is Not My Enemy*, unveiling the myths that fuel Muslim antisemitism. 12 p.m. 1 King St. W., Suite 3400. Lunch $25. Reservation required. Dietary laws observed. speakersaction.com.

THE BOTTOM BILLION

Discussion on important world issues. *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Light dinner followed by discussion led by **Rabbi Eleanor Steinman**. Dinner 7 p.m., program 7:30 p.m. Registration required for dinner. $10. 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net.

EVENING BOOK REVIEW

Harriet Morris reviews *Blooms of Darkness* by Israeli writer **Aharon Appelfeld**. $10, includes dessert. Beth Tzedec, 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3511.

Other News

NCSY CONCERT

30th annual NCSY concert and gala dinner. **Eli Gerstner** and Yeshiva Boys Choir perform. Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. Toronto Centre for the Arts. ncsyconcert.com, 905-761-6279, ext. 230, for tickets.

SHABBAT SERVICE

Join Solel Congregation of Mississauga on Dec. 10, 8 p.m. With **Jay Brodbar**, executive director of New Israel Fund Canada. Catered adult dinner, 6:15 p.m. Registration required for dinner. 905-820-5915.

MOVIE NIGHT

Shrek pyjama party and movie night. Dec. 11, 5:30-8 p.m. Shaar Shalom. The Giborim and Maccabee Youth groups will join the congregation for *Havdalah*. Movie starts at 6 p.m. Snacks served. Register: you@shaarshalom.ca, 905-889-4975 ext. 62.

GAMES NIGHT

Games at Beth Radom. Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Texas Hold 'Em, mah-jong, blackjack. Silent auction, door prizes, food. 416-636-3451, games@bethradom.com.

MISHPACHAH MINYAN

Families with young children are invited to participate in Shaar Shalom's mishpachah minyan. Dec. 11, 10:15 a.m. Service starts with Torah reading and ends to coincide with the main service so participants can join congregation members for kiddush. 905-889-4975.

JEWISH HEALING PROGRAM

Healing Service. Dec. 12, 3-4 p.m. Miles Nadal JCC. **Rabbi Ed Elkin** and **Judy Shier Weisberg** facilitate. Free, wheelchair accessible. 416-638-7800, ext. 6287.

JIAS GENERAL MEETING

Annual meeting for Jewish Immigrant Aid Services. **Guidy Mamann**, partner of Mamann Sandaluk Immigration Law Firm, on "Recent Trends in Immigration and the Impact on Our Community." Dec. 14, 7 p.m. Prosserman JCC.

MUSICAL RECITAL

Concert at Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. Dec. 12, 12-2 p.m. Refreshments served. Tax receipts for donations $18 and over. Sponsored by Na'amat Canada.

CHANUKAH CELEBRATION

Come Light the Menorah, with Yiddish folk and theatre songs by **Aron Gonshor**. Dec. 12, 2 p.m. Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W. Refreshments served. $5 for Workmen's Circle and Friends of Yiddish members, $10 for non-members.

IRENA SENDLER

Toronto première of *In the Name of Their Mothers*, the new and most complete documentary film about **Irena Sendler**. Producer **Mary Skinner** speaks after the screening. Dec. 12, 8 p.m. Congregation Habonim. irenasendlerfilm.com.

RABBI'S TISH

Dec. 25 following Shabbat services. Study session and kiddush with **Rabbi Martin Berman**. Shaar Shalom. 905-889-4975.

BAYCREST VOLUNTEERS

Baycrest is looking for volunteer gallery guides and arts and crafts facilitators. If you have an art background, skills in jewelry design, drawing, painting, photography, creative writing, storytelling and more, call 416-785-2500 ext. 2572.

JF&CS GROUPS

Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit jfandcs.com. Registration required.

When you're about to separate: what to tell the kids. Workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. Dec. 8, 6:30-9 p.m. Lipa Green.

Men's abuse-prevention program orientation evening. Eric Kirsh and **Margaret Kata** provide information on the 16-week program, starting Jan. 2011. Dec. 7, 7-9 p.m. Lipa Green Centre.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211. Connecting the Generations. Catered lunch plus Jewish heritage visit to ROM. Meet a student. Ext. 155.

Chanukah Musical Celebration. **Aviva Chernick** entertains. Dec. 9. Reserve by Dec. 6. Ext. 155.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Beth Tzedec Seniors. New Horizons for chavurah with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**, Dec. 13, 1:30-3 p.m. (recurring). Rich discussion and a nosh as we learn from and with each other. All welcome.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Dec. 15, departs 10 a.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Social circle – needlepoint, etc. Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Seniors woodworking – skilled craftsmen. 416-630-6487.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Wellness lecture: "Goal Setting for Well-Being and Longevity," with personal growth coach **Judy Weiss**. Dec. 9, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Free.

Lecture: "Jewish Honour in the Face of 21st-Century Antisemitism," with Canadian Jewish Congress CEO **Bernie Farber**. Dec. 7, 10 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. www.prossermanjcc.com, 416-638-1881.

Registration for morning programs and full-day daycare is now open.

Registration for the Tic Tac Summer program is now open – children ages 2 and 3 enjoy a fun and educational experience from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Kosher lunch included. To book a tour or to find out more call **Kailah**, ext. 4351.

Sharing the light of the menorah across the city. Enjoy Chanukah with a multi-location celebration. Live entertainment, prizes, free treats. Dec. 4, 6:30 p.m.

Registration for winter courses starting in January now open, with more Ryerson/Chang programs for 50+. Recorder, Latin dance, mah-jong and bridge lessons, acting classes, folk dance, current events.

Lunch and Learn with **Rabbi Moshe Stern**. Dec. 3, 12-1 p.m. Free. Bring lunch, coffee and tea served. Call morning of to confirm program is running.

Chanukah party. Latkes and entertainment with **Shaya Petroff**. Free. Dec. 5, 12-2 p.m. in the lounge.

Please note there will not be a Creativity Club, Jokers Club or PRO meeting in December.

"The Female Ruse: Stories of Women's Deception in Genesis." Why do women deceive in the Bible? Unique co-teaching with an Orthodox female scholar and a Reform female rabbi. Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. $10. Room 105. Ext. 4255.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Sundays, 8 a.m., and Thursdays, 7:15 a.m. Complete kosher breakfast after services. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Toronto Jewish Film Society. 2011 subscriptions selling out. Eight films from January to December on select Sundays at Al Green Theatre. Noted speakers introduce and discuss each film. **Joelle**: ext. 139 to register.

Renee Barda: Life Begins Again! With **Dorothy Krizmanic, Gideon Wilk** and **John Lettieri**. Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $22 regular, $18 group. Ext. 0.

Media Mondays, lectures with film clips. Dec. 6, 7 p.m. New Wave cinema of Taiwan. With *Eye Weekly* film critic **Adam Nayman**. $12, $6 students with ID. Ext 606.

Dec. 5, 12-2 p.m. Family Chanukah celebration. Latkes, music, games and crafts. Ext. 277.

Utah's Crying, an original rock musical. Dec. 2-4, 8 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $15 online, $20 at the door. utahscrying.com, 416-731-7253.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *God Is Great...I Am Very Small*, with **Audrey Tatou**. **Shlomo Schwartzberg** speaks. Dec. 5, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. Tickets sold 15 minutes before screening times. $15, $10 for ages 18-29 (7:30 screening only). esthera@mnjcc.org, ext. 606

"The December Dilemma: Dealing with Christmas and Chanukah in the Jewish family," with **Alena Strauss**. Dec. 5, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Free, refreshments served. sharonis@mnjcc.org, ext. 154.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 31

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Laura Bien	Nov 12/10	333 Clark Ave
Jules Kofman	Nov 12/10	32 Saintfield Ave
Ida Centner	Nov 14/10	111 Avenue Rd
Morris Newman	Nov 12/10	167 Thistle Pond Dr
Lt. Col. Irwin B. Weisbarth		1555 Finch Ave E
Ida Centner	Nov 14/10	111 Avenue Rd
Morris Newman	Nov 12/10	167 Thistle Pond Dr
Cheryl Grossman	Nov 12/10	2789 Bucklepost Cr
Max Milgram	Nov 13/10	784 Centre St
Marvin Besunder	Nov 15/10	22 Shallmar Bl
Bryce Goosen	Nov 13/10	12 Thistle Ave
Dr. Joshua Brodey	Nov 16/10	2727 Yonge St
Anne Wagman	Nov 17/10	4300 Bathurst St
Dora Newmann	Nov 17/10	3560 Bathurst St
Lillian Lluba Sharpe	Nov 17/10	77 Avenue Rd
Jean Segalowitz	Nov 19/10	59 Lawrie Shepway
Avrom Siegel	Nov 18/10	111 Avenue Rd
Judy Stein	Nov 17/10	48 Prue Ave
Simona Rotman	Nov 20/10	2 Glamorgan Ave
Betty Simon	Nov 19/10	1995 Lenarthur Dr
Benjamin Lieberman	Nov 21/10	24 Shorthill Rd
Sidney Baker	Nov 20/10	7460 Bathurst St
Harvey Pivnick	Nov 19/10	3397 Hwy. 38, RR # 1
Sara Langer	Nov 21/10	23 Markwood Ln

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Swern, Richard Howard	Nov. 15/10	29 Millcreek Cr
Grosman, Sally	Nov. 15/10	Private
Furst, Richard	Nov. 16/10	16 Anvil Millway
Anidjar, Lola	Nov. 17/10	121 Almore Ave
Deutsch, Frances Diane	Nov. 18/10	50 Disera Dr
Weiss, Harry	Nov. 17/10	
Farkas, Tibor (Ted)	Nov. 18/10	20 Baif Blvd
Lewin, Ryan	Nov. 17/10	660 Briar Hill
Fyxon, Khima	Nov. 19/10	Private
Douglas, Adele	Nov. 19/10	3560 Bathurst
Steinberg, Ernest	Nov. 17/10	55 Ameer Ave
Winston, Mildred	Nov. 18/10	
Friedrich, Lidia	Nov. 19/10	15 Raglan Ave
Jama, Bela	Nov. 18/10	2 Covington Rd
Seeman, Esther	Nov. 20/10	601 Clark Ave
Bouslov, Arkady	Nov. 15/10	
Medvedev, Valery	Nov. 16/10	Private
Gaistman, Morris	Nov. 21/10	Private

HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Betty Wasserstein	Oct 30/10	1001 Peter Robertson
Ruth Diament	Nov 4/10	1318 Wilton Ave

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Coast to Coast

Kingston plans for the future

By JORDAN PRESS
Special to the CJN

KINGSTON, Ont. — When the youth of Kingston's Jewish community light a large chanukiyah in the historic square behind City Hall on Dec. 2, it will be more than a community event that celebrates a holiday.

It will be a symbol of how organizers are working toward getting more Jews involved in community life. The event will be free and it will be open to anyone who wants to participate – two ingredients that should help successfully entice non-affiliated Jews to become more active community members.

The Kingston Jewish Council is in the same position as many other small community groups. They are all trying to engage more Jews in community life, but have been planning for the future based on what they see, rather than hard data.

That has changed.

Last month, the council held a public meeting at which it hosted representatives from the United Israel Appeal Federations Canada (UIAFC) who released population and demographic projections for Kingston and the rest of Canada.

What the numbers showed was that Kingston Jewry has increased over the past 30 years, but that population growth is expected to slow down over the next 10 years, just as in the rest of Canada. Between now and 2021, Canada's Jewish population is projected to increase by 2.4 per cent – to 394,300 from an estimated 385,198 – while Kingston Jewry is projected to grow by nearly five per cent to a projected 1,317 from an estimated 1,256.

But within those numbers are unique situations for each community that make the projections helpful for community planners, especially for smaller communities who don't have the resources of the UIAFC.

The projections are being shared with UIAFC members, the results of two years of study. Community affiliates asked the UIAFC to help them plan for the future, and the projections are designed to do just that. The projections are based on the 2001 national census.

Like Canada, the population in Kingston is projected to get older, with more people in the over-65 bracket in 2021 than in 2001. The number of people under the age of 25 is also projected to drop. This aging population will affect how organizations such as the Kingston Jewish Council plan for their community's future.

The UIAFC also projects that more Jews will be living in poverty in Canada by 2021 – nearly 56,000 from about 53,000 – while the number of Jews earning more than $100,000 will also increase to about 36,000 from 34,000. Kingston is actually projected to be the wealthiest city per capita: the median income next year in Kingston is projected to reach almost $41,000, more than any other city listed in the UIAFC report.

Another factor that will influence planners: the projected increase in interfaith marriages. By 2021, approximately one in three Jews in Canada will be in an interfaith marriage with a total of 29,469 children, according to the UIA projections.

Planning for the future for communities such as Kingston begins right now. Having more inclusive events and a neutral meeting space are being looked at. The UIAFC recommended the community could simply change the posters for events to include pictures of interfaith and same-sex couples to attract a broader scope of Kingston Jews.

MP petitions government on Israeli MIAs

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Joe Volpe

Eglinton-Lawrence Liberal MP Joe Volpe last week tabled a petition urging the federal government to help secure the return of Israeli soldiers who were captured in the first and second Lebanon wars, as well as by groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas over the years.

The petition, presented Nov. 24 in House of Commons, contained "hundreds, if not thousands" of signatures, according to Volpe.

He told *The CJN* that he wants the government to "use all reasonable means" to help gain the freedom of seven Israeli MIAs: Yehuda Katz, Tzvi Feldman, Zachary Baumel, Ron Arad, Guy Hever, Majdy Halabi and Gilad Schalit.

Volpe presented the petition on behalf of a Toronto grassroots group calling itself Mothers for MIAs.

"They want to get these young boys home. It's an important matter to be settled if we're to bring any semblance of rationality or peace in the region," Volpe said, adding that the group spent a lot of time collecting signatures by visiting many local synagogues.

"I felt the least I could do was give [Mother for MIAs] a podium from which to voice their concerns."

The petition asks the government to consider using economic sanctions "and the breaking of ties with those organizations responsible for the abductions and the governments that support them, in order to bring about the safe and swift return of these men to their families."

Volpe also tabled a second, related petition that asks the government to "use all reasonable means" to ensure the return of the body of Eli Cohen, the Mossad agent who was tortured and then executed by Syria in 1965. His body was never returned to his family.

Volpe said he intends to "make public" the government's response to the petition once he receives it.

Gilad Schalit

Ron Arad

CJA drive tops $40M

Compiled by CJN Staff

MONTREAL — The 2010 Combined Jewish Appeal raised $200,000 more than last year, it was announced at the campaign's official closing Nov. 24.

"Once all pledges are accounted for, it is projected that $36.6 million will have been donated," Federation CJA president Jack Hasen said.

"As an expression of age-old Jewish values, the campaign's theme of 'for one another' inspired an enthusiastic response from the community and giving on a level not seen for several years."

In addition to the contributions to the mainline campaign, nearly $1 million in one-time donations and more than $2.8 million designated for local and Israel projects were also received, for a total of more than $40.4 million.

There were more than 18,000 donors to the campaign.

"The achievements of this campaign give us every reason to look to the future with cautious optimism," Hasen said. "While we have not fully recovered from the economic crisis of a year ago, we are definitely in a more positive position today."

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Diab witness questions French evidence

Compiled by CJN Staff

An Ontario Superior Court judge declined to make an "instant decision" on an application by alleged terrorist Hassan Diab to stay his extradition proceedings. Instead, Judge Robert Maranger said he wouldn't rule until completion of the extradition hearing, the *Ottawa Citizen* reported.

Diab's extradition hearing continued last week, with Crown attorney Jeffrey Johnston jousting with defence witness Kent Roach over evidence produced by France that allegedly showed Diab had a key role in the 1980 Rue Copernic Synagogue bombing, which killed four people and wounded dozens of others.

In questioning Roach, a University of Toronto law professor considered a leading authority on anti-terrorism, Johnston suggested information provided by France from unknown intelligence sources had been corroborated by reliable evidence. It had been gathered according to French law and could be used as a starting point to gather evidence even if it does not meet Canadian legal standards, he said.

Ontario judge declines to make 'instant decision'

"I'm also aware of concerns that evidence derived from torture has... been used in French proceedings," Roach said.

"Just as it has been used in many other proceedings around the world," replied Johnston.

"That doesn't make it right," said Roach.

At one point, Roach conceded that unsourced intelligence can be used if it can be corroborated by other reliable sources, but he repeated that with Diab's liberty at stake, aspects of the French case are "dangerous."

Earlier he said he saw similarities between the Diab case and that of Maher Arar, the Ottawa man deported to Syria where he was tortured.

Roach was the first witness called after 12 days of hearings into the stay application. He said the French evidence relies on "unsourced, uncircumstanced" intelligence that has been manipulated to fit their changing theory of the case.

Roach, who helped advise the commission of inquiry into the Arar case, testified that aspects of the Diab case set off "alarm bells" for him, particularly reports that first suggested Diab entered France from Spain using his own passport and then saying he used a false passport.

"It would suggest to me the intelligence record is unreliable because it is malleable enough to fit any or both scenarios. Because it is not sourced, because it is not circumstanced, it is very difficult to go behind their suppositions and to challenge the intelligence," said Roach.

Roach labelled nearly every piece of intelligence in the French case against Diab as unsourced and uncircumstanced. That included the 1999 intelligence report that concluded Diab, using the alias Alexander Panadriyu, bought the motorcycle and built the bomb that was hidden in its saddlebags.

Sculpture donated to Montreal's JGH

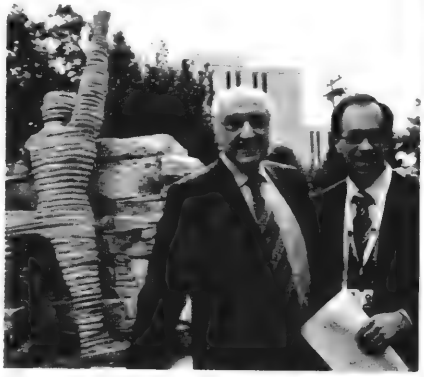
By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — All 20 tons of *The Ascent* have descended at the main entrance of the Jewish General Hospital's Lady Davis Institute for Medical Research to the delight and relief of its creator, dentist/sculptor Harry Rosen.

The three-metre stone sculpture of a climbing figure with one hand stretched skyward, set against a wall of precisely balanced layers of more stone, was donated to the JGH by Rosen, a well-known prosthodontist and professor emeritus at McGill University.

It took a team of architects (notably Gerry Soiferman and Ron Williams), engineers, truckers and other skilled and strong people volunteering their time over the past year to transport the sculpture from Rosen's country home in the Laurentians, to build the foundation and backdrop, and to retrofit the sculpture. Rosen acted as foreman throughout.

"It didn't cost the hospital one penny," he said at the dedication Oct. 4.



Harry Rosen, left, and Larry Sidel, vice-president and chief operating officer of the Jewish General Hospital Foundation, stand beside Rosen's massive *The Ascent* sculpture in front of the Lady Davis Institute.

The sculpture was inspired by the line from the Robert Browning poem, "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" Rosen and the hospital hope it will inspire the hundreds of researchers passing by it each day in their quest to alleviate illness. The installation is also close enough to the sidewalk that anyone can view it. The sculpture, which weighs about a ton by itself, was built over a couple of years by Rosen from boulders indigenous to the Laurentians, which he split by hand and then carved into plate-shaped rounds. From the feet up, he put together these segments into a human shape, mortaring each piece together. For the past two years, it has adorned his property near L'Esterel, next to another stone wall he had earlier constructed.

The new wall was built on-site from many tons more of rock Rosen bought from a quarry in Hemmingford, Que.

Rosen, 81, put in six months outdoors, mostly alone, getting this piece of public art to the point that it was both esthetically pleasing and physically safe.

The left leg of the figure, whose back is turned toward the viewer, is taking a step up, its left arm atop the wall, and the finger of the right hand appear to reach for the stars.

Transporting the sculpture involved welding it to the flatbed of a truck, the only way to secure it, and then breaking the weld. One leg did break, which had to be mended. The foundation required excavation by backhoe and the pouring of four truckloads of cement.

Some of the stones of the backdrop weighed two or three hundred pounds, and much of the placement was done by hand. The really time-consuming part, however, was getting the stones placed just right so that the wall was level and held together by gravity.

Rosen did much of that work himself, rearranging and grinding smaller pieces into wedges and shims. It was dirty work and he dressed the part for a workman.

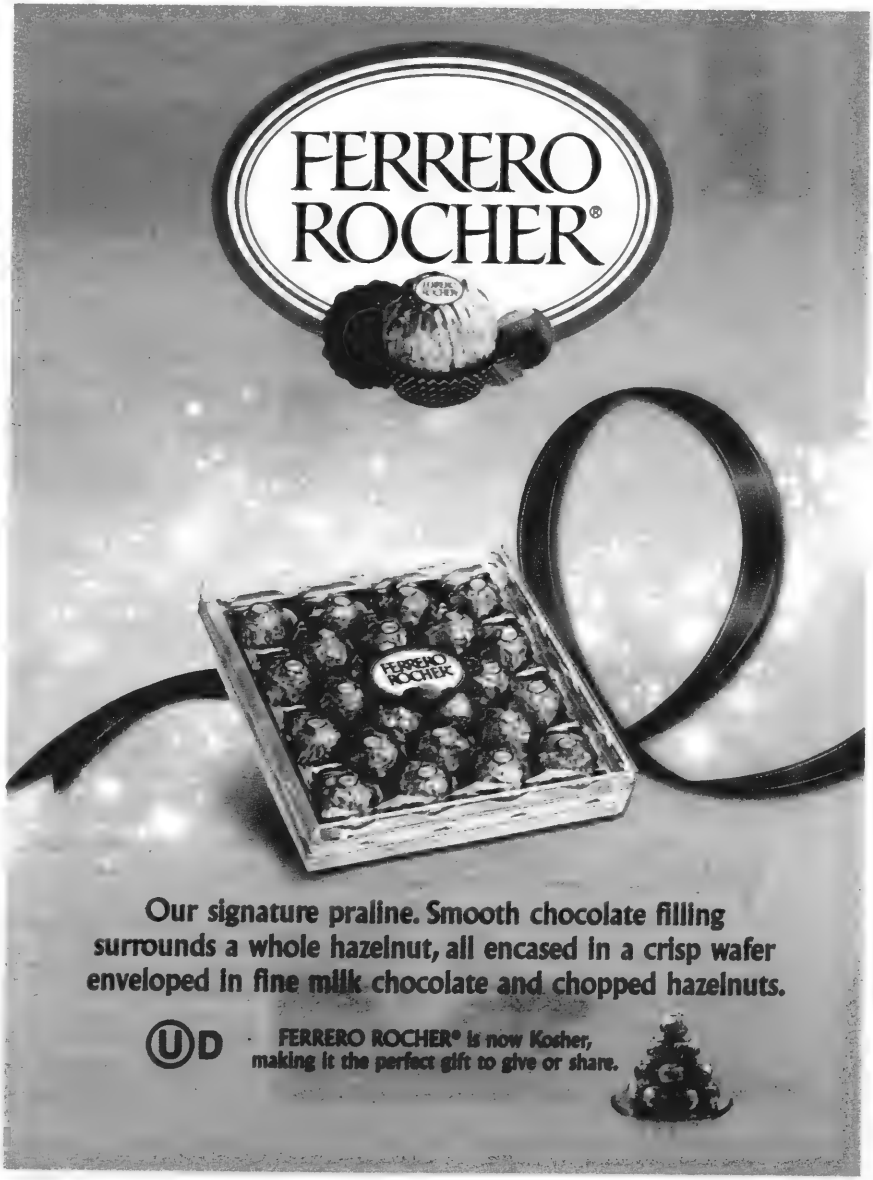
One winter's day, a man stopped and watched him for awhile. "Many people asked me questions as I worked, usually about the art or the philosophy behind it. But, he said, 'Tell me, who's your boss?' I said why? He said, 'You must have a terrible boss making an old man like you work so hard on such a cold day.'" Rosen, a strapping fellow, laughs at the memory.

Rosen's manual skills in small spaces restoring teeth have long been recognized, but it has only come to light in more recent years that he is also very good with his hands when it comes to much larger tableaux.

For decades, he harvested rocks up north, using his own handmade winches and pulleys, cut and ground them himself, and turned them into walls and terraces.

In more recent years, he has taken a more artistic bent, and he has created large-scale sculptures of human forms. Last year, he donated *Little Hercules*, a boy hoisting a barbell triumphantly over his head, to the Montreal Children's Hospital to inspire its young patients.

"I like to say that I may not have been able to get blood out of a stone, but I think I have breathed life into it," Rosen said.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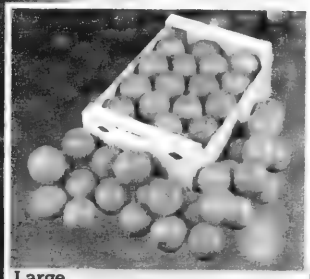

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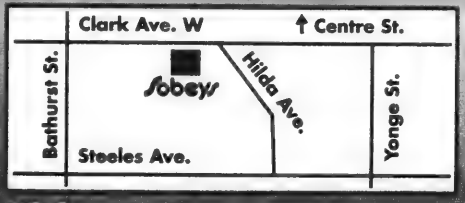

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Buying Israeli shoes best way to foil boycott: QIC

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Jewish community is rallying behind a Montreal shoe store owner who is the target of a campaign to boycott Israeli goods.

The Quebec-Israel Committee (QIC) is urging people to patronize the store, Le Marcheur at 4062 St. Denis St., which sells, among other brands, a line of shoes made in Israel called BeautiFeel.

The QIC has also offered pro bono legal counselling to the owner, Yves Archambault, but QIC research and communications director David Ouellette said Archambault has so far not requested that help. Archambault has also not indicated he will stop selling Israeli shoes. Efforts to reach him for comment on this story were unsuccessful.

The QIC is cautioning against any counter-demonstration or confrontation with those who protest outside the store, and is advising against even going there at the same time as the protesters.

"Confrontation would only serve to give the boycotters the attention they are desperate for, as well as damage the owner's interests," said Ouellette.

On Oct. 2, PAJU (Palestinian and Jewish Unity) began a series of picketing sessions in front of the store that has continued on most alternate Saturday afternoons. On Nov. 20, police came on the scene after a person opposed to the boycott action allegedly shoved someone taking photographs and then threw a punch in the direction of a cameraman. No charges were pressed.

The picketing, usually by only less than a dozen people, initially consisted of holding up a banner on the sidewalk outside the store's entrance urging solidarity with the Palestinians' campaign against Israeli "apartheid," and carrying signs denouncing Israel's "colonization" and "terrorism."

At the demand of police on Nov. 6, the protesters have since moved the placards off to the side so as not to obstruct passersby, and they've been confining themselves to mostly handing out flyers away from the store entrance.

PAJU is the same group that for years staged weekly vigils outside the Israeli consulate when it was downtown.

Ouellette terms the PAJU campaign against Le Marcheur "vicious blackmail and harassment," and said "we are looking into every option," including the legal route.

He conceded that the protesters are "very disciplined," do not interfere with those entering the store, and have the legal right to be where they are.

Before the picketing started, a "cease and desist" letter was sent to Archambault by PAJU, informing him that if he did not meet its demand to take the Israeli shoes off his shelves within seven days, the picketing would start.

PAJU president Bruce Katz, who signed and delivered the letter, said the action is being stepped up. Protests are now to be held on a weekly basis, at least through December.

The QMI Agency, Quebecor's news service, reported that Jafar Khadir, the father of Amir Khadir, the sole Québec solidaire member of the National Assembly, was among those at the first picket. The party has officially endorsed the anti-Israel boycott.

Jacob Kincler, president of the Israel-Canada Chamber of Commerce, who has been privately rallying support for Le Marcheur, thinks legal action might be taken against the protesters on the grounds that their actions may be damaging a business.

Ouellette reiterated that the so-called boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel remains "extremely marginal" in Quebec.

Protester in front of Le Marcheur in Montreal

'Inappropriate' to compare Israel with Iran, Sudan: Radio-Canada

Compiled by CJN Staff

MONTREAL — Veteran Radio-Canada television news anchor Simon Durivage has expressed his regrets to those who complained that he appeared to equate Israel with Iran and Sudan.

Following a letter-writing campaign organized by the pro-Israel media monitoring group Honest Reporting Canada (HRC), the French-language public broadcaster offered an explanation of the context, while admitting that Durivage's comparison was "inappropriate."

On the Oct. 15 edition of the network's political talk show *Le Match des élus*, Durivage said: "Israel is a controversial country and is often even blamed by the United Nations. Is it not a bit dangerous to align ourselves to this point to a country whose policies are controversial and even condemned by the UN? I would ask the same question if Canada decided to represent Iran or Sudan somewhere in the world."

Durivage was interviewing Quebec Conservative MP Steven Blaney in the wake of Canada's failure to obtain a seat on the UN Security Council. He was referring to Canada's decision to represent Israel's interests in Venezuela after that country severed diplomatic relations with the Jewish state.

HRC executive director Mike Fegelman found the comment an "obscene equivalence between Israel, Iran and Sudan," calling the latter two countries "state sponsors of international terrorism" and, in Sudan's case, one that is complicit in genocide.

To read full story, please go to cjnews.com

The dollars and sense of simple divorces

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 30 years

Question: 1. What is the average cost of an uncontested divorce in the Toronto area? 2. What is the best way to find a lawyer who could help me with the process?

Answer: It depends on the lawyer and what you mean buy "uncontested" divorce. If a spouse is making no claims against the other and there are either no dependent children or there is a written agreement in place dealing with child support, then the fees can burn $750–$1,200, plus disbursements (out of pocket costs). These disbursements include court fees, plus the costs of hiring a process server to deliver the Divorce application and similar expenses, all of which cost an additional amount of approximately $450.

Sometimes these disbursements are higher or lower. In a "friendly" divorce the other spouse will pick the Divorce Petition up at the lawyer's office to save on the expense of the process server. However, some estranged spouses cannot be found. If that happens the lawyer will have to obtain a special kind of Court order for "substituted service" and put ads in the newspapers to "notify" the other spouse of the Divorce application, all of which might cost an additional $800–$1,250, depending on the Lawyer, including disbursements.

You'll pay an additional $200-$300 if you've been previously divorced and can't find your old Divorce Judgment or if you were previously divorced in a non-English speaking country. The best way to find a lawyer is to ask your friends or family if they know a good family law lawyer; word of mouth is still the best source of referral. If that fails, call the Lawyer Referral Service of the Law Society of Upper Canada. For $6 the service will provide the name of a lawyer whose office is close to your home address and who will provide up to 30 minutes free consultation to help you determine your rights and options. You can access the service by calling 1-900-565-4577.

Finally, here are some cautionary notes about "uncontested divorces." Be careful about simply using Divorce Kits bought at local stores or paying uninsured paralegals who are not lawyers. You might pay less initially but without informed legal advice that could lead to much more expensive problems.

Let me give just two examples. If you owed money for property division by reason of marriage, you can lose that right within the earlier two years after divorce or six years after the date you separated from your spouse if you don't claim for it before the Courts during that time period. If you obtain an uncontested divorce without settling your property claims, you could allow the two years to drift by and then find out that you're prevented later from making a claim for money to which you are entitled.

Similarly, you cannot obtain an "uncontested divorce" if you have a dependent child and fail to provide the Court with an affidavit that recites the amount of child support paid by the non-custodial parent and proof as to how much that parent earns yearly. You don't necessarily need a separation agreement to complete such an affidavit. But then again, they said the Titanic was so seaworthy it didn't really need its full complement of lifeboats and lifejackets. The cost of separation agreement is a whole different matter (at least $750–$1,000 for a very simple "no brainer.")

On behalf of my family, and all of us at Garfin Zeidenberg, I wish you and your family a happy and healthy Chanukah.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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Coast to Coast

Report described impact of March of Living

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

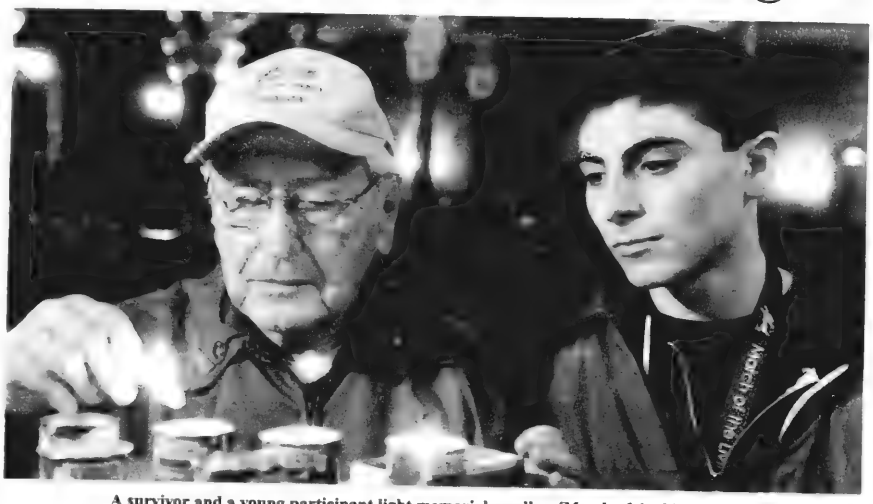
A study into the impact of the March of the Living shows that participants credited the program with enhancing their Jewish identity, making them feel more connected to Israel and increasing their commitment to human rights.

The March of the Living (MOL) Long-Term Study 2000-2008 also found that program alumni were most deeply affected by their visits to Nazi concentration camps, their interaction with Holocaust survivors and their visits to historical sites in Israel.

Released last week, the report, by InfoFeedback, indicated the Montreal firm had contacted more than 1,700 MOL participants. Replies in the online survey came from 231, most of them from the 2004 to 2008 trips.

The report came out shortly after the University of Toronto came under fire for approving a thesis, *The Victimhood of the Powerful: White Jews, Zionism and the Racism of Hegemonic Holocaust Education*, that criticized the March of the Living and the March of Remembrance and Hope, a related program that brings older students to Europe. The thesis author, Jenny Peto, claimed the programs were used "in ways that obscure Jewish privilege, deny Jewish racism and promote the interests of the Israeli nation-state."

The survey questioned program alumni on a wide range of attitudes and found that "the experience had a significant positive impact on MOL goals."



A survivor and a young participant light memorial candles. *[March of the Living photo]*

Ninety-one per cent "agreed that confronting antisemitism became even more important after the trip," while "in the area of commitment to human rights (fighting genocide and combating general racism), a very high average increase of 89 per cent was recorded since their participation in the March."

In addition, "87 per cent felt an increase in their feelings of tolerance for other groups after their experience of the MOL," the study reported.

"With regard to their sense of Jewish identity, 88 per cent of respondents agreed there was an increase in this feeling following the MOL." Sixty-one per cent felt it increased the importance of their Jewish faith, 72 per cent said it increased their desire to participate in Jewish organizations, 74 per cent "reported an increase in their desire to donate to Israel" and 87 per cent said it increased their desire to visit Israel.

The March of the Living is an international program that brings mostly high school students to Europe to visit Jewish communities and Nazi concentration camps before moving on to Israel. Toronto, with 300 participants expected in 2011, and Montreal, with around 250, generally boast the largest contingents when measured by city. Canada, with as many as 700 participants, is annually one of the biggest Diaspora participants, said Eli Rubenstein, national director of MOL. Last year, about 10,000 people from around the world took part in the march.

In Canada, MOL is sponsored by local federations including UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and Federation CJA in Montreal, as well as the United Israel Appeal.

The survey's findings indicate the MOL is reaching its goals, Rubenstein said. Young people feel more connected to the Jewish People and Israel and, at the same time, develop universal values of helping others and opposing racism, he said.

Previous surveys had examined the short-term implications of the MOL, but "this study shows the positive, long-term impact of the program, especially in Jewish identification, Jewish causes, ties to Israel, human rights and combating genocide," Rubenstein said.

"They come back better human beings, better Jews and more committed to fighting for human values."

Dale Boidman, national chair of MOL, said the hundreds of personal comments from participants nearly all "talked about being with survivors" and being in a Nazi death camp. "It's exceptionally impactful to stand at Majdanek with these huge chimneys from the ovens, with the city of Lublin all around," she said.

In April it's still wintery in Poland, and the "kids were cold, imagining what it was like there in the middle of winter, with little food, and how these people walked out alive and had the internal strength to go on and live a normal life.

"These people were heroes."

Commemorating Yom Hashoah in Poland and then "singing *Hatikvah* on Yom Ha'atzmaut [Israel Independence Day], with tears of joy, relief, commitment and understanding that at this point in our Jewish lives, we have somewhere to go, when we didn't before [makes] the impact of arriving in Israel so important," she said.

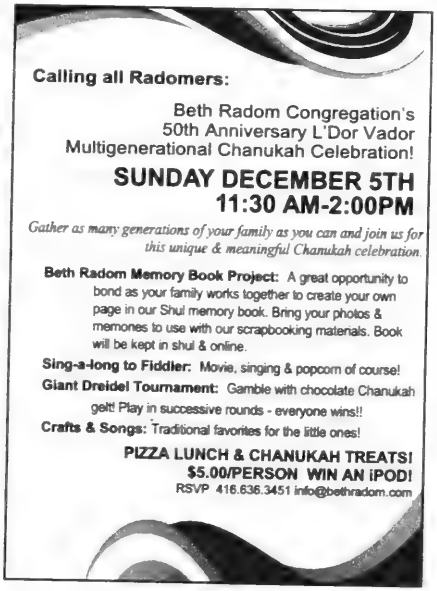
Anita Ekstein, a survivor who will be going on her 11th march next year, said the trip "strengthens Jewish identity. The youngsters empathize and understand others' suffering, get involved in human rights and other social causes and are connected to Israel.

"I know from experience how committed students are to learn the lessons of the Holocaust, [and] when they return dedicate themselves to making the world a better place, more aware and involved in social causes.

"Many have kept in touch with me over the years, and many have chosen helping professions, social workers, doctors, teachers. One is even teaching law in Gambia."

Ekstein, who served as MOL national chair for several years, said, "They realize how fortunate they are, with parents, siblings and free speech.

"I think that's a big awareness they take back with them."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Advocacy restructuring nearly done, Cummings says

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

The plan to restructure the way Jewish community advocacy is conducted in Canada is almost finalized, the chair of the country's pro-Israel umbrella group says.

Responding to a report in *The CJN* last week that aired concerns by Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) about the restructuring process, Steven Cummings, the Montreal-based chair of the Canadian Council for Jewish and Israel Advocacy (CIJA), said CIJA believes the community would benefit from a "consolidation" of decision-making and communications.

Steven Cummings

The details of the national restructuring plan exist in a brief called the "Newco Document," which the CIJA reorganization committee has distributed to all its affiliated agencies, including Congress, the Canada-Israel Committee, the University Outreach Committee, the Quebec-Israel Committee and UIA Federations Canada (UIAFC).

Cummings said CIJA intends to ratify the Newco Document – which he referred to as the "road map" at its upcoming board meeting on Dec. 8, and then have the UIAFC board declare its support for the document at its board meeting on Dec. 12.

The second iteration of the document was sent out two weeks ago. It has not yet been made public, and *The CJN* was unable to obtain a copy.

Asked what is lacking in community advocacy that would necessitate a restructuring, Cummings said that it wasn't a matter of anything missing, but rather that "it's a matter of doing better."

He said the key issue is that the community speak with one voice. "We feel that the issues that are of most importance to the Jewish community really leach into each other. Whether they're issues around antisemitism, around anti-Israelism, difficulties on campuses… all of them are informed by the core values we have in the Jewish community around human rights and the dignity of all people.

"All of these things tie together. And we think addressing, communicating and advocating on these issues we're best able to do it as one body as opposed to a number of different bodies that, while tied together under the CIJA umbrella, continue to have independent boards."

To that end, Cummings said that one of the natural steps in the creation of a new community advocacy entity would be the dissolution of "a number of boards as they exist today" followed by their rebirth as various "regional councils" that would be formed as part of the new structure.

As reported in *The CJN* last week, David Schwartz, Congress' Pacific-region chair, said he was concerned that if his regional board were disbanded, he feared the loss of "many" of its current members who won't want to be part of a committee structure.

"Committees will lack the glue and succession planning that a regional board has," Schwartz said.

In response, Cummings said that he felt there was "no reason why those who are engaged in the Pacific region, or anywhere else in the country, would not find that they have as powerful a forum in which to engage in advocacy" while in partnership with a strong, national organization.

"This continues to be a complex process, but one in which we feel we have dealt with the most fundamental issues. Now it's a matter of how this will all work," he said.

Asked if the Newco Document will be made public, Cummings responded: "I really can't answer that question right now, as I would have to take guidance from the board and the reorganization committee. There will be a final document going out next week for the board meeting. It has had very wide distribution, but I don't expect it will be distributed to anyone else before the board meeting."

Cummings said that he hopes the Jewish community will look at this restructuring process and the eventual creation of a new, centralized advocacy agency as a positive step in the community's growth.

"We hope this structure would give opportunity to those who have a keen interest in advocacy and activism, a place in which they would be able to express themselves and be a part of. I believe that puts wind in one's sails. It makes the strategic decisions that much more important and credible.

"We are not looking to have an organization that is closed. We're looking to have an organization that is very open to the community."

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Rise of radical Islamism called threat to Mideast stability

Continued from page 3

Speaking a day before the 63rd anniversary of the 1947 United Nations Palestine partition plan, Aznar said his initiative has [opened] "a space" in which "reason" and "decency" prevail.

He noted that the initiative has enjoyed "remarkable success" in terms of international support.

Having already brought it to the United States, Britain, Brazil, Panama, Costa Rica, Argentina and Italy, he intends to bring it to Belgium, the Czech Republic, Poland and Spain.

"Our desire is to continue defending Israel, because, in that way, we think we're contributing to better defend the entire western world – something we find vital and urgent."

Aznar suggested that sharp critiques of Israel lack nuance.

"It's easy to denounce the harshness of Israel's military actions," he said, pointing out that Hezbollah and Hamas want to destroy Israel.

"It's easy to denounce the [security] fence that partially separates the West Bank from Israel," he said. Yet Israel's barrier has drastically reduced the number of terrorist attacks in Israel and allowed Israelis "to go out for pizza, to the movies, or send their children on the same school bus…"

"It's easy to condemn Israel and portray it as a new apartheid regime," he said. But Israeli Arabs sit in the Knesset and some hold "high-ranking positions in several state institutions."

Sharp critiques of Israel lack nuance says former Spanish PM

Israel is not only a nation enmeshed in conflict and wars, he added.

Characterizing Israel as "a land of opportunity" with a future, Aznar said it has been admitted into the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, has a thriving economy and enjoys diplomatic relations with many countries.

"Nonetheless, the automatic response to blame Israel for almost everything bad happening in the Middle East doesn't want to recede. It's quite the contrary."

Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is "the new George W. Bush" in that he is blamed "for everything."

Aznar blasted Turkey, a NATO member and Israel's former ally, for having backed "aggression" by endorsing last May's flotilla.

"By contrast, very few remember the plight of Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit, who was abducted more than four years ago by the Hamas militia."

In closing, Aznar expressed outrage that Canada did not win a temporary seat on the United Nations Security Council.

"But you don't need to feel sorry. On the contrary, you must be proud of having principled leaders like Mr. [Stephen] Harper as prime minister."

He voiced hope that Harper would join his initiative.

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Canada to boycott 'Durban III'

'Our government has lost faith in entire process'

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Canada will not participate in the "charade" of a 10th anniversary commemoration of the Durban "hate fest," Jason Kenney, minister of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism, announced last week.

"Our government has lost faith in the entire tainted Durban process," Kenney said at a news conference announcing the decision. "Canada will not participate in the events to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Durban declaration and program of action on September 2011.

"Canada is clearly committed to the fight against racism, but the Durban process commemorates an agenda that we believe actually promotes racial division rather than fighting it," he stated.

As was the case when Canada was the first country to boycott the 2009 World Conference Against Racism, dubbed Durban II, Canada is the first country to announce it would withdraw from "Durban III."

Jason Kenney, minister of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism

The governments of Australia, much of the European Union and Israel joined Canada in boycotting Durban II. The United States, which had attempted to modify the conference's agenda, pulled out shortly before it convened in Geneva.

Opposition leader Michael Ignatieff backed the government's position on Durban III.

"I unequivocally support the decision to boycott the Durban III conference, taking place in New York next September," Ignatieff stated.

"The first Durban conference, which the proposed Durban III conference seeks to commemorate, turned into a festival of racism against Israel and the Jewish people that Canada was right to condemn. Sadly, while a decade has passed, the Durban conferences remain a staging ground for antisemitic and anti-Israel statements. Canada should absolutely not participate in the Durban III conference or countenance in any way these hateful views.

"In light of this disturbing trend, the conferences cannot be seen as legitimate forums capable of facilitating honest discussions about racism.

"Combating both racism and antisemitism is a global responsibility, and as a steadfast defender of the principles of equality and dignity for all persons, Canada must not participate in Durban III," Ignatieff said.

Former senator Jerry Grafstein said he planned to take the boycott decision one step further by organizing a counter-conference in New York City to coincide with the Durban III event.

When governments and NGOs were convening in Geneva at Durban II, "I helped organized a counter-conference in New York at Fordham University," he said. "I'm going to try to reinstitute that.

"It's not good enough to say we're not going to go. That's good, but what's the alternative? A counter-conference," he said.

"We'll take the same agenda and bring speakers that would counter the obscene venom that flows out of the UN Human Rights Council [which is organizing Durban III].

"I would hope Jason Kenney would be a keynote speaker in New York. I will write to him. He's shown leadership on this."

Grafstein, who retired from the Senate earlier this year, said "we'll bring outstanding world figures" to the counter-conference.

The event at Fordham University brought together representatives from 40 organizations. "I'm again calling on American politicians and people from [the] NGO community and other communities and leading international figures," he said.

"The UN has done and continues to do some amazing things, but at the same time, it's been held captive by regressive blocs. That's nothing new," Grafstein said. Referring to the human rights abusing nations organizing Durban III, Grafstein said, "They're abusing democratic processes for undemocratic objectives."

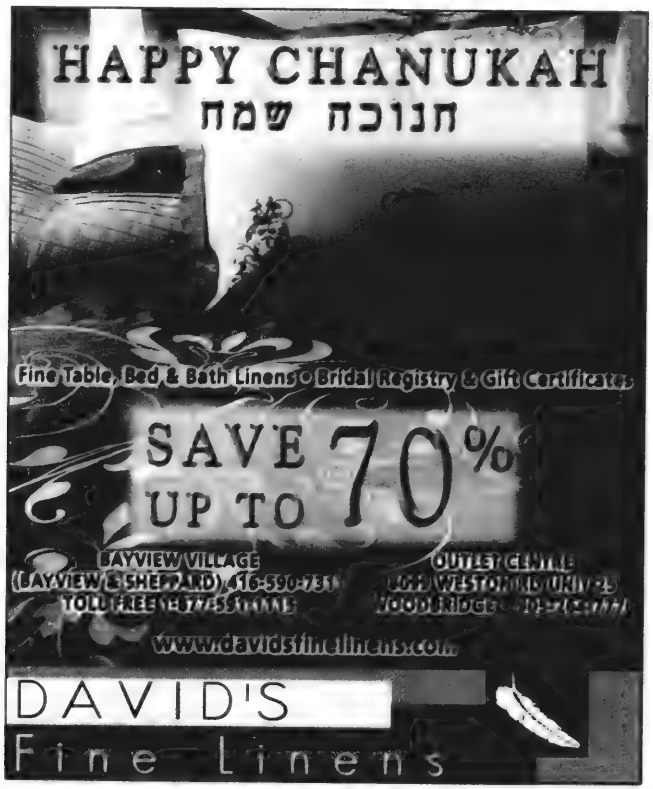
In his remarks, Kenney said "despite the fact that the Durban declaration and first followup have served to fuel bigotry, the General Assembly has now chosen to repeat and even augment the mistakes of the past."

He noted the original Durban conference in 2001, as well as NGO activities associated with it, "proved to be a dangerous platform for racism and particularly antisemitism," with the the Protocols of Zion circulated and portraits of Hitler on display.

Canadian Jewish Congress commended Kenney for announcing the boycott and Ignatieff for supporting it.

"This UN process is fundamentally flawed and by now beyond repair. All that can be expected are attempts to build on the poisonous record and accordingly the process must be condemned without reservation," Congress president Mark Freiman stated.

"We congratulate Minister Kenney on his unrelenting stand in the fight against antisemitism and all forms of hatred," added Congress CEO Bernie Farber.



Countries collaborate on tech development

Compiled by CJN Staff

Some 50 representatives from Canada and Israel met last week in Toronto to map future steps for both countries in technology innovation.

The National Research Council of Canada hosted the Canada-Israel Technology Innovation Summit 2010, the first of two summits that bring together leaders from industry, universities and the governments of both nations.

Tony Clement, minister of industry

Canada can gain much through increased collaboration with Israel's best minds, Industry Minister Tony Clement said. "The focus of both governments on tangible economic outcomes will help our countries on the path to full economic recovery."

Eli Opper, chief scientist of the Israeli Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, said that "by leveraging Israeli and Canadian strengths in the fields of water, renewable energy and neuroscience, our countries will create new opportunities for technological innovation.

"Through co-operation and collaboration, we can utilize the advantages both countries have in these fields, paving the way to technological breakthroughs that will improve not only our economies, but our societies as well," Opper said.

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On Campus

Journalism students meet at GA

By JORDAN PRESS
Special to the CJN

Guest Voice

Uri Dromi's slow, measured tone lets you know that he really tries to practise what he preaches when it comes to Israel.

He's been talking about Israel for a while. The retired Israeli Air Force (IAF) colonel is a former chief education officer for the IAF and former chief information officer for the World Zionist Organization.

His calm tone accented his opening talk to about 30 young Jewish journalism students, including me, some of whom identify themselves as on-campus activists. We were part of the Do The Write Thing conference that ran concurrently with the General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America in New Orleans last month.

Pro-Israel activism, Dromi said, comes in many forms, although it has progressively moved toward what he called "the direct approach," which ends with people forcing their views on others in a progressively louder voice.

"I'm for the soft action, the indirect approach," he said.

That means talking and listening to everyone who has a view on Israel. Have Israelis tell their personal stories and ask questions of others, Dromi said.

No need to yell, he added.

I processed his words in my mind later that morning as I watched police and security haul five protesters out of a speech by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. One of the protesters yelled, "The occupation delegitimizes Israel." From behind me, someone replied that the protester's mouth delegitimizes free speech.

The message I heard during my three days at the general assembly was simple: criticizing Israeli policy does not cross a line, although one of my conference mates referred to such people as antisemitic. Criticizing Israel's right to exist – that crosses a line.

Then came the second part of the message: another line is crossed when we, as a community, can't talk. How we talk is even more important than what we talk about. Hearing this message, it was almost as if comedians Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert's Rally to Restore Sanity and or Fear, which took place at the end of October on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., had made its way into the hotel hallways of New Orleans.

"It's fine to disagree, but we should find a civil way to do it," said Gary Rosenblatt, editor and publisher of the *Jewish Week* in New York City.

Natan Sharansky, chair of the Jewish Agency for Israel, who quietly took the podium in the small room where our conference took place, was leery about silencing dissenting voices.

"We are not demanding one voice" for all Jews, he said. "Use the atmosphere of free dialogue."

But shouting at the Israeli prime minister is not the way to foster that dialogue, Sharansky said. Such an act only serves to further entrench the creeping polarization in discussions about Israel.

There is room for dissenting viewpoints, was how Howard English, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto vice-president of communications, put it. The point is how we dialogue around them.

At the end of the conference, I bumped into Dromi one more time. I told him I didn't quite understand what he was talking about with his indirect approach until I saw the protesters at the Netanyahu address. Dromi smiled and shook my hand.

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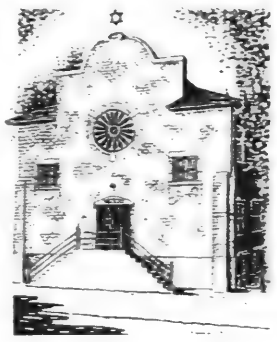

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שיחה עם גידי קורן וחברים

המדריך למהפכה

דורון צברי הוא במאי סרטים ישראלי מהמצליחים ביותר שידעה ישראל, ובשנים האחרונות שלושה מסרטיו זכו בפרס האוסקר היישראלי . ועל כן יש משהו מאוד מרתק בזה שהאיש מוכן היה להקריב את קידומו, הקריירה שלו וגם את שלמות משפחתו למען מלחמה בשחיתות בענף שהוא קרוב אליו. וזה גם הנושא לסרטו המרתק "המדריך למהפכה" שראינו בתל אביב לפני שבועיים. במשך יותר מעשר שנים נלחם צברי בשחיתות העמוקה ברשות השידור עד שהביא לכינונו של חוק חדש- חוק רשות השידור. מאז קום המדינה התמנה יו"ר הרשות על ידי ראש הממשלה המכהן, ובמשך שנות כהונתו הוא דאג שלא לשכוח להראות לאדונו שהוא יודע על איזה צד מרוחה החמאה. צברי מראה את זה דרך כהונתו של יוסף בראל שמונה על ידי אריק שרון, ודאג לעשות לו מסיבות יום עצמאות עתירות תקציב, ולהוריד מן המסך כל דעה שיוצאת נגד ה"מנהיג". בראל פוטר מאוחר יותר בשל אי סדרים על ידי ממשלתו של אהוד אולמרט, האיש שגם הסכים להעביר בכנסת את חוק רשות השידור שיזם צברי.

בסרטו מתעד צברי את כל השלבים והתסכולים של דרכו הארוכה. בסופו של דבר עבר החוק, שקובע בין השאר שיו"ר רשות השידור יתמנה על ידי ועדה ממלכתית בראשות שופט.

זהו סרט על נכונותו של אזרח רגיל לנהל מלחמה נגד שחיתות, שלא על מנת לקבל פרס, ותוך לקיחת סיכונים אישיים גדולים. לאורך כל הסרט מלווה אותנו אימו של צברי ששואלת אותו מליון פעמים: "מה ייצא לך מזה? מלם מסמנים אותך כעושה צרות ולא תקבל שום עבודה."

בסוף הסרט רואים את צברי ואימו מוזמנים ללשכתו של אולמרט לחנוג את העברת החוק. אימו של צברי מתלוננת לאולמרט שבנה זרק את כל חייו למען מטרה שלא תביא לו שום דבר אישי. מספר לה אולמרט שגם בנו החליט ללמוד ספרות צרפתית שלא תביא לו כלום. אומרת האם לשר: תלוי כמה המשפחה יכולה לעזור לילד- לנו אין כלום. ועונה לה אולמרט במשפט חכם: רק בגלל שדורון קיבל הרבה אהבה בבית, הוא מסוגל להתמיד במשימה כל כך חשובה שלא על מנת לקבל פרס.

אינני בטוח שהסרט הזה יגיע הנה להקרנות מסחריות, כי הנושא ישראלי מידי- אבל אם יוצא לכם- אל תחמיצו!

תשע בסולם קורן

הרב עובדיה נגד אמסלם

חבר הכנסת אמסלם מש"ס מצ'ופס ומשמיע דעות מקוריות משלו, שאינן על פי קו המפלגה. ספציפית הוא סבור שחשוב שהחרדים יצאו לשוק העבודה. וכצפוי, לא עבר זמן רב ומנהיג ש"ס, הרב עובדיה, הודיע שהקריאה לתלמידי תורה ללכת לעבוד היא מחצפת ומנוגדת לדין תורה."אנחנו מאמינים בני מאמינים שהלומד תורה מקיים את העולם" אמר הרב. רמת העיוות של האנשים האלה כבר לא מזעזעת, היא פשוט מעוררת בחילה עמוקה. איך זה שתלמידי תורה בצפון אמריקה יוצאים לעבד! פשוט מאוד: הם לא תברי מפלגה שסוחטת את נשיא ארה"ב או ראש ממשלת קנדה, ועל כן אין להם ברירה.

ובארץ! גם לא עובדים, גם לא משרתים בצבא, וגם סוחטים מעבר לכל פרופרציה- בשבוע שעבר התפרסמה לראשונה בישראל, לפי חוק חדש, חלוקת מענקים ומלגות, וכצפוי- החרדים מקבלים יותר מהקצבות למוזיקה קלאסית, לתיאטראות ולנורמים רבים אחרים. לא פלא אם כן שהישראלי החילוני הופך לאנטי דתי, ואיננו מוכן לשמוע דבר וחצי דבר על מסורת, בית כנסת ואידישקייט. הפחיטות הזאת הרעילה לו את החוויה היהודית בצורה טוטאלית. אבל שישאר בינינו.

And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Animator gets relief from 'solitary' work at improv classes

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

One of Alicia Eisen's passions involves working alone in a small studio curtained with black velvet. Her other passion has her up on stage every week creating plotlines and dialogue on the fly.

Eisen, 24, is an animator who takes improv classes at Second City in her spare time. Her passion for animation is something that started when she was very young.

"It was a really long process," she said of the road to becoming an animator. "I love to draw... I've been doing it my entire life. This led to me to going to a specialized art high school, where I was exposed to everything about art, every medium. It was just amazing for me. I met a lot of great people there, too, some [who were] interested in animation."

Animation, Eisen said, was not something she had considered as a career. Once she looked into it, though, she realized it was something she would love to do. From there, she put a portfolio together and began studying animation at Seneca College, where she graduated from in 2007.

"There's a lot to enjoy [about animation]," she said.

"I learned all kinds of animation while I was in school – hand drawing, stop motion, computer," she said. "With hand-drawn, you get to really develop drawing skills and you need to be accurate and fast.

"Stop motion [an animation technique to make a physically manipulated object appear to move on its own] is my favourite, what I work in mostly. I'm a very tactile person, I love to sculpt and work with my hands.

"I love the performance of [animation], expressing myself through that kind of performance."

Alicia Eisen

This love of performance is why Eisen started taking improv acting classes nearly two years ago.

"I actually started [at Second City] initially to help me get better at animating, because what sets apart really good animation is the acting in it. You can get in touch with your instincts better and trust them. Once I started doing it, I couldn't stop – it was so much fun.

"You meet a lot of really creative people, too. Some people have really boring jobs, and then they come out and they can be all crazy... It's really good because animating can be a really solitary experience. My last job... required [I] work in an individual studio surrounded by black velvet curtains. The only time to socialize was at lunch or if you saw someone on the way to the bathroom.

"Improv is a huge social, amazing thing I love being in."

Eisen's most recent job was working on Seasons 1 and 2 of the show *Glenn Martin, DDS*, which airs in Canada on CityTV.

Aside from being an animator, Eisen does freelance illustrating and visits schools talking about what it's like to be an animator. She also hosts workshops on everything from anatomy to stop-motion and hand-drawn animation, as well as memory sketching and painting.

"I really enjoy going to schools. When I was younger and in school, I remember an illustrator visited us. He was so awesome and really inspired me. He ended up being my life-drawing instructor in college," she said.

"I like to show kids what's possible."

Now that Eisen is no longer working on *Glenn Martin*, she is focusing on illustration and working on a music video, which is still in the pre-production stage.

"[I've] worked with very few breaks, and right now I have a nice bit of a bigger break. I really haven't gotten to do a lot of drawing in the past few years, but I love it!" she said.

"Now that I have a break, I'm working on my illustration portfolio... I go drawing every single day. I really want to illustrate for newspapers and magazines."

Eisen shares her drawings every day on her blog, www.frecklesfun.blogspot.com. Visit www.frecklesfunvisits.blogspot.com for information on her school visits and workshops. To get in touch with Eisen directly regarding illustration, animation, or to set up a school visit, e-mail freckles.animator@gmail.com.

Some of Eisen's illustrated creations

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Spice of Life

Chanukah the miracle of using the 'right' oil

By BEVERLY LEVITT
Special to The CJN

A few Chanukahs ago, prolific cookbook author Mollie Katzen politely "sautéed" latkes for her family in a desperate attempt to make them lower in fat

Low-fat latkes? Isn't that an oxymoron?

"They were downright depressing," she lamented. "Starchy, soggy and greasy! I remember latkes that were whisper thin and wildly crisp. I wanted to see pieces of dark golden brown potato, almost overcooked, and I wanted to taste fried potato and onion with a trace of salt."

She finally had to concede, "There's no way to get a potato pancake that's perfectly crisp unless you fry it. And if it's not crisp, what's the point?"

You can't blame Katzen for trying. After all, the chef and author has sold five million cookbooks, including *Moosewood Cookbook* (Ten Speed Press, 1977) from her groundbreaking restaurant, which introduced the concept that colourful, healthy dishes with fruits, vegetables and grains could also be delicious. In all of her eight books, rarely does she give instructions for frying

Thinking back to her low-fat latke fiasco, she sighed.

"We don't eat latkes for their nutritional properties. They're a treat," she said. "Latkes are fun to make; they're delicious, but don't try to turn them into something they're not. Eat them, enjoy them; just don't gorge on them.

"It's not the fat in your diet that makes you fat," said Katzen. "A healthy diet is not about slashing fat from your diet; it's about replacing the bad fats with the good ones. It's important to know when to say yes to fat."

Because different fats begin to degrade at different temperatures, Katzen said, it's crucial to use oils that are refined for high heat such as avocado oil, almond oil, safflower oil and sunflower oil

"If I am sautéing vegetables, I use olive oil. But my favourite oil for frying at high temperatures, which is how you cook latkes, is safflower oil," said Katzen. The hotter the oil, the more likely the latkes will be light and crisp instead of heavy and soggy

"I never made latkes that were crisp enough until I discovered safflower oil," she said. "Because you can fry efficiently at a very high temperature, crisp doesn't begin to describe them. You can hear someone bite into one from two rooms away!"

MOLLIE'S ULTIMATE POTATO LATKES

Adapted from *Mollie Katzen's Sunlight Café*
(Hyperion, 2002)

For a delicious variation, replace up to half the potato with grated sweet potato. Potatoes may be peeled, partially peeled or left intact

The batter lasts for several days if kept in a tightly covered container in the refrigerator. Leftover potato pancakes can be reheated in an ungreased, preheated skillet over medium heat.

1 1/2 lb. potatoes (any kind)
1 medium onion
1/4 cup unbleached all-purpose flour or rice flour
1/2 to 1 tsp. salt (rounded measure)
2 large eggs, beaten
safflower oil for frying
optional toppings: sour cream or thick yogurt, applesauce, fruit compote

Use a hand grater or the fine grating attachment of a food processor to grate the potato and onion together. Transfer the grated vegetables to a medium-sized bowl and sprinkle in the flour and salt. Add eggs and stir until thoroughly combined.

Place a large, deep skillet, preferably cast iron, over medium heat for about three minutes. Add enough oil to make a 1/8-in.-deep pool in the pan. Wait another minute or two to heat the oil. When the oil is hot enough to instantly sizzle a bread crumb, use a quarter-cup measure with a handle or a large spoon to scoop batter into the pan, going slowly so you don't splash hot oil. Spread each pancake out so it is very thin.

Fry the pancakes on each side for about seven or eight minutes, or until deep golden and crisp all over.

Line a platter with a triple thickness of paper towels. Remove the pancakes from the pan using a slotted metal spatula. Hold each over the pan for a moment to drain off any excess oil. Place pancakes in a single layer on the prepared platter for a few minutes before serving. There should be plenty of oil left in the pan to fry the remaining batter. If the oil smokes, spill it out and start over with new oil.

Serve hot or warm with sour cream or thick yogurt, applesauce or fruit compote. Makes 12 to 14 medium sized latkes

TUNISIAN TOMATO SOUP WITH CHICK PEAS AND LENTILS

Adapted from *Mollie Katzen's Vegetable Heaven*
(Hyperion 1997)

1 cup chickpeas, cooked until crisp tender
1 cup uncooked lentils, rinsed and picked over
1 cinnamon stick
2 tbsp. olive oil
4 cups minced onion
2 tbsp. minced garlic
2 tsp. salt
1 tbsp. turmeric
1 1/2 tsp. cumin seeds
2 tsp. ground cumin
2 or 3 bay leaves
6 cups chopped tomatoes, peeling and seeding optional
freshly ground black pepper and cayenne to taste
3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice (or to taste)
optional toppings: yogurt, minced fresh parsley or mint, a few currants

Place cooked chickpeas and uncooked lentils in a pot with the cinnamon stick and about seven cups of water. Cook until chickpeas and lentils are perfectly tender but not mushy, about 30 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick and drain the legumes, saving the water.

Heat the oil in a soup pot or Dutch oven. Add the onion, garlic, salt, turmeric, cumin seeds, ground cumin and bay leaves, and sauté over medium heat for 15 to 20 minutes or until onions are very soft.

Add six cups of the reserved cooking water from the lentils (supplement with fresh water if there's not enough) and the tomatoes, and bring to a boil. Lower the heat to a simmer; partially cover and cook for another 15 minutes. Fish out and discard the bay leaves.

Stir in the chickpeas and lentils; cook for about 5 minutes longer. Do not allow the legumes to become mushy. Season to taste with black pepper, cayenne and lemon juice.

Serve the soup hot. If desired, add a dollop of yogurt, a sprinkling of parsley or mint and pass a small bowl of currants Makes six servings

MIXED FRUIT COMPOTE

From *Mollie Katzen's 'Sunlight Café'* (Hyperion 2002)

2 lb. apples and pears, cut into 1 1/2-in. chunks (peeling is optional)
1 to 2 tbsp. lemon juice
a dash or two of salt (optional)
optional additions: dried fruit such as raisins, cranberries, apricots, cherries, pineapple (up to 1 cup); honey or pure maple syrup to taste; sweet spices such as cinnamon, cloves, allspice, ginger, cardamom or anise to taste.
optional toppings: yogurt, toasted walnuts

Place fruit in a heavy saucepan over low heat. Cover and cook slowly, checking in every five minutes or so to give it a stir. Add small amounts of water as needed.

After about 20 minutes, add the lemon juice, salt and dried fruit. Cover and cook for another 10 minutes or so, then taste. If desired, you can sweeten it, add a touch of spice or leave it plain. You can cook it even softer and mash it or keep it textured.

Serve at any temperature, plain or topped with yogurt and toasted nuts. Makes six servings.

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PA report says Kotel not a Jewish holy site

The Israel Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — A Palestinian Authority report claiming the Western Wall is not a Jewish holy site and is, in fact, sacred to Muslims poses a serious question as to the Palestinian's desire to reach a peace deal, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said last Thursday.

The prime minister's rebuke came in the wake of a report released by a senior PA official last week that said the Western Wall has no religious significance to Jews and is a holy Muslim property.

Al-Mutawakil Taha, deputy minister of information in the western-backed Palestinian Authority that rules the West Bank, told the Associated Press that his five-page study published on a Palestinian government website reflected the official Palestinian position.

In a statement released by the Prime Minister's Office last Thursday, Netanyahu severely criticized the PA-sponsored study, saying that "denying the link binding the Jewish people and the Western Wall by the Palestinian information office is a travesty.

"When the Palestinian Authority denies the connection between the Jewish People and the Western Wall, it raises serious questions as to its intentions to reach a peace deal founded on coexistence and mutual recognition," the statement said, adding that the PA must cease its "distortion of historical facts and encourage a bridge to peace that would lead to a historical reconciliation between the two peoples."

The report released by the Palestinians last Wednesday disputes that the Western Wall was a retaining wall of the Temple compound, discarding centuries of documentation and archeology.

"This wall has never been a part of what is called the Jewish Temple," the report claimed. "However, it was Islamic tolerance which allowed the Jews to stand before it and cry over its loss."

The report concludes that since Jews have no claim to the area, it is holy Muslim territory and must be part of Palestinian Jerusalem.

The contention could further inflame tensions over the disputed city and draw heavy rebuke from Israeli and Jewish leaders.

Decades of archeology have shown that the Western Wall, the holiest place where Jews can pray, was a retaining wall of the compound where the two biblical Jewish Temples stood 20 centuries ago. The Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, Islam's third-holiest site, is built atop the ruins.

The latest claim about the Temples, echoing positions taken in the past by Palestinian leaders including the late Yasser Arafat, underlined the deeply held, conflicting beliefs that must be untangled if a peace accord is to be reached between Israel and the Palestinians.

Both sides say the clashing narratives are political. Israel captured east Jerusalem in the 1967 Six Day War and annexed it. Palestinians claim east Jerusalem, including the Old City, as the capital of their future state.

Taha said he wrote the report after Israeli officials on Sunday approved a five-year renovation plan for the Western Wall area. "Of course it's a political position," Taha told AP.

Israeli government spokesperson Mark Regev described the report as incitement by denying the historic Jewish connection to Jerusalem.

Einat Wilf, a legislator from the Israeli Labor party, a part of the governing coalition, said Palestinians are stupidly trying again and again to somehow create an alternative reality in which the Jewish people are strangers in this land.

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Lebanese PM seeks help from Iran with Hezbollah

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

TEHRAN — Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri arrived in Iran on Saturday seeking its help to prevent political tensions turning violent if a UN-backed tribunal indicts Hezbollah members for killing his father.

Western diplomats have said that the tribunal could indict members of Hezbollah, which is backed by Iran and Syria, by early next year for the 2005 bombing which killed former premier Rafik Hariri and 21 others.

Lebanese politicians fear the indictments could prompt confrontation and possible violence between the Shiite Hezbollah, which has denied any involvement in Hariri's killing, and allies of the Sunni prime minister.

Hariri was welcomed to Iran by Vice-President Mohammad Reza Rahimi, who vowed to deepen ties with Lebanon. "We should use all of our capacities to expand the ties… and to take giant steps in line with our interests," Rahimi said after a meeting with Hariri.

Hariri was expected to meet senior Iranian officials, including Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad during the three-day visit, Iranian television said.

Saad Hariri

Ahead of his first official visit to Iran, Hariri told Iran's state news agency that the Islamic state could play an important role in allaying tension in Lebanon.

"Iran plays an important role in the Middle East region… particularly in resolving crisis and maintaining stability in Lebanon," IRNA quoted Hariri as saying.

Ahmadinejad visited Lebanon in October, when he said Iran supported all Lebanese but highlighted the influence of Hezbollah by visiting its strongholds.

Lebanese officials hope a recent initiative by the leaders of Saudi Arabia and Syria, who back rival camps in Lebanon, will help prevent any escalation. Iran's endorsement of the Saudi-Syrian efforts is essential for their success.

"Hariri's visit… is a piece in the regional movement towards [accomplishing] the deal," Lebanese analyst Oussam Safa said, adding it will give Hariri direct access to Iran without having to go through Tehran's allies Hezbollah or Syria.

"It will help Hariri to get Iran's support in calming Hezbollah's reaction if the indictment is issued," he said.

Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has urged all Lebanese to boycott the tribunal and vowed to block the arrest of any of his members. He has also called on Hariri to repudiate the tribunal, which he described as an "Israeli project."

Ghazanfar Roknabadi, Iran's ambassador to Beirut, said Hariri's visit was "historically significant" and would have positive results on Lebanon in the next few days, Iran's English language PressTV reported on Saturday.

"Iran backs unity among Lebanese political groups…. the visit will also be appreciated in Lebanon," said Roknabadi.

"The visit will expand ties between Iran and Lebanon and will surely strengthen the resistance movement against the Zionist regime," deputy Foreign Minister Reza Sheibani said the state-run *Iran Daily* newspaper reported.

WikiLeaks release not a problem, Netanyahu says

JTA

JERUSALEM — The secret documents released by WikiLeaks will not negatively affect Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said.

Israeli leaders can feel comfortable with what has been revealed in the first batch of documents made public on Sunday because there is very little difference between what Israel said in private discussions with U.S. leaders and what it told its citizens.

The documents did show that what many Arab leaders said privately and what they said publicly, particularly on the subject of Iran, are significantly different. For example, many Arab leaders called on the United States, in some cases repeatedly, to attack Iran.

"More and more countries realize that Iran is the central threat, but the countries in the region have a gap because they publicly are attached to the Israeli-Arab conflict, but privately they realize that this narrative is not true. They realize that the central threat is from Iran, and now this has been revealed even though it was known," Netanyahu said Sunday in a speech before an editors' conference in Tel Aviv.

"It can eliminate the theory that Israel is the obstacle to peace and show that we have mutual interests," Netanyahu added.

The United States briefed several of its allies on the documents over the weekend. Israel had already been told last week that it could be mentioned in the release of classified U.S. documents.

The WikiLeaks website publishes classified documents from anonymous sources and leaks. It released about 250,000 secret diplomatic cables on Sunday. "Usually there is a gap between what is said in public and what is said in private, but regarding Israel, this gap is not large," Netanyahu said. "Regarding other countries, the gaps are extremely large."

Netanyahu said he was not told in advance the specifics of what was in the documents.

State Department legal adviser Harold Koh released a letter to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange saying that the publication of the documents is illegal and demanding a halt to their publication.

The publication of the documents will "place at risk the lives of countless innocent individuals… place at risk ongoing military operations… [and] place at risk ongoing co-operation between countries," the letter reportedly said.

The letter called on WikiLeaks to return the documents to the United States and destroy any copies.

'True meaning of tikun olam'

Continued from page 1

Haiti; the Alyn pediatric and adolescent rehabilitation centre, which sent a delegation of physiotherapists to treat children and provide training to local medical health professionals, and Herzog Hospital, which offered post-trauma counselling and treatment.

IsraAID's operations in Haiti are typical of the organization's multi-faceted approach to providing assistance, its founder, Shachar Zahavi, said.

"IsraAID brings together Jewish and Israeli NGOs under one roof. The idea is to harvest all aspects of know-how in order to take a holistic approach," Zahavi said. "Our concept is to help our member organizations enhance their activities in developing countries by partnering with other member organizations."

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto has supported several IsraAID initiatives since 2004, financing work with the Sudanese refugees in Chad, the Somali refugees in Kenya, the tsunami victims in Southeast Asia, the typhoon victims in the Philippines and Burma, and earthquake victims in Peru.

"The Toronto federation is one of our main supporters," Zahavi said. "I am very happy about this. It's something that connects us to the Toronto Jewish community."

The cholera clinic also has volunteers from Toronto, with a handful of Toronto physicians joining their Israeli and Haitian colleagues at the clinic, on a rolling basis.

"Now that we have Canadians and Israelis working together in the field, under one Jewish umbrella, I'm even happier," Zahavi said. "This is something we always aspired to."

"We have a long-standing relationship with IsraAID because they do great work," Sokolsky said. "They are a very effective organization in getting relief to people."

Not only is IsraAID quick to respond to emergency situations, Sokolsky said, they are also expert strategists. If not for such strategizing, they would not have had the infrastructure in place at the clinic in time to respond to the onslaught of new cases. "Not only were they among the first on the ground in Haiti, but they are strategic. They think. They plan."

IsraAID also focuses on long-term sustainable solutions, Sokolsky added. "While other organizations have come and gone [since the earthquake], IsraAID organizations have been able to switch from immediate to long-term relief."

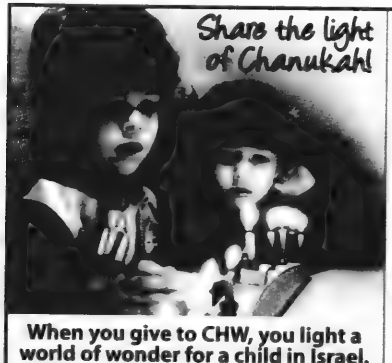
The cholera clinic is a good example. Although it's currently being manned by Israeli and Canadian medical personnel, the focus is on training Haitian nurses, physicians and community workers, in order to ensure that the clinic will continue to operate after the foreign volunteers return home.

The hope is that once the number of cholera cases has diminished, the clinic will be transformed into a non-emergency family medical clinic that will house medical personnel with different specialties, such as optometrists, gynecologists and dentists, to serve the population of Leogane and the surrounding communities.

Another key reason for the partnership between the federation and IsraAID is the positive image that IsraAID projects of Israel, Sokolsky said. "We like IsraAID, because it has the double impact of doing excellent work and providing a face for Israeli citizenry in foreign countries. It's important for people to get an accurate picture of the average Israeli, as the portrayal in the media is not always so accurate."

He pointed to another advantage in the partnership: it represents a new chapter in the philanthropic relationship between Israel and the Diaspora. "Here we are funding an NGO in Israel to do its work in communities outside of Israel. Instead of sending aid to Israel, we are partnering with Israelis to serve the entire world," Sokolsky said.

"IsraAID demonstrates the true meaning of tikun olam, creating a better world by saving so many lives through remarkable acts of kindness."



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Israel Briefs

Palestinians eyeing one state, poll finds

A majority of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza view the two-state solution as a precursor to one Palestinian state, a new poll found. The poll, sponsored by the Israel Project, found in a series of questions to respondents that most of the Palestinians have not reconciled themselves to the long-term existence of the Jewish state. Although 23 per cent accept the statement that "Israel has a permanent right to exist as a homeland for the Jewish People," two-thirds chose the statement, "Over time Palestinians must work to get back all the land for a Palestinian state." Thirty per cent agreed with the statement that "the best goal is for a two-state solution that keep two states living side by side," while 60 per cent chose, "The real goal should be to start with two states but then move it to all being one Palestinian state." Some 854 Palestinians – 538 in the West Bank and 316 from Gaza – participated in face-to-face interviews from Oct. 4 to 15. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus three percentage points.

New barrier along border with Egypt

Engineers fanned out along Israel's southern border last week to prepare the ground for the construction of the barrier and electronic fence. The nearly $375-million (US) project is being undertaken in order to prevent migrant workers from entering Israel, as well as to deter terrorists and drug smugglers. Large parts of the border between Israel and Egypt are demarcated with fencing. The new barrier will be constructed first along the main infiltration routes near Gaza and Eilat, and will include two layers of fencing, including barbed wire. Hundreds of illegal migrants from Africa enter Israel each week. Nearly 11,000 have entered Israel since January, according to Israel's Population and Immigration Authority. Most are searching for work, though some 200 asylum seekers have been granted refugee status in recent years. Dozens of migrants who paid smugglers thousands of dollars to help them cross the border from Egypt into Israel have been shot and killed by Egyptian soldiers.

Rabin's son presents plan

Yuval Rabin, the son of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, has joined forces with businessman and social activist Koby Huberman in order to advocate for the Israeli Peace Initiative, or IPI, a response to the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative.

In an article published on the website bitterlemons.org, Rabin and Huberman propose that instead of responding to the Arab peace plan, the Israeli government should say "yes" by presenting a parallel proposal to end the conflict – the IPI. The two have spent several months promoting the IPI among political figures, academics and business people in Israel and, at the same time, tested the reaction of Palestinian and Arab figures to the principles of the initiative in an unofficial manner.

Iran accuses Israel

Iran has accused Israel of attacks on two of the country's nuclear scientists. One Iranian senior nuclear scientist was killed and another injured Monday in two separate attacks in Tehran. The government of Iran immediately blamed the CIA and the Mossad for the bombing attacks, which reportedly were carried out by men on motorcycles. Iranian state television blamed "Zionist agents," according to reports. Majid Shahriari, who was killed, and Fereydoon Abbasi Davani, who was injured in the attacks, were physics lecturers at Tehran's Shahid Beheshti University. The attacks took place near the university. The scientists were senior figures in Iran's nuclear program, according to reports. "The Zionist regime this time shed the blood of university professor Dr. Majid Shahriari to curb Iran's progress," the office of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said in a statement posted on its website, according to AFP. Shahriari was reportedly working on a nuclear project for Iran's Atomic Energy Agency. The attacks come just days after Iran said its first nuclear plant was fully loaded with fuel rods and awaiting several tests before going online for the first time.

– *JTA and Ha'aretz*

Three charged in Auschwitz sign theft

JTA

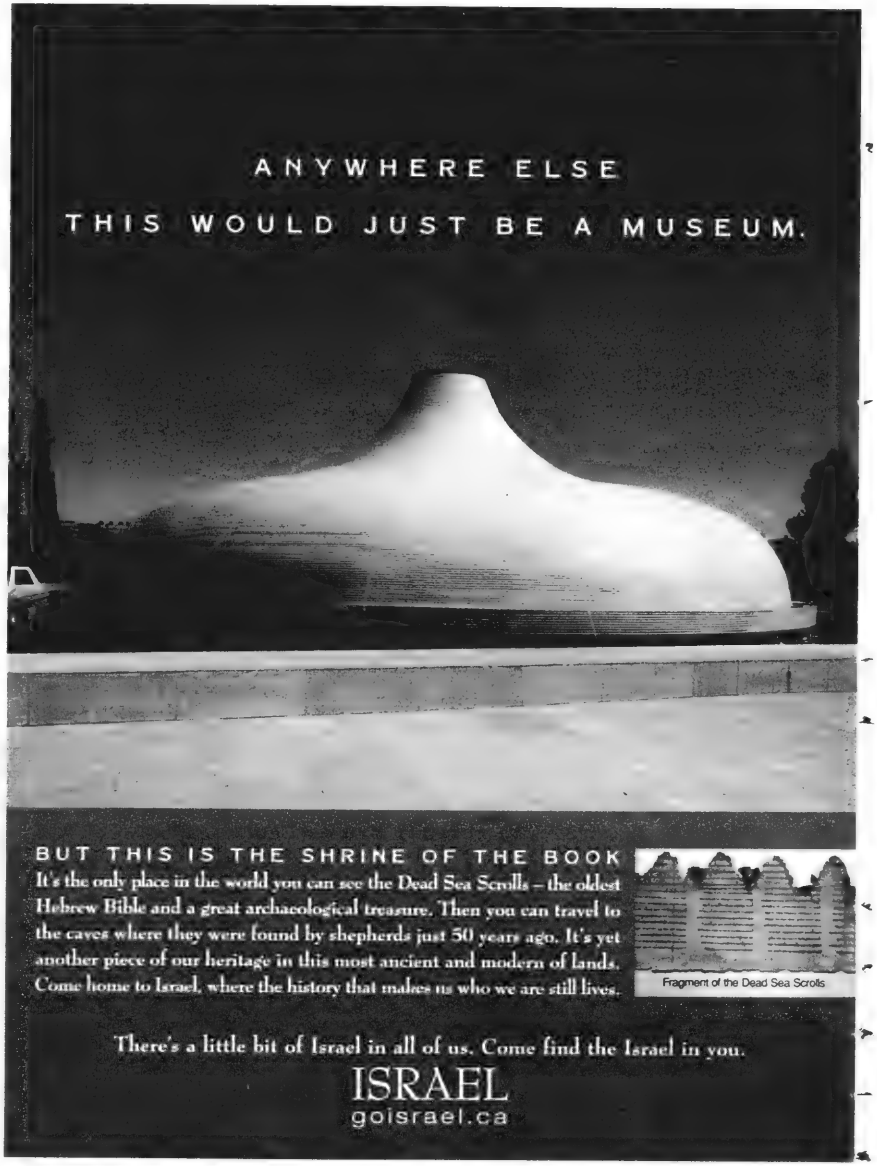
WARSAW – Polish prosecutors charged a Swedish man and two Polish men in the theft of the "Arbeit Macht Frei" sign from the front gate of Auschwitz.

The Swede, Anders Hogstrom, a neo-Nazi leader who allegedly organized the theft as a middleman between a neo-Nazi buyer and five Polish thieves, reportedly struck a plea bargain with Polish prosecutors on Thursday. Under the terms of the deal, Hogstrom will serve 32 months in jail in his native Sweden, the French news service AFP reported Thursday.

The iron "work makes you free" sign, measuring five metres across, was stolen on Dec. 18, 2009 and recovered across the country 72 hours later, cut into three pieces.

Hogstrom, who was arrested in February in Stockholm and extradited to Poland in April, founded the National Socialist Front, a Swedish neo-Nazi movement, in 1994. He could have faced 10 years in prison on the charges. It is not known whether the Polish court in Krakow will accept the terms of the plea bargain.

Three of the thieves have already been sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison each.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Program aims to keep 'failing' students in school

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

JERUSALEM — The Azrieli Institute for Educational Empowerment program in Jerusalem was launched last week.

Representatives of the Azrieli Foundation, the Jerusalem Foundation and the Municipality of Jerusalem gathered at the Jerusalem Cinemateque last Tuesday for the launch.

The empowerment program, already in operation in 14 other cities across Israel, aims to keep high-risk seventh, eighth and ninth graders in school. "This is such a wonderful program, and I am so pleased to partner with the Jerusalem Foundation [to bring it to Jerusalem]," said David Azrieli.

The Azrieli Foundation is contributing 60 per cent of the initial $1 million required to run the program in five Jerusalem-area schools for the next five years. The remaining 40 per cent is being covered jointly by the Jerusalem Foundation and the Municipality of Jerusalem.

The program takes a three-pronged approach: it offers students who have failed at least four subjects, and whose admission to high school is at risk, academic assistance in the core subjects of Hebrew, English and mathematics; social assistance to strengthen communication skills; professional guidance for parents, to teach them how to take a more proactive role in their children's education.

"We are trying not only to educate the kids to help them matriculate, but to catch them in time before they end up on the street," said Azrieli. "We catch them at a time of crisis in their lives, when they're failing in school and headed toward dropping out. This program is aimed at preventing them from dropping out and encouraging them to stay in school."

Nadim Shibam, director of the community and society projects department at the Jerusalem Foundation, said that "the program has a real chance of success because it targets the unique needs and problems of these children, including significant investment of extra hours for learning, coupling it with personal assistance for parents."

Over the last year, the Jerusalem Foundation has invested 12 million shekels ($3.3 million US) in educational projects in Jerusalem.

"[This program will give] these children the tools to successfully complete 12 years of schooling," Shibam said.

The program, which started in Be'er Sheva in 2004 and has assisted more than 1,700 students in schools in Carmiel, Eilat, Kiryat Malachi, Akko, Dimona, Ofakim and Maalot, has a proven record of success.

David Azrieli

The Azrieli Foundation's annual report for the 2008-09 academic year reported that from among 231 graduates last year, 172 (74.2 per cent) were referred to a full matriculation track and 19 (8.2 per cent) were referred to an advanced matriculation track. All students enrolled in the program improved their academic standing by an average of 20 grade points, with 96 per cent of them reporting that the program helped them with their studies. In addition, 70 per cent of participating students said they had more friends, and 92 per cent reported an increase in their parents' interest in their studies.

According to Meir Avitan, general manager of the Azrieli Foundation, more than 90 per cent of past program participants graduated high school and matriculated, and no program participants dropped out of school.

In Jerusalem, the program will assist 128 seventh- and eighth-grade students at the Greenberg Junior High School in Gilo; Rapaport Junior High and Ort Spanian in Gonen; Bet Hinuch in Katamon; Masorti in Talpiot.

The hope is to continue expanding the program in the future, both to additional schools in Jerusalem and to other cities in Israel.

The Azrieli Foundation also runs programs in architecture, Holocaust education and commemoration, scientific and medical research, developmental disabilities, and the arts.

"Education is foremost, not just to me but in Jewish life. [Jewish] kids hundreds of years ago knew how to read a Siddur and were educated while others were not," said Azrieli. "The effect that education has on people is enormous."

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Agreement allows NZ kosher slaughter of poultry

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

SYDNEY, Australia – New Zealand's Jewish community has won an 11th-hour agreement from the government to allow the kosher slaughter of poultry.

Lawyers acting for the community were due to begin a legal battle on Nov. 29 against the government's controversial ban on shchitah in the High Court in Wellington.

The case was adjourned following an agreement Friday with Agriculture Minister David Carter, who in May rejected a recommendation that shchitah be exempt from the new animal welfare code. Under the new agreement, kosher slaughtering of poultry will be allowed, although negotiations regarding the kosher slaughtering of lamb are ongoing.

The code mandates that all commercially slaughtered animals must first be stunned, thus rendering shchitah illegal.

'Very relieved' by the development

A statement issued by the heads of the community on Friday afternoon stated: "Until those negotiations are concluded, or the matter is determined in court, the interim orders which were previously granted enabling the shchitah of lamb will continue."

New Zealand Jewish Council president Stephen Goodman said he was "very relieved" by the development.

"It is disappointing that it took legal action for the government to come to a negotiated solution," he said. "The whole process has been extremely stressful to the New Zealand Jewish community as well as costing over $NZ300,000 that could, and should, have been applied to reinforcing the community rather than arguing with our government over our right to live here."

Shchitah has been carried out in New Zealand since 1843. The island nation on the edge of the Diaspora is home to about 7,000 Jews.

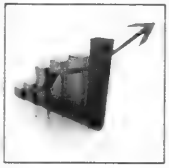
Winnipeg lawyer invests in Israeli real estate

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Winnipeg lawyer Howard Tennenhouse has been travelling to and from Israel for 31 years now, visiting relatives, seeing the sights and, more recently, dabbling in the real estate market.

Actually, it's a little more than dabbling as the 54-year-old attorney has compiled an impressive roster of properties he has bought and sold across the country. He's even contemplating turning it into a second career.

He recently sold one of the first units he acquired, a small apartment in Zichron Yaacov, just south of Haifa, for 425,000 shekels (US $116,000). In 2005, he paid $70,000 (all figures US) for it.



His first purchase, also in Zichron Yaacov, was his "dream home," a 120-square-metre "penthouse" with a view of the southern end of the Carmel Mountain range. He recently sold that one as well, and in the period from his first purchase to today, he's bought – and sold – seven or eight other Zichron properties, four more in Ashdod and a couple of properties in Eilat. He's also developing a "villa" (a semi-detached unit) in Ashkelon, a "*tzimmer*" (an upscale bed and breakfast) and a restaurant in Zichron Yaacov and a property in Atlit. One of his big projects is developing condominiums on a small irregularly shaped plot of land near the Old Port in Jaffa, Israel's hottest market, that cost him $1.2 million. And there are others.

In Winnipeg, he owns a 2,200-square-foot bungalow – that's it.

It took a while, but the real estate bug has bitten Tennenhouse in a big way. When he retires in three years, he plans on moving to Israel permanently and relying on real estate to keep him busy and provide an income.

So far, he's made quite a success of it. The real estate market in Israel has been booming since he got involved six years ago, Tennenhouse said.

When he first got into the market, he wasn't looking at making it a business. An ardent Zionist, he had dreamed of moving to the Holy Land and viewed Rishon as the ideal retirement venue – it was close to relatives who lived in Kibbutz Ma'anit, was alongside Highway 6 and the north south train line. After doing his due diligence, he travelled to Israel and purchased his first property with that in mind.

Later, to raise capital, he invited seven or eight partners – Jewish guys he knew in Winnipeg – to put their money into Zichron real estate. "They were interested not just in money – they all had money – but in owning a piece of property in Israel. They didn't do it for the cash, but they all made some money."

Eventually, he bought out his partners. On one of his trips to Israel, on the night before he was to fly home to Winnipeg, he came across an ad by a real estate agent in Ashdod. He called him and the two developed a rapport. On a subsequent trip, Tennenhouse purchased his first Ashdod property for $92,000, "just to test the waters." Today, it's worth $170,000, he said. He acquired a 2,200-square-foot penthouse for $275,000 four years ago. It's worth more than $500,000 today. Another of his properties earns $1,500 a month in rent from a cellular tower on top.

"Ashdod is red hot," Tennenhouse said. "It's developing as a city. It has a great beach, they're developing the infrastructure, Russian and Ethiopian immigrants are moving there and they need homes."

But isn't Ashdod close to Gaza, he's asked.

"What isn't close to Gaza?" Tennenhouse replied. "If it's not close to Gaza, then it's close to Lebanon. If it's not close to Lebanon, its next to the West Bank."

Ashkelon, even closer to Gaza, is likewise developing a strong real estate market, he said. He's building a semi-detached "flat" there, in effect riding the coattails of his real estate agent and friend, Roni Sharon, whose family is in the development business and is constructing the units.

In Israel, personal relationships are vital, Tennenhouse said. Not only do you have to know the market, you have to know the right people who in turn know other right people and are able to navigate the bureaucracy and obtain all necessary permits and financing.

After having a bad experience with one of the big name Israeli financial institutions, his lawyer connected him to the Bank of Jerusalem, which provided the funding for his forays into the market. In Israel, you're required to put down 30 per cent cash on residential properties and 40 per cent on commercial. "They didn't restrict me in getting new properties," he said.

All the properties are rented and that income pays the mortgages, he said. Ashdod is so hot, he added, "when a tenant leaves, I can rent it out within 24 hours."

Recently, Tennenhouse teamed with Annabelle Almagor to establish Habitat, a boutique real estate company. In addition to employing a number of agents involved in buying and selling properties, the company is marketing his Jaffa project. It's also involved in developing and marketing one particularly large deal, a $100-million luxury apartment project.

Almagor is well connected in Israel, he said. She once served as executive assistant to President Shimon Peres, her father was influential in the Labor party and security agencies, and she grew up knowing many prominent Israeli figures. Her father established a settlement in Sinai, where her brother was born – the first Jewish baby born there in 2,000 years.

Tennenhouse, who visits Israel three or four times a year but calls there every day or two, said the success of his law practice has given him the wherewithal to invest in Israeli real estate. A big part of his practice is representing First Nations clients who received compensation for the abuse they suffered in the residential schools scandal. His clients benefited from the $2.9 billion (Cdn) compensation fund set up for them and his fees have pretty much gone into real estate.

"The Natives have become the greatest Zionists in the world," he quipped.

As for himself, "Once I retire, [real estate] will be my income-producing vehicle and more importantly, I love it. It's fun," he said.

"It's fun to create something from nothing and to meet interesting people."

Housing market is cooling: ministry data

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Data released by Israel's Finance Ministry suggests the country's housing market is cooling.

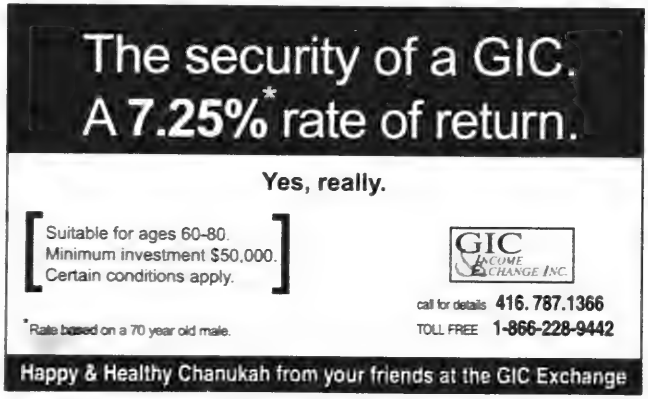
In the third quarter of 2010, which runs from July to September, the number of home sales and even prices dropped, the ministry said. The trend began earlier in the year, but the new data suggest that the process is gaining momentum.

Compared to the second quarter, housing sales fell two per cent. Compared to the third quarter of last year, however, the fall was a much more impressive 19 per cent. Nearly 23,000 homes were sold in the third quarter of 2010, the lowest figure for that quarter since 2006, according to the data.

This year's figures already reflected a drop in demand for new homes, but for the first time in 2010 sales of existing homes are falling sharply, according to the third-quarter data. The fall comes as lenders are demanding stricter terms, while the average wage has declined compared to 2009.

The average price of new homes in the third quarter was off 2.9 per cent compared to the second, and followed a decline from the first quarter. The most recent three-month figures also reflect a slowdown for the fifth straight quarter in new-home sales. When compared to the third quarter of 2009, new-home sales tumbled 15.3 per cent, with the purchase of 5,300 new residences.

The Association of Contractors and Builders, however, disputes the Finance Ministry's new home-sale data for the third quarter, saying there has not been a steep decline.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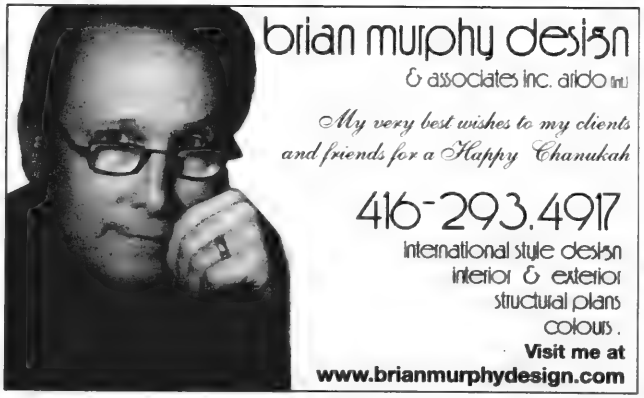

CJN Profile

Camp counsellor is running on empathy

'Zak' Maresky enjoys working with kids with special needs

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Preconceptions abounded when Isaac "Zak" Benjamin Maresky first decided to enrol as a counsellor at the Hebrew Academy for Special Children (HASC) camp in upstate New York in 2008.

He got wind of the camp through the New York-based National Jewish Council for Disabilities (a.k.a. Yachad), which he was exposed to during after-school programming while attending Bnei Akiva Or Chaim High School in Toronto.

Maresky, who was 18 at the time, only knew that he wanted to help young, Jewish kids with special needs enjoy their summer. What he didn't know was the effect this experience would have on him.

"It seemed to me that most people I knew in high school who were involved helping kids with special needs in some way, their next step was always to move on to HASC. So I applied too," he said.

The non-profit camp, which each year hosts more than 300 children and adults with physical and developmental disabilities for a seven-week stay on its grounds in the Catskill Mountains, aims to provide its campers with a "sleep-away camp experience, just like many of their siblings and friends," its website says.

But the camp also acknowledges that it couldn't achieve this goal without the dedicated help of volunteers like Maresky, who spend 24 hours a day with their campers, bonding with them, creating enduring friendships and growing as individuals.

For Maresky, who has spent the last two summers at the camp, the impact on his perspective on life has been tangible. So much so, that he's entered the ING Miami Marathon to run its 42-kilometre course on Jan. 30, 2011, in an effort to raise money for HASC.

He's never run a marathon before. In fact, Maresky told *The CJN* that before this year, he'd only ever run about an eight-kilometre stretch, back when he would run during gym and cross-country at Or Chaim in Toronto.

Since enrolling in the marathon as part of a HASC contingent of runners, he's been jogging 15 to 20 kilometres a week as part of his training in the hope of completing the competition.

Maresky said running for HASC in Miami is "a cause that's worth everything. Those kids go there and flourish and grow."

So far, he's raised more than $2,000 in sponsorship money for his run and hopes to have a lot more for the camp before he laces up his running shoes for the upcoming marathon.

Zak Maresky, right in both pictures, with Jon, one of the people he's bonded with at camp.

Zak with Jon at one of the camp's many functions.

Maresky said he knew working at HASC was something he needed to do after growing up with a cousin who had cerebral palsy.

Though he never had to care for his cousin as he did for his campers at HASC, Maresky said he could now empathize better with his cousin's condition, and he understands that people with special needs are just as dynamic and full of life as anyone else.

"My campers were like me. They loved sports, running. The experience affected my attitude about people with disabilities. They're such great people, and it just makes you want to help them even more," he said.

After the marathon, Maresky said he plans to finish his degree in chemistry at York University and then move to Israel to go to law school and enrol in the IDF, where his two brothers are already serving.

In the future, he said he wants to continue supporting HASC and contributing to it in any way he can.

"Once I graduate and finish all my schooling, I'd like to become a serious donor. For now, I feel like I'm doing the most I can directly," Maresky said, adding that he just wants to "spread the word" about the camp to anyone that will listen or potentially donate to its cause.

Though Canadians may not have heard about HASC, it is a well-recognized institution in the States, he said.

"The camp and the people are so fantastic, I don't know what else to say."

For more information visit, http://www.hasc.net/marathon/my/isaacbm

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Issue of being gay and Orthodox addressed

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

A panel held last year on being gay in the Orthodox community, organized by Yeshiva University and Wurzweiler School of Social Work, was a watershed moment, says Rabbi Nati Helfgot of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah in New York.

"A number of students spoke about their pain and the problem of wanting to be part of the Orthodox community but not fitting in," he said at a recent conference, Renewing our Spirit, sponsored by Torah in Motion. Also speaking was Rabbi Barry Freundel of Kesher Israel Synagogue in Washington D.C. The moderator was Elliott Malamet.

"Many of us were taken aback after the panel, however, because a number of prominent voices spoke out [in favour of] reparative therapy [which attempts to change the sexual orientation of a person from homosexual or bisexual to heterosexual]," Rabbi Helfgot said.

"This became presented as the official Orthodox voice. The reaction to the panel was so over the top that the real Orthodox response was to hide the issue. [Some of us] felt it was up to us to react. We felt that even though there are many issues, this is the issue we relate to right now."

The result, he said, was the Statement of Principles on the Place of Jews with a Homosexual Orientation in our Community.

Written mainly by Rabbi Helfgot with the help of other rabbis, educators and mental health professionals, the statement, released last July, "is a balance between Halachah and the desire to rid the community of the shaming of people.

"[We attempted to address] how we, as a community that is committed to the ideal of heterosexual marriage, can make space for those who want to be part of the community, yet feel alienated. The statement left it up to individual synagogues if they want to be inclusive," said Rabbi Helfgot.

The authors of the statement did not advocate reparative therapy, he said.

Rather, the statement affirms "the religious right of those with a homosexual orientation to reject therapeutic approaches they reasonably see as useless or dangerous."

Rabbi Freundel, who in 1986 wrote the article *Homosexuality and Judaism* in the *Journal of Halachah and Contemporary Society*, questioned whether the statement of principles was necessary if the Torah already commands sensitivity. "Is the Torah insufficient to engender values?"

Rabbi Helfgot agreed that the value of sensitivity is in the Torah, but he said that "somehow in Jewish history, certain things have been de-emphasized. We can't deny that while it is not acceptable to berate someone, it happens."

Rabbi Freundel said that he has no problem with gay couples belonging to his shul, as long as they don't openly announce their homosexuality.

"The shul should distinguish between private and public. Two women who are very public together got involved in our sisterhood. We asked them not to discuss homosexual issues in shul. It's no different than [asking them] not to talk about non-kosher food. Don't bring in something that is anti-halachic and advocate it."

Rabbi Helfgot said there is an issue of where to draw the line. "Does a person have to live a closeted life to be part of Orthodox life? They don't want to live a lie."

He said that we live in a world "where gays are out there, and we can't go back. We are inundated with sexual openness, and this statement doesn't change that.

"I believe that sexuality is a spectrum. There is a percentage of people who are not committed, but there are people who won't change. That is the reality of the world we live in."

FREE THE CHILDREN: In conjunction with Free the Children Organization, students at Leo Baeck Day School's south campus (in Holy Blossom Temple) silenced their voices to show solidarity with children around the world who live under oppression or in poverty. Teachers used Smart boards, cue cards and other techniques to make this a unique day for all. Here students display their messages of hope written on cutouts of children, symbolizing the connection.

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U.S. could face a crisis if Israel attacks Iran's nuclear sites

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Five crises since World War II have drawn the United States deeper into the morass of Middle East politics. President Barack Obama currently faces the distinct possibility that a sixth crisis in the near future, in which Israel attacks Iran in a desperate attempt to cripple or decapitate its budding nuclear program, will further envelop the United States in the deadly vortex of Middle East animosities.

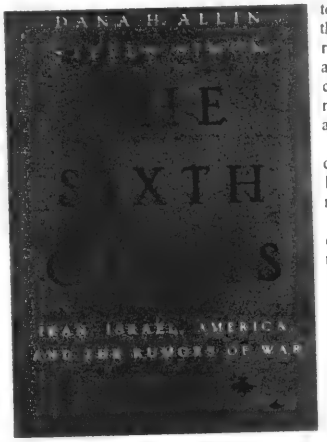
This unnerving scenario is the subject of a timely and incisive book, *The Sixth Crisis: Iran, Israel, America, and the Rumors of War* (Oxford University Press), by Dana H. Allin and Steven Simon, both of whom are specialists in U.S. foreign policy.

Long before Iran's nuclear ambitions became a topic of heated debate in Jerusalem and Washington, D.C., the United States was thrown into five crises whose lasting effects reshaped the Middle East.

They were as follows: the 1956 Suez War, the Six Day War in 1967, the Iranian revolution in 1979, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 followed by the Gulf War in 1991, and the Al Qaeda terrorist attack on the United States in 2001, which triggered still ongoing wars and insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq.

As a new year beckons, the United States faces a sixth crisis. As the authors put it, "There is every reason to worry that, in the coming years or even months, a fearful Israel will conclude that it is cornered with no choice but to launch a preventive war aimed at crippling Tehran's nuclear infrastructure and thereby [remove], or at least forestall, what most Israelis consider a threat to the Jewish state's very existence."

The worst-case scenario, in which Israel attacks Iran, is not implausible, given what they describe as Iran's "annihilationist" agenda with respect to Israel. Living in the shadow of the Holocaust, Israel has twice acted militarily to derail its enemies' nuclear programs. In 1981, to international condemnation, Israel destroyed Iraq's Osirak reactor. And in 2007, without ever acknowledging it, Israel obliterated a nuclear facility under construction in Syria.



Allin and Simon blame Iran for sowing the seeds of this crisis-in-the-making. They argue that Iran's harsh and unrelenting rhetoric about Israel's illegitimacy and impermanence, as well as its unbridled support of Hezbollah and Hamas, is creating a full-blown "mood of panic" in Israel.

Iran has been consistently hostile to Israel since the Islamic revolution, but only in recent years has Israel expressed real concern.

For about the first two decades after the fall of Iran's pro-western Pahlavi monarchy, Israel was slow to recognize "the sea change" brought about by the overthrow of the shah, they say. Indeed, Israel secretly sold weapons to Iran in the 1980s.

Two events changed Israel's outlook on Iran drastically.

In 2002, an Iranian exile group disclosed that Iran was actively assembling a nuclear device. Subsequently, the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed that Iran was building an enrichment plant in Natanz and a heavy water factory in Arak.

The "crude posturing and incendiary rhetoric" of Iran's current president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, closed the case as far as Israel is concerned.

When these developments are factored into Israel's long-standing policy that a nuclear weapons capability in the region, other than its own, would pose an intolerable threat to its survival, one can perhaps understand why Israel might be tempted to deploy brute force against Iran's nuclear facilities.

Claiming that Israel is capable of carrying out a unilateral attack, Allin and Simon discuss three plausible routes Israeli aircraft might use.

Israel's decision to launch a raid on Iran would depend on several factors. The first would be its assessment of U.S. and international resolve to block Iran's pursuit of nuclear arms. Additional considerations would turn on two other issues. Would an attack buy time for Israel, given its high risks and costs? What would be its impact on Israel's key relationship with the United States?

Assuming that an Israeli attack would touch off a regional war, Allin and Simon conclude that it would be driven by Iran's "recklessness" and Israel's "fears."

Although they understand why Israel might be forced to resort to military means to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear arsenal, they believe that force would not be materially useful and might even be counter-productive.

In the event of an attack, they observe, the United States would become embroiled in an Iranian retaliatory strike against Israel, which could be extremely serious in terms of casualties and property damage.

Iran would probably retaliate against American regional interests, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan. Oil prices would rise, heightening concerns about energy supplies. Washington's outreach to the Muslim world, as spelled out by Obama in 2009 in a speech in Cairo, would be imperilled.

Iranians, even those opposed to Iran's theocratic regime, would rally around the flag for nationalistic reasons. Iran would redouble its efforts to weaponize its nuclear program and very likely succeed in resurrecting it, they claim.

Furthermore, progress toward resolving Israel's dispute with the Palestinians would be stopped dead in its tracks, especially if Israeli jets overflew Jordan and Saudi Arabia to reach targets in Iran.

Depending on the circumstances of an Israeli attack, Israel's ties with the United States could be frayed, especially because Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Obama differ over a crucial matter.

Netanyahu has argued that Israel can only make concessions to the Palestinians after the urgent problem posed by Iran's nuclear program is resolved. Obama has said that a resolution of Israel's conflict with the Palestinians is required to enlist Arab backing for a strategy of containing and pressuring Iran.

If war is to be avoided, the authors contend, the United States must adopt a systematic policy of containment vis-a-vis Iran, impose tougher sanctions on Iran and try to persuade the Iranian government to limit its nuclear program.

Meanwhile, Iran's "defiance" and Israel's "panic" are the "fuses" that could spark a destructive war in the Middle East. "The sixth crisis could shape our world for many years to come," Allin and Simon write ominously.

Their warning is not an idle one.

Children's tale The Tooth *explores homelessness*

By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN

Lawyer by day and children's book author by evening, Toronto's Avi Slodovnick has published another charmer, this one combining an issue familiar to kids – tooth decay – with a hard-to-ignore social issue.

The Tooth (Kane Miller Book Publishers, and originally titled *The Cavity*; the name change is a long story) tells the story of little Marissa, whose love of candy catches up with her. A visit to the dentist, undergone with minimal fuss, exposes the young girl to "columns of tall, grey buildings" casting great shadows, and "enormous" skyscrapers "that seem endlessly tall."

Avi Slodovnick

But it is not this potentially hostile world Marissa takes notice of. Rather, her attention is drawn to a grown man sitting on a grate on the sidewalk. Before him is an open shoe box with money inside. She is curious but her mother leads her away.

Even inside the dentist's office, Marissa peers out a window, unable to tear her eyes away from the man. She notices that most people walk right by him. "Others walk around him, like they were trying to avoid him," the story says.

Instead of the afflicted tooth getting filled, it is pulled (for reasons that advance the book's message). Outside, Marissa again spies the homeless man, and sees there is but little money in his shoe box. So she drops her tooth into the receptacle, believing, not unreasonably for a little girl, that it will pay off.

"Put it under your pillow tonight," she sagely advises the man. "And there will be money there tomorrow."

All the man needs is a pillow.

It's a poignant little tale that makes its point gently and without treacle.

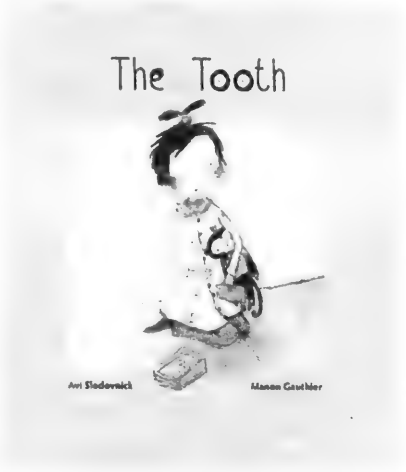
"Originally, I wanted to write a story about the purity of a child's compassion," Slodovnick, the father of three boys," says. "At the same time, I had wanted to write a story about homelessness since I see a lot of it downtown and had observed first-hand the indifference many people show."

One time, Slodovnick saw a man walk past a homeless person, only to feed bread to pigeons.

"That image stuck with me. While many of us have an aversion to the homeless, what is probably required is a frankness that maybe only a child can muster. Eventually, for me, the themes of a child's compassion and homelessness merged naturally."

The Tooth "is intended to introduce children to a difficult topic that should be discussed with their parents or teacher," he says.

Slodovnick is co-author, with his brother-in-law, Jack Siemiatycki, of two previous children's books, the similarly themed *The Hockey Card* and *The Baseball Card*.



Illustrated by Manon Gauthier, *The Tooth*, geared for kids aged four to 12, is for sale in Canada through Indigo and other booksellers. It is also sold in French in Quebec, France and Belgium as *La carie (the cavity)*.

Photo of Jordan Pettle, Julie Tepperman, Aaron Willis and chorus by Keith Barker

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Polish heroine subject of U.S. documentary

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

American filmmaker Mary Skinner has made a wonderful documentary about the Polish humanitarian and heroine Irena Sendler, who was instrumental in saving more than 2,000 Jewish children during the Holocaust.

The movie, *Irena Sendler: In the Name of Their Mothers*, will be screened at Congregation Habonim on Sunday, Dec. 12 at 8 p.m. by the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada and the Young Polish Canadian Professionals Association.

Skinner will introduce her film and take questions after the screening.

The motion picture, the first of its kind on Sendler made outside Poland, recreates her mission of mercy and features interviews with her, several of the Jewish children she saved and two of Sendler's fellow workers.

Irena Sendler in old age

Like Jan Karski, the courageous Polish courier who told the world about conditions in the Warsaw Ghetto and the Nazi plan to exterminate the Jews of Poland, Sendler was an extraordinary person who risked life and limb to do good in a particularly dark period.

Sendler, a Catholic social worker, began to help Jews shortly after Germany invaded Poland in 1939. An employee of Warsaw's social welfare department, an organization administered by the Nazis, she helped Jews to Polonize their names so that they would be eligible for assistance.

After visiting the Warsaw Ghetto and witnessing the "hellish" conditions there, she formed a network to smuggle Jewish children out of the ghetto to convents and orphanages. She was assisted by Jewish police officers and tram drivers, among others.

Sendler continued with her work despite a decree by the Nazis in 1941 that helping Jews was punishable by death.

Sendler's determination was forged on the anvil of compassion. She was deeply affected by the liquidation of Janos Korczak's Jewish orphanage in Warsaw.

Animated by remarkable archival footage of wartime Warsaw, the film is supplemented by interviews with four of the Jewish children whose lives were saved by Sendler and her co-workers.

Once the children were removed from the ghetto, they were placed in safe houses and provided with a stable environment.

"We had to give them a lot of love," says Sendler, explaining that the children were often terrified and confused.

Having been rescued, the children were given fake identity papers and new names and baptismal certificates and taught how to recite Catholic prayers.

Not surprisingly, some Jewish parents were reluctant to hand over their children to Sendler, fearing for their safety.

At the end of 1942, when Sendler ran out of money, she turned to the Council to Aid Jews, known as Zegota. But after the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, she could no longer help Jews, and this weighed on her conscience, she says.

She did, however, send the Jewish children in her care to more than 200 convents in rural Poland. Even there, children with obvious Jewish features were in danger because of German inspection visits.

Sendler was arrested and tortured by the Gestapo in 1943. Due to be executed, she was saved by the Polish underground at the very last moment.

Although she lived in hiding for the remainder of the German occupation, she continued her work, burying lists of Jewish children in jars so that they could be reunited with their parents after the war. Regrettably, only a very small proportion ever saw their parents again. They had been murdered in the Treblinka extermination camp.

During the Communist postwar era in Poland, Sendler was harassed by the Polish government, having been accused of maintaining relations with the non-Communist Polish government-in-exile in Britain.

Irena Sendler during World War II

Yet Sendler's heroics did not go unrecognized. In 1965, she was named a Righteous Gentile by Yad Vashem, one of some 6,000 Poles who were so honoured.

In the Name of Their Mothers pays tribute to Sendler and her brave band of decent Poles who, under the most difficult circumstances, rose to the occasion when they were most needed.

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

PIANIST SIMONE DINNERSTEIN TO PLAY BACH'S *GOLDBERG VARIATIONS* HERE

Known for her "intelligent and emotionally powerful performances," New York-based classical pianist **Simone Dinnerstein** has gained immense renown for her recording of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*: the CD appeared on the Best of 2007 lists of the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New Yorker*, iTunes and many others.

Dinnerstein performs the *Goldberg Variations* at the Royal Conservatory of Music's Koerner Hall, Sunday, Dec. 12, 3 p.m. $20 to $55. 416-408-0208, www.remusic.ca

• • •

Barda in Concert: Soprano **Renee Barda** performs classics of **George Gershwin**, **Cole Porter**, art songs and more, accompanied by pianist **Dorothy Krizmanic**, clarinettist **Gideon Wilk** and **John Lettieri** on the accordion, in a concert titled *Life Begins Again*. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Al Green Theatre, Saturday, Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• • •

Chanukah Concert: The Ashkenaz Foundation and Annex Shul present Montreal-based Jewish hip-hop sensation **SoCalled**, performing Chanukah songs and music from his upcoming CD in a program called Hip Hop Hanukah.

SoCalled (a.k.a. **Josh Dolgin**) combines hip hop, rap and funk with Yiddish theatre tunes and old-school klezmer samples from 78 rpm records, spiced up with electric guitar, bass, horns and live folk musicians on traditional instruments. Attendees are encouraged to bring new unwrapped toys to the event to be given to sick children. Mod Club, 722 College St. at Crawford. Thursday, Dec. 2, 9:30 p.m.; doors open at 9 p.m. $20, $25 at the door. www.ashkenazfestival.com, 416-979-9901.

SoCalled

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More Chanukah Celebrations

• The 10th annual **Judy & David** Chanukah Live Concert is at City Playhouse in Vaughan, Dec. 4 and 5. 905-882-SHOW.

• Active Seniors presents recording artist **Aviva Chernick**, who sings in English, Ladino, Hebrew and Yiddish, at a Chanukah Musical Celebration with latkes. Thursday, Dec. 9, 1:30 p.m. Reserve by Dec. 6, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

• Friends of Yiddish and the Toronto Workmen's Circle present Come Light the Menorah, a Chanukah celebration featuring songs by **Aron Gonshor** of Montreal's Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre troupe. Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W. Refreshments. $10, $5 for members of Workmen's Circle and Friends of Yiddish. Sunday, Dec. 12, 2 p.m. RSVP to Sandy, 416-458-1440 or 416-736-8073 by Dec. 8.

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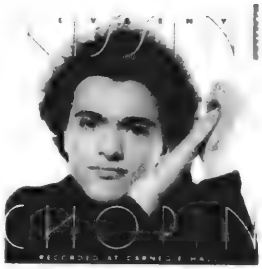
Film Events

• Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *God Is Great... I Am Very Small*, an "honest, unpredictable and sharp comedy of manners" starring **Audrey Tatou**. Guest speaker **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. $15, $10. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Sunday, Dec. 5, 4 and 7:30 p.m.

• Film critic **Adam Nayman** discusses "Surfing the New Wave Cinema of Taiwan" in his next lecture on contemporary foreign-language cinema. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, Dec. 6, 7 to 9 p.m. $12 drop-in fee, students $6.

• The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation presents the Toronto première of *Irena Sendler: In the Name of Their Mothers*, a film about the righteous Poles who rescued 2,500 Jewish children from Nazi-occupied Warsaw. The director, **Mary Skinner**, will be in attendance. Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Ave., Sunday, Dec. 12, 8 p.m. Limited seating, come early.



Evgeny Kissin

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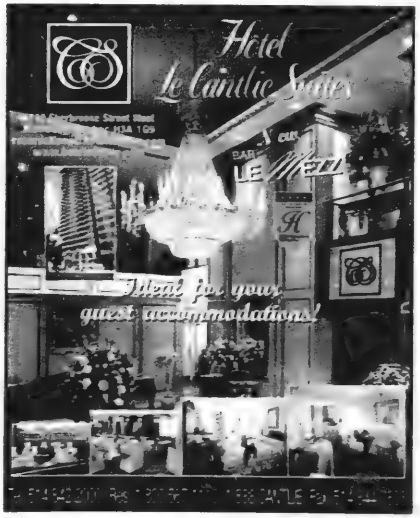
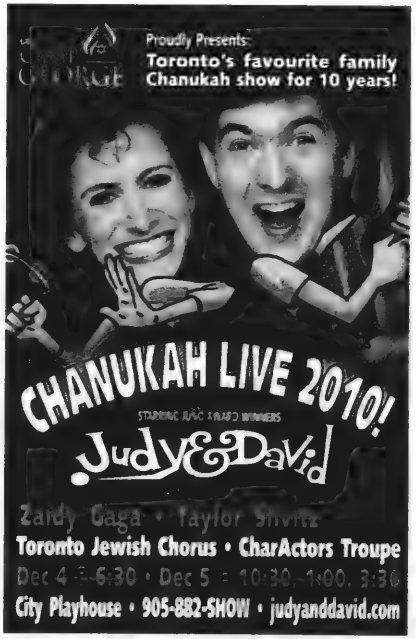
Quotable Quote: In a recent interview in the London *Jewish Chronicle*, Moscow-born classical pianist **Evgeny Kissin** explained why he has begun to speak out in support of Israel and against the sweeping anti-Israel hysteria that is becoming prevalent. He is nearly as gifted at rising to Israel's defence, it seems, as he is playing the piano.

Kissin, on fairness: "I always try to be objective, and for that reason I ask myself sometimes: what if the tables were reversed? What if the Jews had the whole of North Africa, the whole Arabian Peninsula, Palestine, Syria and Iraq – and the Arabs had nothing and wanted Palestine? And the only answer that comes naturally to my mind and seems fair to me is: in such a situation, it would have been the sacred duty of the whole world to give Palestine to the Arabs and to suppress any Jewish resistance ruthlessly."

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Arts & Travel

Yann Martel defends fiction in Holocaust lit

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Holocaust is not only an appropriate subject for fiction, but a necessary one if the world is to remember this catastrophic event over the long term, Canadian author Yann Martel argued in a keynote address in Montreal.

Martel, whose latest novel, *Beatrice & Virgil*, deals obliquely with the Holocaust, believes that historical depiction has its limits, and only art can get at the truth and spirit. If the art is bad, if it trivializes or exploits the subject, it will soon be forgotten, he added.

Survivors and their descendants don't need to turn to literature to understand the Holocaust, but others do – today and into the future, he said. To rely solely on the facts of this period has its weaknesses because it limits readership and invites revisionists to pounce on any discrepancy, said Martel. A well-written work of fiction, on the other hand, can convey feeling and meaning.

"I think there is a danger in not allowing imagination to deal with the Holocaust. Great novels are still read and speak to us hundreds of years afterward," he said.

Martel, 47, whose first major novel, *Life of Pi*, won the prestigious Man Book Prize in 2002, now lives in Saskatoon after moving from Montreal. His first exposure to the Holocaust was while attending a British school in the early 1970s in Paris, where his father served as a diplomat.

While the young Martel could grasp World War II, he found the Holocaust "perplexing and puzzling".

"In a war you are fighting an evil enemy. In the Holocaust, they were killing their best friends. German Jews were completely integrated… why this inexplicable hatred?"

He found that what novels of the Holocaust did exist were really autobiographical or biographical, rather than truly imagined.

A book related to the Holocaust, he admits, was not the most logical follow-up to his surprise winning of the Booker, and he struggled for years before *Beatrice & Virgil* was published in the spring by Knopf Canada.

Yann Martel

This is an allegorical work in an unconventional style. The title characters are animals, named for the guides to heaven and hell in Dante's 14th-century *The Divine Comedy*.

"It's a literary device that freed me from historical realism," he explained. "Allegory can go straight to the heart of something, unencumbered by the weight of history."

Martel did, however, avoid writing as if he was a witness to the Holocaust, using instead literary references and other links to get there.

Some have objected to his novel. Although the Canadian reviews were quite positive and the book sold well, *Beatrice & Virgil* received some scathing notices in the United States, notably in the *New York Times*.

"I was astonished. [*The New York Times*] said I trivialized the Holocaust, that you can't use the tools of literature in reference to the Holocaust. Most of the critics [who did not like the book] were not Jewish writers. This surprised me."

Martel said he has not received any direct comment from a Holocaust survivor on *Beatrice & Virgil*. The book has been translated into French, German, Italian and is coming out soon in Hebrew in Israel.

"Art is a dialogue. It's not a final thing. It's what one person thinks. Can bad art do damage? I say no… You have to trust that, overall, art will transmit something."

But he added, if anyone "hates" the book, he'd like to hear from them.

Folk honours for klezmer act

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Toronto's klezmer sextet Beyond the Pale picked up two honours at the Canadian Folk Music Awards held in Winnipeg on Nov. 20.

The group, which had four nominations, won best instrumental group and the "pushing the boundaries" awards, both for their third album *Postcards*.

"It's very gratifying to be recognized for our work, and in categories that so perfectly represent the essence of our musical approach," Eric Stein, the band's leader and mandolin player, said.

"It's also thrilling to be in a position to help raise the profile of contemporary Jewish roots music by being recognized in such a mainstream context."

The band also won an award for best instrumental group in 2005 for their previous album *Consensus*.

Beyond the Pale also features Bret Higgins, Martin Van de Ven, Milos Popovic, Bodgan Djukic and Aleksandar Gajic.

Beyond the Pale

Arts & Travel

Courtroom musical encourages audience to think

By DAVID SILVERBERG
Special to The CJN

Parade is a Tony Award-winning musical about a Jewish man fighting to absolve himself of a crime.

It's the true story of Leo Frank, a young Jewish manager of an Atlanta factory in 1913 who is accused of raping and murdering a young black girl. Frank is the target of a lynch mob that forces division between white and black, Jewish and Christian.

The trial and conviction form the nucleus of *Parade*, a powerful story director Joel Greenberg is excited to tell audiences at the show's Canadian premiere this month at Berkeley Street Theatre Upstairs in Toronto.

"Not many musicals include a great story and raise uncomfortable issues," Greenberg says. His Studio 180 Theatre and another theatre group, Acting Up Stage Company, are co-producing *Parade*, which won Tony Awards for best book and score after it debuted in 1998.

Greenberg says the story will take the audience by surprise because a city is gripped with fear and stirred into a frenzy to rid themselves of a Jewish man they believe committed a heinous murder. "It's potent stuff," he adds.

Playing the pivotal role is Michael Therriault, a Canadian stage veteran. He calls *Parade* "a unique musical that encourages you to think ... it's sort of an whodunit that's also emotionally engaging."

As tense as Leo Frank's trial becomes in *Parade*, Therriault says the beauty of the musical is Leo's relationship with his wife, played by Tracy Michailidis, which is "complicated because she tries to change her mind about how she views Leo [after he's accused of murder]."

Michael Therriault

Greenberg says Jewish audiences will especially relate to the themes bubbling beneath the surface of *Parade*. "They will have a more visceral response to the story since they're culturally connected to Leo," he says.

The Toronto production of *Parade* has a cast of 15 who will play the musical's 40 roles. It's also being set in the intimate Berkeley Street Theatre, a long stretch from the Broadway theatre where *Parade* first debuted.

Therriault saw the 1990s production, starring Canadian Brent Carver as Leo Frank, and he says he appreciates the different personality a smaller theatre offers to its patrons.

"Audiences get more bang for their buck in this kind of theatre. They walk away remembering what they saw," he says.

Greenberg echoes Therriault's sentiment. "This isn't a toe-tapping theatre. Our hope is that the performance becomes a starting point for conversation, so people will think about *Parade* well after leaving the theatre."

Parade runs from Dec. 30 to Jan. 22, 2011 (opening night Jan.3). For tickets, visit www.canadianstage.com or call 416-368-3110.

Israeli sitcom wins International Emmy

JTA

Ramzor, an Israeli sitcom about three longtime friends and their romantic relationships, won the International Emmy Award for best comedy. The Emmy was awarded Nov. 21 in New York at an International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences awards ceremony.

Ramzor, which means traffic light in Hebrew, defeated entries from Thailand, Mexico and Britain. It was selected as a finalist by a panel of 700 judges from 50 countries.

Earlier this year, the American Fox network bought the rights to the show, which is being called *Mixed Signals* and is scheduled to air starting in February. The American version will be written by Bob Fischer, who wrote the TV series *Married with Children* and the film *Wedding Crashers*.

• • •

Israelis voted off same-sex partners on *Dancing with the Stars*

The end for television sportscaster Gili Shem Tov and professional dancer Dorit Milman came on the third week of this season, the Israeli reality show's fifth on the air.

Shem Tov is a lesbian married to a woman with whom she has a son. Milman,who is not a lesbian, was not aware that she had a female partner until Shem Tov walked into the studio for their first meeting.

The Israeli *Dancing with the Stars* was the first of 35 versions broadcast in countries around the world to have same-sex partners.

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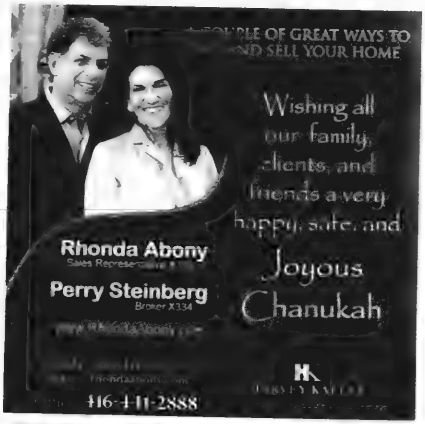

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Israeli-born Badat has the pride of a Lion

By BEN FISHER
Special to The CJN

Alon Badat's Israeli roots are made abundantly clear on the soccer pitch.

As a freshman forward on the newly crowned CIS champion York University Lions, Badat has showcased the aggressive style and hard-nosed work ethic he developed while playing professionally for Maccabi Netanya.

Spending his formative years exposed to the intense, rigid demands of a soccer hotbed like Israel certainly didn't hurt the development of the 20-year-old athlete.

"In Israel, you are pretty much living the game," says Badat. "You are practising basically every day, and there's a constant need to focus and work hard."

That strong work ethic has gotten Badat to where he is today: runner-up as CIS rookie of the year and a significant contributor to the York Lions, a team that recently earned its second national title in the past three years.

At the CIS championships, played at the University of Toronto, Badat collected two points in three playoff elimination game victories, including an assist on team-leading scorer Adrian Pena's championship-winning goal against the UBC Thunderbirds.

Even after having played professionally in Israel, the meaning of the Lions' victory wasn't lost on Badat, a finance major at York.

"Since the start of the season, we had one goal in mind," said Badat. "Thanks to [York head coach Carmine Isacco] and a great group of guys working hard all year, we were able to realize that goal."

There it is again – that emphasis on working hard. Fortunately for Badat, it comes easily for an athlete with his level of passion for the sport.

It was that passion that inspired him at age 17 to return to his birthplace Israel to play for Maccabi, a club that competes in the top tier of the Israeli league.

It was that passion that convinced him to sit out a year in order to comply with CIS rules about former professional players before returning to play for the Lions.

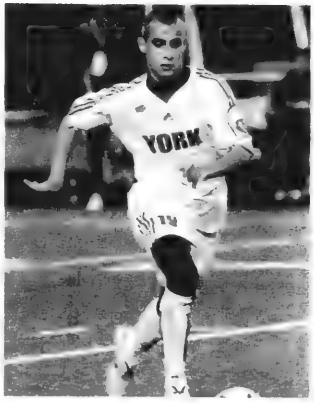
And it's that passion that will see him continue to play the sport for as long as he can at as high a level as possible.

Badat's love of the "beautiful game" is perhaps trumped only by his devotion to family and sense of connection with Israel.

A driven, talented athlete with strong family values and a proud tie to his Israeli roots, he said it's been a struggle for him to choose between his homeland and his Thornhill-based parents, brother and sister.

"I feel that Israel is my true home and where I belong, and I hope to return at some point," Badat said. "But family is my main priority, and staying near them is very important to me."

Already in his young life, he's moved to Canada at age 10, returned to Israel at 17 and then came back last year to play with the Thornhill Soccer Club for one season before joining the York men's team.



Alon Badat

ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Beach volleyball player Sam Schachter, left, was voted junior athlete of the year at the Canadian Sport Awards recently. Schachter teamed up with Garrett May to capture the under-21 world beach volleyball championships in Turkey earlier this year. Past winners of the junior athlete of the year award include hockey player Eric Lindros, boxers Lennox Lewis and Shawn O'Sullivan, and swimmer Alex Baumann. The Canadian Sport Awards are presented annually by the charitable True Sport Foundation and are given to the country's top amateur athletes. Winners are chosen by an independent jury. Presenting the award to Schachter is Victor Lachance, executive director of True Sport Foundation.

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Heritage Toronto marks site of first Mount Sinai

Compiled by CJN Staff

Heritage Toronto's Jewish Heritage Initiative commemorated the site of the first Mount Sinai Hospital Nov. 17 with a plaque that tells the story of the hospital's humble beginnings.

The purchase of the building at 100 Yorkville Ave. in 1922 was the realization of a 10-year dream by the Ezras Noshem Society for a hospital to provide medical services to Toronto's then-burgeoning Jewish immigrant community and a place for Jewish doctors and interns to practise.

"We are extremely honoured to be recognized by Heritage Toronto for our history of providing care for the community. Our history is rich with vision, determination and concern for the well-being of the community. It characterized our beginnings and still drives us today to provide the best possible care for patients," said Joseph Mapa, Mount Sinai's president and CEO.

Mount Sinai is the fifth organization to be recognized by Heritage Toronto's Jewish Heritage Initiative which began in 2006.

Much has changed about the hospital since it first opened in 1923 as the Hebrew Maternity and Convalescent Hospital. The name was changed to Mount Sinai Hospital, and it moved to University Avenue in 1953. It has also grown from 30 to 472 beds and become one of North America's leading medical, teaching and research institutions.

Mount Sinai has also developed a worldwide reputation for excellence in genetic research, women's and infants' health, surgical oncology, gastrointestinal diseases, diabetes, general psychiatry, critical care and cardiology.

Pictured, with the Heritage Toronto plaque from left, are Susan Horvath, president of the Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation; Mount Sinai president and CEO Joseph Mapa; Brian Gluckstein, chair of the Mount Sinai Hospital Founders Society; foundation board co-chairs Michael Bregman and Robert Rubinoff, and Eric Slavens, chair of the Jewish Heritage Initiative.

LOW FAT CAULIFLOWER LATKES

2 eggs + 2 egg whites
1 small onion, peeled
1 head cauliflower, steamed, cut into florettes
2 tbls flour
salt & pepper to taste
non-stick cooking spray
2 tbls olive oil, for frying

In a food processor, chop onion; add eggs until well mixed. Add cauliflower pieces, flour & seasonings and process until finely chopped, do not over process. Spray fry pan with non-stick cooking spray. Put on medium heat. Wait until hot and drop batter by tablespoonfuls into pan. Fry 4-5 min. until firm (or they will break apart), cooked through and browned on both sides.

YIELD: 16 servings. TIP: With each new batch, spray pan with non stick cooking spray. VARIATION: Substitute and/or combine with spinach or broccoli.

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About Life

Dear Ella,

I lost my husband more than three years ago. We were happily married for 44 years, and had two children and five grandchildren. I never imagined I would be enjoying my family alone at the age of 64.

In many respects I still feel like a young woman. I'm healthy, I take care of myself and am financially secure, but the thought of dating like one of my granddaughters is terrifying. It's not so much meeting men or talking to them that scares me. It's the intimacy part I'm not sure I can handle. In fact, I'm not even sure I want to. I do however, miss having male companionship, a connection to someone. How do I go about getting to the latter without participating in the former?

It's a New World

Dear It's a New World

Intimacy has many meanings. It can mean friendship, love, romance or sex. It's completely up to you which one of these options you choose and in which combination. You're in the driver's seat of your life. You control the destination and the speed. Of course, you must take your passenger's feelings into account, but at the end of the day, you're in control.

People can enjoy intimacy of any kind at any age. You are only limited by your mind and physical restrictions. When it comes to intimacy, think of the three "Ts".

Time. There's no need to rush. Allow yourself all the time you need to feel comfortable with every step of the process. This should be an enjoyable journey, not a stressful one.

Trust. You and your partner need to build a foundation of trust before you can move forward. With the development of trust, insecurities begin to melt. Trust must be earned and can't be rushed.

Talk. Communication throughout your relationship is key. Without this last ingredient , the rest falls apart. All three of these elements have to be fulfilled for any relationship, old or new, to work successfully.

People are social beings. They're not meant to be alone, and you're no exception. Don't give in to your fears when you have so much at stake.

You deserve to have a life of your own outside of your children and grandchildren.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, e-mail: ella@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions passed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.

Life is a verb

Life Coach Corner

By JUDY SIBLIN-LIBRACH

You have a huge task – writing thank-you notes or completing a big project, or something that seems overwhelming at first. How do you tackle it, break it down into little parts and make it happen? So, of course you could write 10 thank-you notes a day and you will be done within a few weeks.

Or you could make an agreement with yourself to walk for 30 minutes a day, five days a week, and who knows, before long you could be running a marathon.

But what if you have a dream, and it seems so large and looming, you don't know where to begin? Start by taking some action, and then momentum will come and movement will start to happen. As British prime minister Benjamin Disraeli once said: "Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action."

In the inspirational book *Life Is a Verb*, Patti Digh gives her readers 37 days to wake up, be mindful and live intentionally. So she came up with a commitment to ask herself this question every morning: "What would I be doing today if I only had 37 days to live?"

What she realized from giving herself this challenge is similar to what Steve Jobs (who gave the famous Stanford University commencement address "How to Live Before You Die") once said: "Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life."

It is often so easy for that to happen, especially when that someone is your child or your children and you can easily get swept away by their passions and purpose. So make sure to carve out your own dreams and take your own action for your own dreams and goals.

There's a lovely bit in *Life Is a Verb*, in which Digh suggests taking "action challenges." What are these? Well, as she puts it, "these are designed as quick, immediate reinforcements of the story preceding them. They are 10-minute writing exercises for which you'll need a few pieces of simple equipment: a notebook, a pen you enjoy holding – or a computer with the screen turned off – and a timer with a bell. I recommend buying an 89 cent notebook for these exercises. You'll also want an inexpensive egg timer with a bell so you don't have to interrupt your flow of thought by looking at a watch or clock. And I can't imagine living life without a big wad of three-by-five-inch index cards for capturing ideas, so pick up a pack of those, too."

The free-writing session with a time limit forces you to produce. At the end, circle what Digh calls the "hot spot," the word or phrase that stands out for you. Then she suggests you set the timer for another three minutes and write about that hot spot.

Digh also talks about the six practices for intentional living. They are: 1) Intensity and how to say "yes"; 2) Inclusion: be generous; 3) Integrity: to speak up; 4) Intimacy: to love more; 5) Intuition: trust yourself, and 6) Intention: to slow down. And finally there is a wonderful section on how to "become you."

The book is full of colorful drawings and photographs that are so inviting. And it is all summed up by: "Life is a verb. Say yes. Be generous. Speak up. Love more. Trust yourself. Slow down."

What will you do with the next 37 days? As novelist George Eliot wrote: "It's never too late to be what you might have been."

Judy Siblin-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com; e-mail: judyelle@ican.net.

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Chanukah Greetings

The Canadian Jewish news

Section B

[Flash90 photo]

Spinning through the natural sequence of events

It happens sometimes that scholars explain at length what children understand instinctively.

The dreidel is a case in point.

Sydney B. Hoenig, the noted historian and essayist, has insightfully written that the dreidel "recalls the 'turnover' of events when Judah the Maccabee's few forces vanquished and toppled the many in Antiochus' army. The natural sequence of events was overturned: the strong were spun into the hands of the weak, as enunciated in the Al Hanissim prayer of Chanukah."

Yet, the two laughing youngsters in the photo above, happy and carefree in their guileless delight, know through their fingers that the little top spinning on the table dreis and dreis (spins and spins, round and round) until it collapses, spent of motion, ready to be scooped up again to be spun and dreied once more.

And so they do.

They pick up the dreidel and spin it again. And again.

And as the picture shows, they chuckle and chortle as they do because in their innocent oblivion, the "turnover" of events – the spinning of the top – is fun.

We, on the other hand, the adults in their lives, understand the turnover of events differently, less like our young children and more like the scholars.

It's a serious matter.

Jewish history is, in some sense, a running billboard for the perpetual spinning of the top. In spite of that, or more accurately, because of that, we know that "overturning the natural sequence of events" is never assured.

We celebrate miracles, but we don't rely on miracles.

We try to "coax" them out of their Mysterious Source by involving ourselves in the affairs of man, by trying to influence the flow of human history, by standing up for the values that underpin our way of life, by affirming our steadfast commitment to the sanctity of all human life that is, after all, the ultimate reason for believing in miracles and for trying to help bring them to pass.

For the Jewish People, it has always been the few against the many, the seemingly weak against the seemingly strong.

That is how our peoplehood began.

That has been its hallmark ever since.

Our characteristic unwillingness to submit to overwhelming odds, has been – and is – the dreidel of Jewish history, the little hermeneutical device that our children spin for their amusement and that we spin as a reminder that the very continued existence of the Jewish people can be seen as a constant overturning of the natural sequence of events.

One of the songs our children sing on Chanukah is an uncomplicated two-stanza poem of repetitive, simple lyrics and even simpler message. Very often, two children hold hands and act out the lyrics as they sing the song, spinning smoothly to the instruction of the words. Some sing the poem with just a hint of a minor key sadness as they fall down at the end of the second stanza.

"Come spin with me
I'm a Chanukah dreidel
I spin and I spin
All around

Come spin with me
I'm a Chanukah dreidel
I spin and I spin
And fall down."

We spin too, each day, each generation, dedicated to making our world a very good place in which to watch our children sing, dance and perform.

But we have always risen from the fall, thus overturning the sordid expectations of our enemies and fulfilling, perhaps, the high expectations of God Above.

Happy Chanukah. Chag Urim Samayach. *The editor*

Happy Chanukah

Chanukah in the Forest

By YEHUDA ELBERG
as told to GILAH LANGNER

About five years ago, I had the pleasure of spending many hours interviewing my uncle, the late Yiddish writer Yehuda Elberg, about his life history. Every year since, on Chanukah, I recall the story that he told about his experience in a Polish forest during the Second World War. – GL

After the Warsaw Ghetto was liquidated, I and a few other people who had escaped went to a big, dense forest in eastern Poland to look for Jewish partisans. We tried to sabotage the rails that were taking food and ammunition to the Eastern Front. Night after night freight trains passed. If we could take apart the rails, or take apart the screws, there would be an accident and the munitions or food wouldn't be delivered. We did manage to derail several trains, and one of them blew up because it was loaded with ammunition.

Yehuda Elberg

After that the Germans were really mad and felt the need to liquidate us. We were like a little bug in the eye of an elephant, driving the Germans crazy. They couldn't find us easily; it was a big forest. They brought down an entire division of soldiers to comb the forest to get us. It was winter then, and the Germans could track us through our footsteps in the snow. We were a small group, and we realized that if we stayed together and they caught one, they would catch us all. It was a very dangerous situation and for the first time I was very scared.

We decided to separate, and we divided whatever food we had among us and the ammunition as well. We reminded ourselves to keep a bullet for ourselves. And then we divided the matches. This was a big thing, although it sounds funny, but a match was a treasure. We could always go in the field and dig out potatoes or even steal some, but the matches were our only means of cooking the food. So we divided our small supply of matches, and I got six of them.

One of the iconic photos of the final expulsion of the Jews from Warsaw.

And then we separated.

That night was a very dark night. The darkness was the kind where you felt you could touch it. You could close your fist and the darkness would remain inside it. If I tried to move, I fell over stones or bushes, or I bumped into a tree. I walked a little and then I sat down to rest. I was alone. I couldn't leave the forest because I knew it was surrounded by soldiers, not to mention the soldiers who were inside the forest looking for us.

I was alone, completely alone – and it felt like I was drowning in the darkness. I stretched my legs by crawling around a bit but I had pains and itching all over. I was starting to feel sorry for myself, and this was a dangerous thing because it takes away your energy. It was December, in deep winter, and I tried to think what was going on in the world. I decided it must be Chanukah, and a wave of nostalgia came over me thinking about being home on Chanukah with the children and candles and Chanukah gelt. In Poland, the Jews would light their candles in the windows or in an open door because of the mitzvah of *pirsumei nisah* – to spread word of the miracle of Chanukah.

Tears started to run down my face thinking of this, and because it was so cold, the tears were sharp and freezing. But as I thought about Chanukah candles in the Jewish home, it stopped being a sad thought. I started to imagine that stars were coming out in the sky. You know how some stars are not visible until the night gets darker. I thought: up there in the sky it is also Chanukah, they're lighting the candles! I thought: there are Jews all over the world, and in every Jewish home there are now Chanukah candles burning. If only I could light some too. I put my hand in the pocket of my jacket and touched the matches. I thought, I have matches but where could I get candles!

But then I realized that I didn't need candles – the matches could be my candles.

I lit one match. And then another, and another. I lit all six matches, and I made the blessing, *lehadlik ner shel Chanukah*, and said a *Shehechayanu*. And suddenly the loneliness melted away. I felt that I could see all the candles being lit all over the world and that I wasn't alone.

I think that this saved my life. I had no matches left to make a fire and this was a great loss, but lighting the matches saved me from despair. This was a Chanukah I would remember all my life.

Yehuda Elberg was a Yiddish novelist, essayist, community organizer, and businessman. He established the Writers' Union and Dos Naye Lebn, *the first Jewish newspaper in Poland after the war, and was the author of numerous novels, chassidic tales, short stories, and dramas in Yiddish and Hebrew. His novel* Oifn Shpitz fun a Mast (On the Tip of a Mast, *translated in English as* Ship of the Hunted) *won the Manger Prize for literature, as did* The Empire of Kalman the Cripple. *He won the Prime Minister's Award in Israel for Yiddish Literature in 1985. He lived in Montreal from 1956 until his death in 2003.*

Gilah Langner is a Washington-based rabbi, educator, and chaplain. A full interview with Yehuda Elberg appeared in the 2005-6 issue of Kerem (www.kerem.org).

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FIRST CHANUKAH IN ISRAEL

A family of immigrants from Ethiopia celebrated their first Chanukah in Israel last year at the absorption centre in Mevasseret Zion, outside Jerusalem. A traditional Ethiopian house, a gojo, was [illegible] on the premises. (Flash90 photo)

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Women bond during jeep expedition in Israel

By RENA GODFREY

Somewhere in the Israeli Negev Desert, it's 2 a.m. and I am cocooned in a damp quick-dry towel, desperately trying to fall asleep in my jeep, despite the howling sound of animals nearby.

I feel like howling, too. I'm at my wit's end after listening to my teammate snore like a freight train for hours, in the confines of our tent. I'm shivering. My stomach is in knots as if it's my first day of junior high school. The other women on the trip are already bonding and having fun, little cliques are starting to surface. I feel left out despite my overly friendly and probably overdone efforts.

Most of all, I don't think I can make it through Desert Queen, a weeklong women's jeep expedition in the Israeli desert. I manage to get cell reception and call my hubby crying, hoping he will magically helicopter me out of this mess I've gotten myself into. I finally calm down when my 17-year-old daughter gets on the phone and assures me that I will indeed survive.

In my sleep-deprived delirium, I replay the soft-spoken words of Yifat Yeger, concept manager of the Desert Queen (DQ) jeep expedition, in my mind. She spoke to the 35 eager participants seated on pillows in the middle of Ben Shemen Forest only a few days ago on orientation day.

"On this journey, you will do things you have never done before. You will face many challenges and prove to yourself what you can be." Yeger is a full-time psychotherapist, which would explain the carefully planned series of physical activities intermingled with ingenious ice-breakers and bonding exercises, all beautifully orchestrated into our very full days of jeep driving, or "jeeping" as my new Israeli friends would say."Okay," I said out loud to the rising sun, "I can do this."

I started to think of all the firsts I had experienced on the first day of Desert Queen. I drove a jeep for the first time in my life, negotiated treacherous cliffs and rocks for what seemed like hundreds of kilometres, slid down sand dunes, and shmeared my body with blobs of henna at my first henna party. Yes, I was having a great time, I just needed to let go. In fact, "letting go" and "freedom" were themes incorporated into our daily activities from the very first day.

Desert Queen 2009, a division of Geographical Tours, officially kicked off its second year running in Israel, in partnership with the Jewish Agency, at the Erez Crossing Border into Gaza, where Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit was kidnapped in 2006. His parents, Aviva and Noam Schalit, were present along with the Israeli media, which captured our send-off, as we released white balloons of hope in the air for Gilad's safe return. We then drove away in a convoy of 10 jeeps, in teams of three and four participants, to begin our incredible journey. On this day, and the days that followed, we never knew what the itinerary would be until the very last minute,

Climbing a rock formation in the Negev

forcing participants to let go and free themselves of always being in the driver's seat.

On the second day, after a well-deserved night's rest, I felt like a new woman. I started to relax and enjoy the exquisite landscape around me and befriended some of the most amazing women I have ever come across. My physical limits were put to the test, and the more I pushed myself, the more rewarding my days became. In addition to mastering the art of peeing outside, I boogied whenever the moment grabbed me to Abba's *Dancing Queen*, hiked in some incredible wadis and rappelled 80 feet down the Ramon Crater. The days were full, and so were our tummies. Oh glorious food!

There was a fantastic group of women and men who whisked ahead of us throughout the day to prepare a celebration of Israeli cuisine fit for a queen. One night, in the dark, we stopped our jeeps and saw lanterns, which led us up to a Nebetian fortress. There, we discovered a beautiful display of yummy yogurt fruit parfaits and this was only a snack. The team's creativity and humorous antics never ceased to amaze us all. Every day we dined under the sun and stars on tables with colourful linens, eating skewers of grilled chicken, beef and fish, hearty beef stews, aromatic and nutrient rich vegetable soups, a multitude of perfectly chopped Israeli salads, and always a healthy dose of hummus.

Continued on page B5

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We experienced the golden sun rising over the Negev

Continued from page B4

As I settled into my newfound DQ groove, I became smitten with the participants who ranged in age from 20 to 60. These beautiful queens who captured my heart were a mixed group of mothers, students from abroad, a few middle-aged Americans, and me, the token Canadian. They left behind their families, friends and jobs, in search of a break from their busy lives and the opportunity to meet other women. There was no shortage of accolades for this unique women's expedition, which also takes place in exotic destinations outside Israel.

Laurie, a pediatric nurse from Pennsylvania, was certain that the valuable experiences gained would not have happened if she hadn't signed up for DQ. "This has been a 'growing' experience for me, and it has helped me to look at some fundamental points in my life and what I need to work on," she said.

For Yana, an entrepreneur who splits her time between Germany and Israel, DQ was about "liberty, freedom and friendship" and the ability to "laugh like a child again."

For Israelis Hana, Merav and Etty, jeep driving and meeting women from abroad was the attraction.

Our expert Israeli guide, Vered, was our fearless leader who carefully directed us up steep hikes through wadis, along the way filling our expanding minds with historical and ecological anecdotes. Together, we built a fence in a nature reserve, and also cycled one morning at 4 a.m. in total darkness.

Toward the end of our ride, we climbed to a peak, to experience the golden sun rising over the Negev, splattering the sky with pinks and purples. In the near distance, we saw a bountiful breakfast luxuriously displayed under a canopy only befitting 35 queens.

The surprises continued and one evening we jumped into our jeeps, followed the lead car for only a few kilometres, jumped out, and were handed lit torches. After we walked down a path surrounded by sand dunes, we were met by two camels that had just delivered our delicious Bedouin prepared dinner of roasted chicken, salads and homemade pita.

Navigating the terrain

A campsite of our tents. ***[Rena Godfrey photos]***

My most memorable evening by far was our last night in the desert. A storm was brewing. Gusts of wind threw our tents from side to side, and sand poured into my sleeping bag, into my mouth and eyes. It started to rain, and I buried myself in my sleeping bag, hoping I could weather the storm. The DQ team worked swiftly through the night to make sure our tents were safely secured, but for some reason, mine was not. Lucky for me, Vered, grabbed me and my belongings and rescued me to her sturdy tent. I couldn't help but think back to the beginning of the trip, and how alone I felt. Although I was still sleeping in a tent, I now felt completely at home.

The next morning, happy and heavily dusted, we ventured out of the majestic desert for the last time. We had truly entered civilization and welcomed the use of a real toilet at an army base, where women soldiers taught male soldiers to drive tanks.

A few hours later, we pulled into the Royal Tulip Hotel in Eilat, for a luxurious final night. That night, I drifted off to sleep with a huge grin on my face, thinking about Yeger's closing remarks: "What did you learn from this journey?" A question I am still in the process of answering.

For certain, I haven't experienced this delicious tingling feeling of being myself – my old self – pre-responsibilities, pre-children, for a very long time. What a privilege to be able to pause, learn, and then move on to a new journey.

For more information about Desert Queen, visit www.malka-net.co.il.

Rena Godfrey is a freelance writer based in Toronto.

Happy Chanukah
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Russia then and now

By WENDY EISEN

The 1917 Russian Revolution ended centuries of Czarist rule and transformed Russia into a socialist republic based on Marxist-Leninist ideology. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) established a new order of alleged equality in which the people worked for the state and all democratic institutions were suppressed.

Communism may have worked well for industrial and technological advances in the USSR, but it did not work well for most of the people. The single-party government denied its population basic rights and freedoms. Soviet citizens lived in peace if they toed the party line, but were oppressed if they did not.

Under the Communist regime, religion was replaced by atheism as a fundamental ideological goal of the state. Religious property was expropriated and believers were harassed. Those who wished to practise their religion and cultural traditions were forced to do so in secrecy.

Within two generations, most Jews had become assimilated, but their Jewishness never disappeared. The letter "J" for "Jude" was stamped in their internal passports.

Antisemitism was not a new phenomenon in Russia. Jews had been scapegoats during Czarist times. Blamed for society's ills and economic miseries, they were banished from major Russian cities to the Pale of Settlement, a confined area that included present-day Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Moldova and Ukraine. There they were easy targets for government-sanctioned pogroms as thousands of Jews were massacred and Jewish shops and synagogues destroyed.

Under Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, life for Jews was no better. Hebrew and Yiddish publications were banned, synagogues were converted into storehouses, and Jewish schools and organizations were shut down. Antisemitism peaked with the murder, in 1952, of 26 prominent Yiddish writers and poets.

During those dark days for Soviet Jewry, the chassidic Chabad Lubavitch movement worked clandestinely, teaching Orthodoxy to Jews in large cities and small towns across the Soviet Union, with the goal of helping them retain their roots.

Israel's victory in the 1967 Six Day War inspired a handful of assimilated Soviet Jews to apply to emigrate to their historic homeland. Upon applying for exit visas, these newly emerging Zionists lost their jobs, were denounced as traitors and became victims of a vicious antisemitic campaign.

Soviet refusal to grant visas strengthened Jewish resolve, and the community of Refuseniks, as they were dubbed, began to grow in size and determination. These few hundred heroic Jews, who dared to defy the world's most powerful totalitarian regime, were under constant surveillance by the KGB, and arrests were made at the slightest provocation. Jews in the free world took up the struggle, using their freedom to speak out for those whose voices were silenced.

* * *

The Soviets' attempt to suppress the Jewish movement by jamming free-world radio programs and cutting telephone lines made travel to the USSR an effective means to obtain names of Jews who requested invitations from Israel and names of those whose applications for exit visas had been denied.

In December 1978, a friend and I visited with Refuseniks in Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev. Many were renowned academicians, privileged members of the Soviet elite, who were living in limbo, wasting the most valuable years of their professional careers. While we sat together in their cramped apartments, the tears in our eyes met the tears in theirs as they relayed details of harassment and arrests. The feeling was of gloom and despair, particularly for those who had been refused for years on end.

The KGB disrupts a demonstration by Jews in Moscow in 1988.

Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel ebbed and flowed with the ebb and flow of U.S.-USSR relations. The Jackson-Vanick Amendment, passed in the U.S. Congress in 1974, linked trade credits with emigration and was largely responsible for keeping the emigration door ajar.

In April 1988, I returned to the USSR with a small group of prominent Canadians. Despite the fact that "Glasnost" and "Perestroika" (openness and restructuring) brought optimism, some Jews whom I had met a decade earlier were still waiting to leave. For others, anguish was mounting as threats of compulsory army service for their sons threatened to delay their emigration for many more years.

A demonstration took place outside Moscow's Lenin Library. Within minutes, two KGB officers arrived on the scene and broke it up. So much for Glasnost!

Cries of "let my people go" were heard across the ocean as quiet diplomacy between the Soviet and free-world governments took place behind the scenes. Freedom was getting closer.

This grassroots movement played no small part in placing the issue of human rights on the world agenda, and along with economic devastation and political unrest resulted ultimately, in the collapse of the Soviet Union. On Dec. 25, 1991, the red flag bearing the hammer and sickle, which had flown atop the Kremlin for 70 years, was lowered for the last time.

With the parting of the Iron Curtain, Jews were free to leave the country of their birth. Emigration figures escalated steadily, and during the next decade more than1.5 million Jews left the former Soviet Union, with one million settling in Israel.

"Operation Exodus" became the focus of the United Jewish Appeal's annual fundraising campaign, to help cover the cost of bringing Soviet Jews to Israel and absorbing them into Israeli society.

* * *

Twenty years have passed. Totalitarianism has been replaced by a free-market economy. Dark, drab clothing has given way to vibrant, stylish fashions, and in public places, citizens engage in animated discussions, in direct contrast to the sombreness of the past.

Continued on page B7

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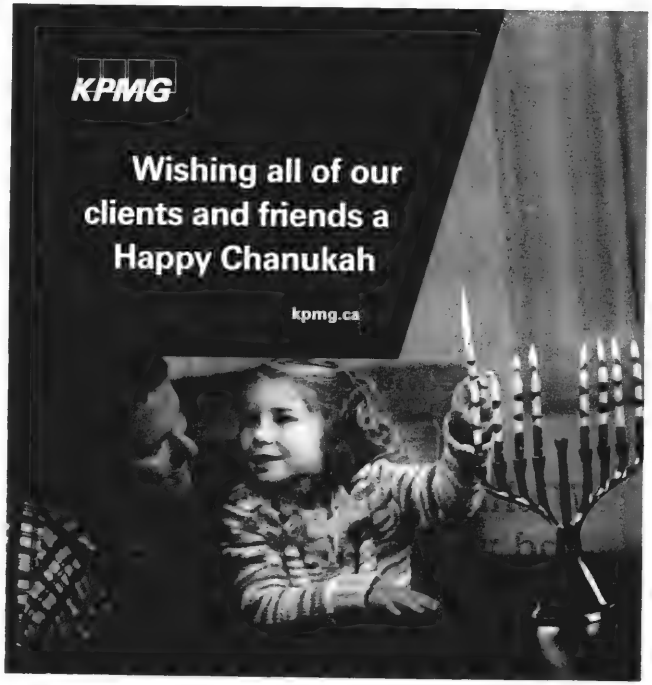

Jews have options today to stay or to leave

Continued from page B6

I was among 40 participants who returned recently as part of a UJA Federation of Greater Toronto mission to the former Soviet Union, to mark the 20th anniversary of Operation Exodus. The spectacular sites in Russia's two largest cities paled in comparison to the miracle of the resurgence of Jewish life.

Today, there is a vibrant Jewish presence in St Petersburg and Moscow, home to 100,000 and 300,000 Jews respectively. The Jewish Agency for Israel and the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee work together to revitalize Jewish life. Their activity, aimed at strengthening Jewish identity, is repeated in dozens of Russian cities.

Dilapidated synagogues have been restored and new ones have been built, offering choices of traditional rabbinic Orthodoxy, Reform Judaism and chassidic Lubavitch worship. Authentic Russian cuisine may be found in a number of kosher restaurants, and Jewish community centres feature state-of-the-art kindergartens as well as educational and cultural programming for young people and middle generation adults. A network of social services provides care for the impoverished and the elderly.

Israeli emissaries continue to inspire, connect with and empower Jewish youth. Teenagers are elated with their newly found Judaism. They attend Jewish summer and winter camps, youth programs and leadership training. Thousands have visited Israel on Birthright trips, and many have spent a year studying in Israeli high schools. Israel-oriented programs and Hebrew classes encourage aliyah to Israel, particularly among the young.

There is a familial role reversal in Russia today: children are teaching Jewish traditions and customs to their parents.

Many Jewish leaders choose to remain in Russia. They have created organizations that meet Jewish needs, similar to those in the West. Privatization has provided opportunities for Jewish entrepreneurs to achieve financial success. Their philanthropy has contributed to the construction of many Jewish institutions and synagogues, one of which is the new Holocaust Memorial Synagogue, located in an area west of Moscow.

Russian Jews have options today: to stay or to leave. In 2009 and by the end of 2010, 14,000 Russian Jews will have immigrated to Israel, 34 per cent of whom are under the age of 25. With antisemitism proliferating around the globe, problems could escalate in Russia and emigration will increase once more.

Among the memorable moments in the Soviet Jewry campaign was one that occurred in Brussels, in 1976, at the Second World Conference on Soviet Jewry. There, former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir asked rhetorically: "What is it that antisemites can't forgive us? What is the greatest of our faults? We refuse to disappear. No matter how strong, brutal or ruthless the powers against us might be, here we are! Millions of bodies have been broken, buried alive and burned to death, but never was anyone able to break the spirit of the Jewish people."

Natan Sharansky, the most celebrated Jewish prisoner, who became the symbol of the Soviet Jewry movement, demonstrated this unbreakable spirit during his 3,255 days of incarceration in Soviet prisons and labour camps. His passion for Zionism triumphed over any attempt to repress it.

Sharansky, whose initial journey from the USSR to Israel took 13 years, flew from Israel for one day to join our group in Moscow. Currently serving as Israel's chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, Sharansky spearheads the effort to reinforce the bonds between the Jews of Russia and the State of Israel.

On Nov. 4, the Israeli government hosted a moving ceremony in the Knesset to honour the Refuseniks and activists from around the world, applauding the glorious achievement that changed the course of modern Jewish history.

Wendy Eisen is the author of Count Us In — The Struggle to Free Soviet Jews.

Kindergarten children celebrate Sukkot at the Jewish Cultural Centre in Moscow in October 2010.

The letters on the dreidle stand for "ness gadol haya sham – a great miracle happened there," but those of us who are part of the Na'amat family are responsible for creating small miracles every day.

This holiday season, we ask you to play a part in fulfilling the wish of a child, teen, or woman in Israel who is desperate for their small miracle to come true. Please give with your heart and help better their lives.

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At the Knesset, a candle for the Russian Jews

By SUE FISHKOFF
JTA

It was December 1982, and my kibbutz ulpan had just been invited to light the Chanukah menorah for the Israeli Knesset. The Israeli army was deep in the heart of Lebanon, the Cold War was raging, talks with the PLO were years away, and Israel was feeling both isolated and feisty. Freedom from oppression was the theme for that year's holiday, and my six-month work-study ulpan program had been chosen for this annual honour because we had so many students from countries where Jews were being oppressed.

There was an 18-year-old, Ahuva, from Aleppo, whose jaw had been broken by Syrian border guards when she was caught during her first escape attempt. She made it out the second time – on foot.

There was 19-year-old Daoud, now David, and his twin brother, Ofer, who grew up Muslim in Beirut and only learned they were Jewish that summer, when their Israeli-born mother revealed her heritage, divorced her Lebanese husband and dragged the twins to Israel as its army poured across their border.

We had the three French boys in the class: Charlie from Morocco; Michel representing Tunisia; and Didier, whose parents were Algerian.

There was a student from Iran who fled after the fall of the shah three years earlier. Another student claimed Egyptian ancestry – good enough for the Knesset – and one young man from Glasgow also would light a candle, presumably in the name of Scottish independence.

I might argue that the student from Paris who refused in class to use the Hebrew word "olah," or "ascend" to describe her move to Israel, on the grounds that any departure from Paris could only be a descent, also was living under oppression. She just didn't know it.

The only thing we were missing was a student from the Soviet Union. The Iron Curtain had shut tight in 1980, few new immigrants were arriving and we were some years away from the great exodus of the early 1990s. Not a single Boris or Natasha to add to the mix.

Then I let slip that I spoke Russian. And my grandparents were from Ukraine – sure, they arrived in 1906 and 1912, but our ulpan teacher was eager to seize upon any connection, however tangential, to clinch that Knesset deal.

> *'I thought back to my first trip to the USSR'*

She renamed me Sonia Pitchkopf and instructed me to prepare a short speech to deliver, in Russian-accented Hebrew, as I lit my candle.

After the laughter died down in class, I realized the enormity of what I had signed on for. This was no Purimspiel. This was the Parliament of the Jewish state, and here I was, tasked with pulling a fast one over on men and women, some of whom certainly spoke Russian, or at least were capable of sniffing out a ruse of this magnitude.

As I began writing my speech, I thought back to my first trip to the USSR. My Russian class from Cornell University landed in Leningrad on Dec. 31, 1975, and as so often happened with Jewish visitors from the West in those years, I found myself in a Jewish apartment within hours of my arrival, plucked out of the crowd by a young Jewish member of the Komsomol group sent to greet us.

The table was spread with a lavish repast – mushrooms in cream sauce, pickled vegetables, carrot salad, all kinds of smoked fish. I learned later how long the family had scrimped to put together that holiday meal. People crowded around me, eager to ask questions about America. Was there really so much street crime? What did people think of the pullout from Vietnam? Had I ever been to Israel? I had stars in my eyes, so excited was I to be in the forbidden land of Cossacks and Bolsheviks, the centre of such rapt attention.

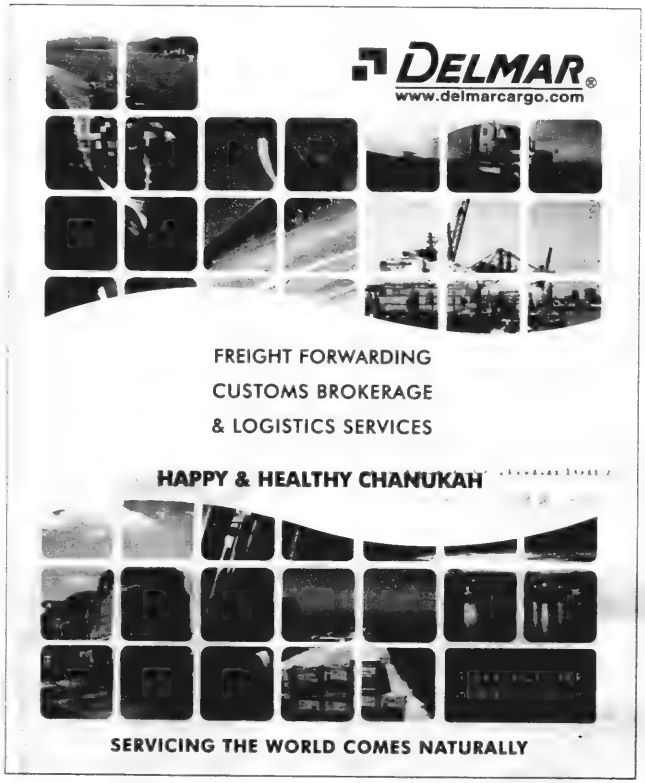
Then two young men dragged out a book and thrust it into my lap. It was an English-language edition of the *Encyclopedia Judaica* they had opened to the page on Chanukah. One of them pointed to a drawing of the nine-branched Chanukiyah and asked me to explain its use.

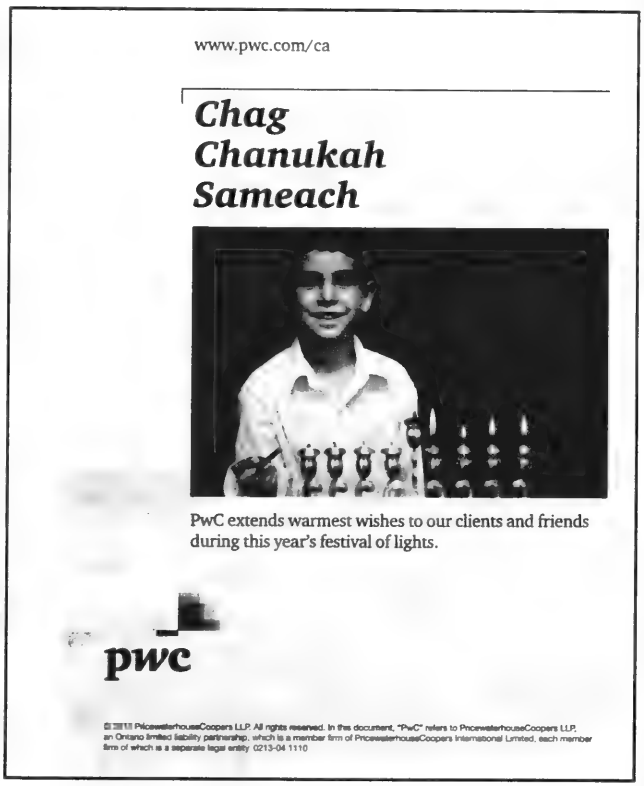
Thinking he was joking, I smiled. These were university educated people. This was the 20th century. He had to be pulling my leg.

He wasn't. And I'll always remember my shock and sadness as I realized it. So here I was, on my Israeli kibbutz, purporting to masquerade as people whose pain and isolation were so very real? I couldn't do it. I wouldn't.

My ulpan lit the Chanukah candles that year on the floor of the Knesset building in Jerusalem. And when my turn came, I was Sue Fishkoff, not Sonia Pitchkopf. And I lit in the name of my own grandparents, free in America, and in the name of the five young men I had met that night in Leningrad.

Two of them already were living in New Jersey. The others were still in Leningrad, now St. Petersburg, as late as 1996, the last time I visited them. And my ulpan friends called me Pitchkopf for the rest of the year.

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Happy Chanukah

Finns show solidarity with Israel

Supporters of Israel in Finland recently took to the streets to show their solidarity with the Jewish state. The inscription on the T-shirt is "I too wait for Gilad," referring to Gilad Schalit, the Israeli soldier who was captured by Hamas in a cross-border raid in 2006. The writing on the poster being held by one of the supporters is the traditional rallying cry of the Jewish People: Am Yisrael Chai. The people of Israel lives!

Wishing everyone a warm and Happy Chanukah

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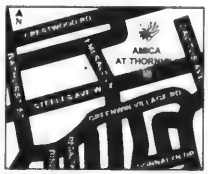

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A Russian winter and the Festival of Lights

By CURT LEVIANT
Special to The CJN

It was deep into the bitter Russian winter of 1843. My great-great-grandfather, Chaim Leviant, then a youngster of 15, was driving his grandfather Moshe's horse-drawn sleigh along the snow-covered roads not far from Kariukovke. This shtetl in Ukraine was noted for its sugar factory owned by the well-known Jewish millionaire and philanthropist, Brodsky.

In another hour or so the first light of Chanukah would be kindled at the house of Chaim's grandparents, where the entire family was gathered to sing songs, play dreidel and eat Grandmother Dobbe's crispy potato latkes.

The snow had finally stopped. The late afternoon sky was clear. The roads, the roofs, the trees were white. The fields were endless sheets of white. All was silent, except for the music of the little bells in the horse's harness; the snow so deep that even the falling of the horse's hooves made no sound.

Young Chaim drove carefully. He knew that during the winter, drivers had to follow three crucial rules: dress warmly, never leave the path – and never ever fall asleep. Yes, he had heard of faithful horses who brought sleeping drivers home. But he also knew the tales of tragic accidents – a slumbering driver could fall from his perch, land in the snow, and not be seen again until the spring thaw.

At the behest of his grandfather, Chaim had just delivered a goose, dried beans, flour, oil and potatoes to a poor Jewish family in a neighbouring shtetl. Grandfather Moshe was a wealthy man who supplied the sugar factory with beets. He owned his house, but he leased the land on which he grew the beets, for Jews were forbidden to own land in Russia.

Curt Leviant

Despite the bearskin great-coat and blanket on his feet, Chaim was cold. To counter the chill in his bones, he thought of the Chanukah lights and of his grandmother's latkes. He began to sing, "I'll soon be home to celebrate" to the tune of *Maoz Tsur*.

Chaim held the reins as the sleigh glided along. Suddenly, he glimpsed something on the edge of a snowdrift. Could that be a fur hat? "Whoa!" Chaim shouted, tugging at the reins. The horse stopped. Yes, a fur hat. The youngster jumped off the wagon. He picked up the hat – but his heart nearly stopped at the fright of what he saw beneath it – a gloved hand. "My God!" Chaim cried. He quickly began to dig in the snow with his hands, until he saw what he saw: a boy of about 12 or 13, wearing the fine clothes of the gentry.

Chaim put his ear to the boy's chest and nose; he was stunned but breathing. As he lifted the lad into the sleigh, Chaim surmised what had happened. A snoozing coachman, very likely drunk, had dropped the reins and the unrestrained horses had set off in a gallop. Then – a rut in the road, and the lad must have tumbled out into a snowbank while the sleigh sped on.

Chaim patted the boy's face. He rubbed his hands and chest. He took off his own bearskin coat and wrapped the boy in it, then placed some blankets around his feet. Over his own shoulders Chaim draped another blanket like a tallit.

"Can you hear me? Can you hear me?" Chaim asked. But the boy's eyes remained closed. When the sleigh began to move, however, Chaim heard a faint moan.

"Father, father," the boy whimpered.

"You're safe," Chaim said. "Who is your father? What is your name? Tell me."

The boy answered slowly. "Arkady… Ivanovich… Goluptsin. I fell off our coach."

"Ivan Goluptsin? Our provincial governor?"

"My father…"

Following the boy's instructions, my great-great-grandfather Chaim made his way to the Goluptsin winter mansion. He knew he was late for Chanukah lights; he had passed the turn-off for Kariukovke long ago.

A servant opened the door, took one look and shouted, "He's here. Master, he's here." Arkady's mother and the governor rushed into the warm, brightly lit entranceway. They saw a tall boy supporting their son, who was wrapped in a huge bearskin coat they did not recognize.

Arkady was laid on a sofa, and his mother began rubbing his face and hands, while two servants removed the bearskin and the boy's leather boots. Another attendant came with two glasses of hot tea on a silver tray, for the boy and for Chaim.

"He saved me, Mama. He found me. He saved me, Papa."

"We've sent messengers to all the police stations," said the governor. "And that idiot of a coachman still hasn't come back… Who are you, my boy?"

Continued on page B11

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The coin is worth far more than its weight in gold

Continued from page B10

"I am Chaim Leviant from Kariukovke."

"Oh, yes, where Brodsky has his sugar plant. I know Brodsky well. Do you know who I am?"

"Your son told me."

"How old are you? Sixteen?"

"Actually, I'm 15."

"You are tall for your age, Chaim, and so grown up, too." The governor put his hand on his heart. "Thank you, thank you for saving my son's life. Come with me, please."

Governor Goluptsin put his arm around Chaim's shoulders and led him into a spacious dining room. A large, glittering chandelier lit with many candles hung over a long mahogany table. "Why are you hesitating, my boy? Come with me."

"Sir, if you don't mind... I... I am late. Our entire family is waiting at my grandfather's house, ready to celebrate our holiday, Chanukah. I should have been there an hour ago, and they must be worried."

"I can understand that worry, Chaim," Goluptsin said. "We ourselves..." and he broke off, holding back tears. He motioned to Chaim. "It will only be a moment."

My great-great-grandfather Chaim followed the governor of the entire Kiev district into his office. An oil portrait of the czar hung behind Goluptsin's gleaming desk. "Please sit down."

The governor opened a drawer a placed a purse on the desk.

"I know it is your holiday and it is your custom to give coins to the children." He smiled.

"This I learned from Brodksy. Chaim, how many grandchildren does your grandfather have?"

Chaim began counting to himself. Yakov, Israel-Noah, Mendl, Tanya, Rachel, Rivka, Dvora and Boris. And Zvama and Kalman, Lazar and Isak, Shmayke and Hillel and... until he reached 18, including himself.

The governor counted out 18 of the large, heavy, five-ruble gold coins and spread them on the desk. The coins glittered in the light. Chaim knew that an average worker's wages were a ruble a month.

"Sir," Chaim said, "please don't think me ungrateful, but I don't want to be rewarded for the mitzvah of saving a life. The Talmud teaches us that when someone saves one life it is as if he has saved an entire world. This alone is my reward."

Governor Goluptsin looked at Chaim. "Hmm. I see... Well, then, is there anything I can do for you?"

"Yes," said my great-great-grandfather Chaim, and the prompt response must have surprised the governor. "As you know, sir, Jews are not allowed to own land in Russia, except under rare and very special circumstances. You said you know Brodsky. Our family does business with him. They have always wanted to buy land to cultivate more sugar beets and plant more crops. With this land we could provide jobs for many people in the area."

"So how can I help?"

"Could you get my family permission to buy a tract of land outside Kariukovke?"

For a moment the governor was silent. Chaim thought that surely he would say it was out of his hands. Then Goluptsin's face brightened.

"Chaim, you have my word. Come back in three days. I shall contact the Imperial Bank in Kiev and the documents will be prepared... And thank you again for good deed." Then the governor smiled. "And don't forget your bearskin greatcoat."

• • •

When he arrived at his grandfather's house, Chaim saw no Chanukah lights in the window. But a dozen faces were pressed to the glass and a few people stood outside. Now, for the second time in an hour, Chaim heard the cry, "He's here... he's here."

Inside, the warm house was filled with the aroma of potato latkes. His mother and father kissed and embraced him, and he felt himself hugged from all sides. At that moment Chaim knew what a dreidel felt like, being spun and turned in every direction. And then he quickly told his story.

"Now we can light the first light," said the beaming Grandfather Moshe. "We waited and we worried, but we didn't want to light the first candle without you."

Then Grandmother Dobbe came in with a large platter of latkes, saying, "Right after the blessings we eat."

The menorah was lit, and the shamash candle and the first flame glowed in the house. After the songs were sung, Grandfather Moshe gave Chanukah gelt to all the children. As they sat on the floor playing dreidel for walnuts, Moshe called my great-great-grandfather Chaim into his study.

"You refused the governor, but you won't refuse me, eh?" Moshe said, smiling. Then he pulled a coin from his pocket. "This five-ruble gold piece is for you. When the time comes, give it to your first-born son and tell him to pass it to his son, along with this story."

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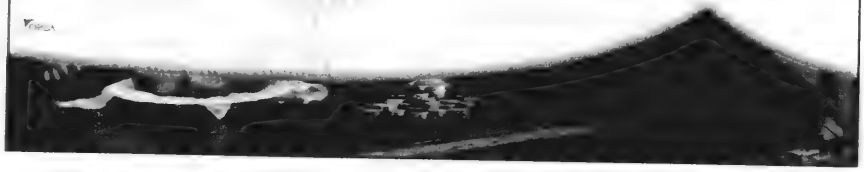

Happy Chanukah

Discoveries during a visit to Berlin...

By RUTH LADOVSKY

Visiting Berlin was something that I had thought about for a number of years. What sparked my interest was meeting two Israeli couples just after they had spent four days in Berlin. When I asked them what they thought of Berlin, their response in unison was, *Mashehu Mashehu!* (really something)

As I often do, I set about to prepare myself for this exciting city. I wanted to explore not just the city's past, but its vibrant present. On a visit to the German National Tourist Board's Toronto office, a young Berliner suggested that I first explore Berlin from the water by taking a boat tour on the Spree River (pronounced Shpree). Great Idea! The trip allowed me an excellent overview of the many architectural masterpieces along the river, with a wonderful explanation and interesting history. The water trip took me from West Berlin to East Berlin, past so many of the landmarks that I knew that I would be visiting later – the cupola of the Reichstag building; the Friedrichstrasse Station, which first opened in 1882 and served as an intersection between East and West Berlin from 1960 to 1990; the magnificent Museum Island with its impressive collection of museums. The Berlin Cathedral and the television tower came in to view, and always visible was the gilded dome of the Oranienburgerstrasse shul.

Berlin is home to many outstanding museums and very famous landmarks. There are numerous cultural centres and memorials and so many places of interest, but what made Berlin so memorable for me was the time that I spent exploring different neighbourhoods.

One such neighbourhood is Prenzlauer Berg. Here I could identify many of the landmarks that I had read about in a novel called *The Book of Clouds*, by Chloe Aridjist. From the Senefelderplatz station of the Ubahn, I walked north to the Friedhof (cemetery) Schonhauser Allee, which should be on every Jewish visitor's itinerary. This cemetery has existed since 1827, and you can see by the dates on many of the headstones, that prior to the war, the Jews of Berlin were not only great in number, but lived long lives. Many important Berliners – entrepreneurs, scholars and artists, including Max Liebermann, are buried there. The cemetery is covered in ivy and moss, and all around, the tall trees were filled with singing birds. It's a place of peace and beauty and memory.

After the cemetery I visited the Rykestrasse Synagogue... the oldest synagogue still in use in Berlin, built in 1902-1904. It has been restored and with 2,000 seats it is today, the largest synagogue in Germany.

The mosaic jewel tones surrounding the bimah create a magical universe all of their own.

Late in the afternoon I decided that it was time to enjoy one of the cafes in the area, and once again, Chloe's book led me right to the south end of Rykestrasse, where I saw the Wasserturm (the watertower) and across from the Wasserturm is Pasternaks restaurant .....a perfect spot for an outdoor meal.

From there, another long walk took me to the East Side Gallery....it's a stretch of the Berlin Wall that has survived to become the world's longest open-air gallery. Painted on the wall are artworks by 118 artists from 21 countries. It's quite far east, so on the return I took the SBahn and listened with pleasure to the recorded announcer's voice calling out the stations.

The magnificient dome of the Rykestrasse Synagogue

The author at the East Side Gallery

Continued on page B13

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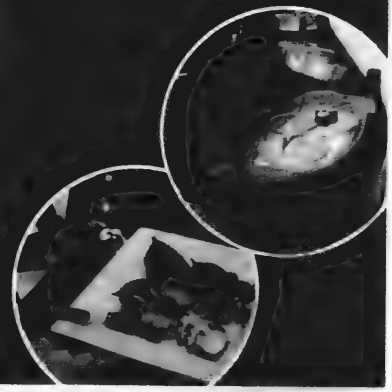

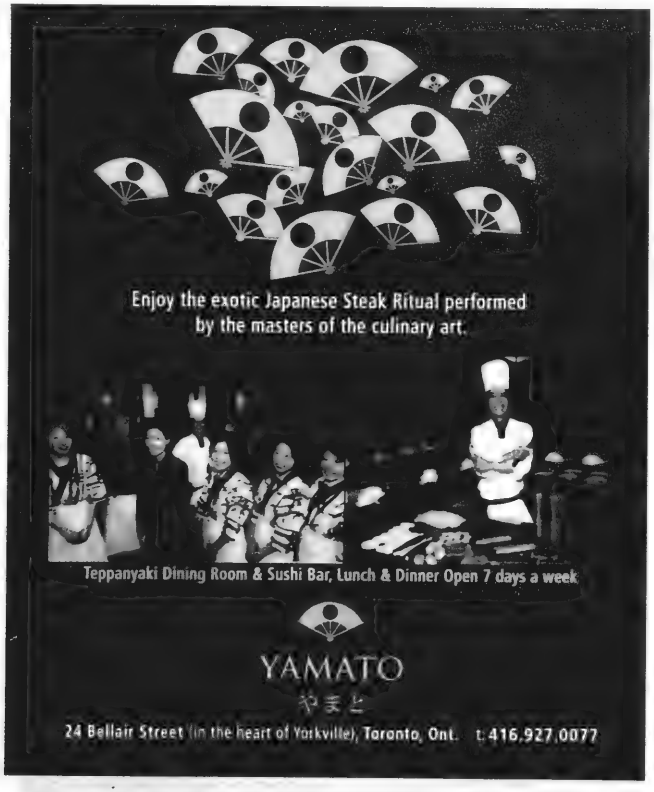

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... synagogues, coffee houses and a cemetery

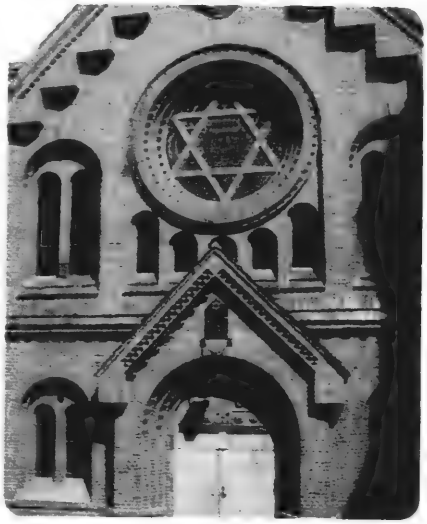
Continued from page B12

Unter Den Linden is a main east-west thoroughfare through the city of Berlin. It earned its name from the rows of linden trees that were first planted more than 3 1/2 centuries ago. On a Sunday, I particularly enjoyed the Boxhagener flea market, just off of Unter den Linden.

Early morning walks in Tiergarten park, as Berliners cycle by to work, and similarly, early walks through the city, allow you a different perspective without the crowds of tourists. While enjoying Pariser Platz and the landmark Brandenburg Gate, I peeked past the front doors of Frank Gehry's pale sandstone Dz-Bank Building to catch a glimpse inside of one of Gehry's trademark fish....a huge whale reminiscent of the waterfront fish he designed for Barcelona's Olympic games.

I travelled by train to Wannsee, and on the return, I took the time to stop at Track 17 in Grunwald. Being an independent traveller allows you time to linger over documents in the Wannsee Conference centre, without feeling a need to move on until you're ready.

In Berlin, there are treasures to be found off courtyards not usually visible from the main streets. One of those treasures is the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue in Charlottenburg. The Shabbat morning service allowed me a connection to the Jewish community now living in Berlin. I felt a rush of emotions as Romanian-born Cantor Izhak Shaffer came out on to the bimah wearing his regal style chazanut hat and gown.....it has been a long time since I have seen a cantor on a regular Shabbat morning wearing clerical robes. The Pestalozzistrasse shul is a gorgeous synagogue...built 1911-12, with a nice size minyan of regular shul goers. An e-mail from their director told me that their service is 'liberal / conservative', meaning that women and men sit separately and women cannot have an aliyah. An organist accompanies the chazzan and conducts a mixed choir of eight, whose beautiful voices filled the hall from above the bimah.



Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue in Charlottenburg

As if that weren't enough, one of the men who had an aliyah was a former opera singer from Russia....his *Borchu* soared like an aria! Inside the aron kodesh, the Torahs were magnificently dressed in highly polished silver breast plates and crowns.

At the end of the service, there was a full sit down kiddush lunch....open faced smoked salmon sandwiches and cream cheese , egg and herring and warm conversation. Two Israeli women tourists were also at my table over lunch and the conversation easily moved from Hebrew to English to include all.

Another treasure off a courtyard in the Mitte district is the museum of Otto Weidt's Workshop for the Blind. In this small shop that made brushes, Otto was able to hide and save many families. Not far from this museum, are the sculptures on Rosenstrasse.....a memorial of the Rosenstrasse protest where Aryan women were successful in securing the release of their Jewish husbands.

While visiting the Berlin Jewish Community Centre, I was introduced to two *shlichim*....representatives for the Keren Hayesod for Germany and for all of Europe. In speaking with both of them, we discovered that we had a connection. One of them had been a classmate with some kibbutz friends of mine. The other man told me that he had visited Toronto in 1986 (24 years ago) as a Beit Halochem vet..... Miki and his group had been a guest of my father!

When he said....."I remember you, and I remember your father," I have to agree that this trip to Berlin was *Mashehu*, *Mashehu*!

Ruth Ladovsky lives in Toronto and is a seasoned traveller and hiker.

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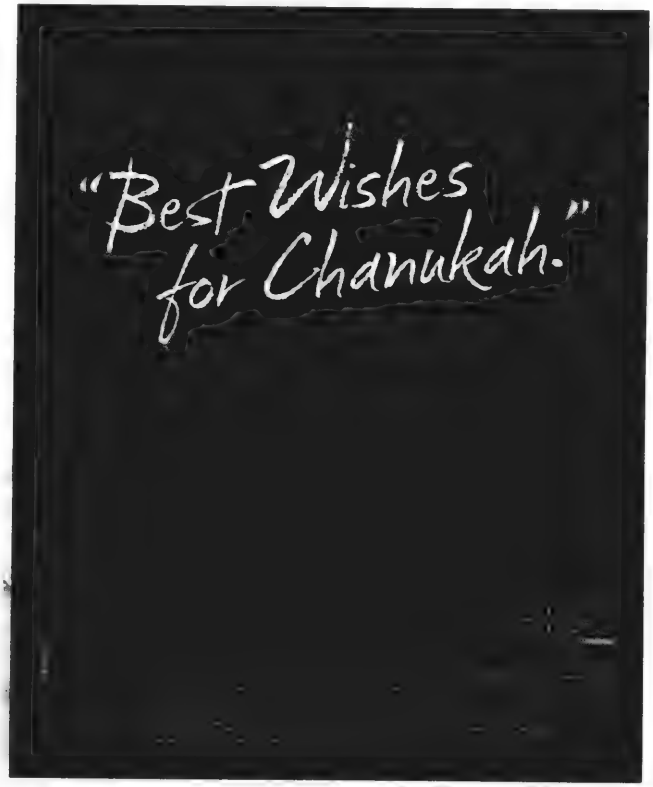

Happy Chanukah

A tale of two monuments

By LAURENCE WEINBAUM

In 1938, following a meeting with Adolf Hitler, Poland's ambassador to Germany, Jozef Lipski, reported to his minister back home that the fuhrer had spoken of solving the Jewish problem in Poland and central Europe through mass emigration. "I told him," wrote the Polish diplomat, "that if he finds such a solution favourable we will erect him a beautiful monument in Warsaw."

A short time later, Hitler and his countrymen solved the Jewish problem in Poland, not through mass emigration but through mass murder. To be sure, there were not a few Poles who saw the Final Solution as the only beneficial aspect of an otherwise horrific occupation that ravaged their country – even as other Poles, though far fewer in number, and at risk of their lives, sought to rescue their Jewish neighbours from certain death. Through it all, Poles had fought the Germans ferociously from the first day of the war to the last and paid an enormous price in blood and property.

After the war, and groaning under a hated regime imposed by Moscow, Poles did not build a monument to Hitler, yet many were satisfied that the Jews had disappeared from the landscape. Indeed, in successive years they did their part to ensure that the remaining Jewish remnant was successively diminished, through acts of antisemitism at the grassroots level and also in the corridors of power.

Over time, the memory of Jews was consigned to oblivion, excised from public consciousness and kept out of the history books – even as Poles slept in Jewish houses, ate off Jewish china, played Chopin on Jewish pianos, and rocked their babies in Jewish cribs.

Last October, a group of Jewish intellectuals and activists was invited to Warsaw to take part in a conference organized by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs devoted to public diplomacy and Polish-Jewish relations.

Continued on page B15

The artist's rendition of the museum being built in Warsaw that will be dedicated to Jewish history in Poland.

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Happy Chanukah

Today antisemitism is considered boorish and shameful

Continued from page B14

The exchange of ideas was free and frank and the Polish hosts could not have been more hospitable, nor more sensitive to Jewish concerns. There is no doubt that in the 20 years that have elapsed since the collapse of Communism, a new Poland has emerged one in which the preservation of Jewish memory is considered a national priority, and is expressed in innumerable and often unexpected and moving ways.

Beyond the memory of the ever-present dead Jews, there are also live ones. In fact, one would be hard pressed today to find another Jewish community of its size as vibrant as that which exists in Poland. Stanislaw Krajewski, who did so much to revitalize the Jewish life, asserts, these are Polish-Polish Jews (as opposed to Polish Jews living outside Poland) and are deeply rooted in the culture and country of their birth.

To be sure, as in the rest of the world, antisemitism has not disappeared. Just days after the end of the conference, an act of verbal violence, in which one professor at the Maria Curie Skladowska University labelled another "You Jewess!" was the talk of Lublin.

Yet the very fact that such an incident was front-page news, and that some of the students reacted forcefully says much about the new ambiance in Poland. Another example is the one-woman campaign against a bookshop

The monument to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising by Natan Rapoport.

in a Warsaw church basement purveying anti-Jewish screeds. Largely thanks to the indefatigable efforts of Zuzanna Radzik, a modern-day Polish heroine who began her struggle in 2001 when she was but 18 years old, the Antyk bookshop was finally and unceremoniously ejected from the church premises.

Today, despite the existence in certain quarters of negative views about Jews, antisemitism is considered boorish and even shameful – at least in polite society. Moreover, no other post-Communist society has even come close to confronting its own culpability (whether through acts of commission or omission) and many of those countries bear considerably greater responsibility for Jewish suffering than Poland does. Today, whatever its shortcomings – including its failure to conclusively deal with the issue of Holocaust-era Jewish property – it is Poland that is Israel's staunchest friend in Europe.

Paradoxically, until very recently, it was widely believed that Poland's entry into the European Union would, as the scholar Joanna Michlic claimed in her recent book on anti-Jewish prejudice, strengthen the civil and pluralistic model and reduce antisemitism. A case can be made that positive developments in Poland have taken place despite what is going on in the EU and not because of it. Certainly, where relations with the Jewish state are concerned, the western European paradigm is not one that we would want to see replicated in Poland or anywhere else for that matter.

On the last day of the conference, we were taken to see the site of the magnificent new museum of Polish Jewry that is under construction in Muranow – the vast housing estate that arose on the ground where the ghetto once stood, the place in which the most dramatic act in the history of the Jews of Warsaw was played out. The strikingly modern edifice, the work of two little known Finnish architects, has largely been financed by the government of Poland and the city of Warsaw – and faces the emblematic 1948 ghetto monument built by Natan Rapoport. Presumably, most of the visitors to the new museum, and certainly the school children, will know nothing about a very different monument that had once been contemplated.

Laurence Weinbaum is the chief editor of the Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs *and was a guest of the Polish Foreign Ministry.*

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Happy Chanukah

Roman Jewish community is alive and vibrant

By DAVID MEILACH

In the year 1555, the Italian Inquisition and Catholic Counter-Reformation engulfed the community of the Roman Jews. Pope Paul IV issued a papal law or canon titled *Cum nimis absurdum*. ("As it is completely absurd and improper in the utmost that the Jews, who through their own fault were condemned by God to eternal slavery which they deserve.")

With this, the ghetto of Rome was born. Jews were compelled to live in seclusion, humiliation and despair in an enclosed area of the *rione* (district) Sant'Angelo along the banks of the often overflowing Tiber River.

Approximately 4,000 people were held captive within four small city blocks – locked in at night, allowed out only during the day. On leaving the ghetto, male Jews wore a distinctive yellow pointed hat (the *sciamanno*) while the women wore a blue scarf, the visual sign of the prostitute. The Roman Jews were allowed to practise only unskilled vocations: they were ragmen, secondhand dealers, fishmongers and pawnbrokers.

The ghetto had five gates. One gate was at the Portico d'Ottavio on the Via Portico d'Ottavio, which today is the main street of the Jewish quarter. A second gate was opposite the Santa Maria della Pieta church, on whose facade is inscribed a quote from Isaiah 65:2-3 which out of context takes on an antisemitic vigour. ("I have stretched my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, that walk in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts; a people that continually provokes my wrath.") The remaining gates were on the Via della Fiumara and at the Piazza Guidea.

A side street in the old Roman ghetto area

Surrounding the ghetto, churches were erected, often assimilating part of the ghetto wall within their structure. Compulsory church attendance led some Jews to fill their ears with wax in order to block out the proselytizing sermons. The ghetto was not struck down until Italian unification in 1870.

The history of the Jews of Rome is unusual and thus intriguing in other respects. Descendants of the first Jews to arrive in Rome in 161 BCE still survive. Judah Maccabee sent delegations to Rome to secure trading rights, and some stayed. Roman sources state that Jews were present at the funeral of Julius Caesar, a friend of the Jewish population.

When Emperor Vespasian and his son Titus laid waste to Jerusalem in 70 CE, both slaves and the booty from the Temple were transported to Rome. The Temple artifacts paid for the construction of the Roman Coliseum. Arguably, the Roman Jewish community is the oldest in Europe.

Although there was an influx of Sephardi Jews from Andalusia to Italy following the advent of the Spanish Inquisition and the expulsion of 1492, the descendants of the original Roman Jews claim to be neither Sephardi nor Ashkenazi. The order of their synagogue liturgy and music has noticeable variations (*nusach Italki*).

Continued on page B17

The famous relief on the Arch of Titus in the Roman Forum showing the transportation of the Temple artifacts to Rome.

Happy Chanukah

A great city

The pedestrian zone in the present Jewish quarter of Rome

Continued from page B16

The Great Synagogue of Rome (home of the Italian chief rabbi), completed in 1904, overlooks the current Jewish quarter. Here, in 1986, Pope John Paul II made his historic visit.

A distinct Roman-Jewish dialect arose where Hebrew words were given an Italian twist. To eat became *akhlare*, to steal became *gannaviare* and the word for goodness became *tovezza*.

The Roman-Jewish community did not suffer Nazism as others did. On Oct. 16, 1943, 2,000 out of 13,000 Roman Jews were transported to camps. Roughly 80 per cent of Italian Jews survived the war. It is with pride that the older Roman Christian population speak of their ability to thwart the deportations.

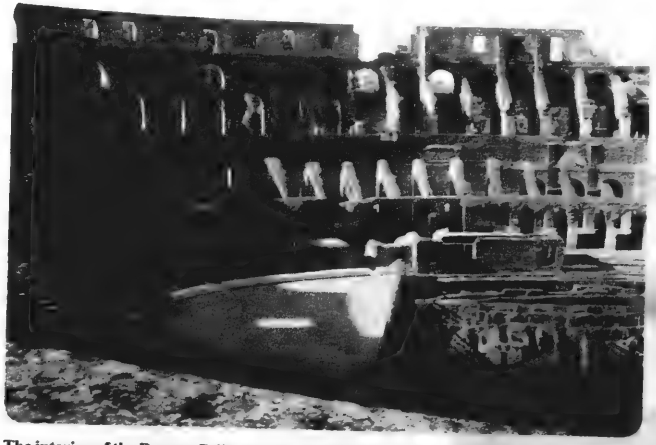
Today, the Roman-Jewish community is alive and vibrant. There are 15,000 Jews living in Rome (Communita Ebraica di Roma) with 13 active synagogues, including a Libyan synagogue for the Jews who arrived after the Six Day War.

Only a small remnant of the original ghetto wall remains, yet the Jewish quarter houses kosher bakeries, Judaica shops and restaurants serving famous Jewish specialties such as fried artichokes (*carciufi alla giudia*) and fried codfish. The Jewish Museum housed within the Great Synagogue displays artifacts of Roman Jewish life through the past 20 centuries.

Rome itself is a great city of the world, fascinating for historians, art and architecture enthusiasts, food and wine connoisseurs and, of course, shoppers.

Visit www.italytravelista.com/jewishrome.

David Meilach is a freelance writer.



The interior of the Roman Coliseum, which was paid for from the booty of the Jerusalem Temple, destroyed in 70 CE and where many Jewish slaves met their deaths.

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20 Jewish cantors walk into a church – it's no joke

By RUTH ELLEN GRUBER
JTA

Can Jewish sacred music sung in a Roman Catholic basilica help relations between Christians and Jews?

For the Reform movement's American Conference of Cantors, the answer is a resounding yes.

Twenty Reform cantors from across the United States travelled to Rome this month for just that purpose, performing a unique concert of Jewish prayers and sacred texts at the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli e dei Martiri, a cavernous church adapted by Michelangelo from the ancient Baths of Diocletian.

"We are here as spiritual emissaries, not political emissaries," said the president of the cantors conference, Susan Caro of the Wilshire Boulevard Temple in Los Angeles. "We recognize the power of music to transform as well as reach across cultural and religious lines."

The concert, titled "To God's Ears," was organized by the New York-based Interreligious Information Center in cooperation with Cardinal William Keeler, the emeritus archbishop of Baltimore, who is the basilica's cardinal priest.

"Presenting music of the synagogue in churches in order to reach the laity could develop into something very, very worthwhile in interfaith relations," said the Interreligious Information Center's executive director, Gunther Lawrence.

Lawrence said several cathedrals in the United States and Britain already had expressed interest in similar concerts.

The Nov. 16 performance featured a range of prayers and texts set to both traditional melodies and music by composers dating from the Renaissance to the present day.

Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli e dei Martiri

In welcoming remarks, Monsignor Renzo Giuliano, the regular priest of the basilica, introduced the 90-minute concert as a journey into the "profundity of the liturgy," saying it was "very important to be here together and praising our God."

The cantors, about half of them women, hail from California, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Arizona and Texas.

Dressed in black, but each wearing a sometimes colourful tallit, they sang in a vaulted side chapel against the backdrop of a crucifix, flickering candles and a wall-sized painting of the Madonna and child.

Before each piece, a cantor stepped forward to describe the selection, explain its place in the Jewish religious service and provide information about the musical setting.

"Our goal was to educate people in Jewish culture and Jewish synagogue culture," said Cantor Roslyn Barak of Temple Emanu-el in San Francisco, who helped co-ordinate the event. "We feel that through music you can heal, make friends, touch people, reach out."

U.S. ambassador to the Vatican Miguel Humberto Diaz called the initiative "a wonderful opportunity.

"Any kind of art, especially music, is a way to bring people together for the sake of the common good," he told JTA.

Diaz and the Rev. Norbert Hoffman, the secretary of the Vatican's commission on religious relations with the Jews, were among the few dignitaries in attendance.

Highlights of the concert included an arrangement of the *Adon Olam* prayer by the Renaissance Italian-Jewish composer Salamone Rossi, and a stirring rendition of *Sim Shalom* by the Berlin-born 20th-century composer Max Janowski, which featured Barak as soloist.

The concert also included the world premiere of *Mah Ashiv Ladoshem-Quid Retribuam Domino*, a setting of Psalm 116 with words in Hebrew and in Latin, by Cantor Erik Contzius of Temple Israel in New Rochelle, N.Y. Contzius, a member of the American Conference of Cantors, did not take part in the concert.

Jewish secular artists have performed on a number of occasions at Vatican events, but traditional cantors probably would not perform in a church. Longtime observers of Jewish-Catholic relations said it was likely that the concert marked the first time a cantorial group had performed such a concert in a Roman church.

"Italian traditional cantors would not, as far as I know, perform in a church, and I know of no instance when this ever happened in the past," the Italian-Jewish musicologist Francesco Spagnolo, curator of collections at the Magnes Museum in Berkeley, Calif., told JTA.

The concert was the centrepiece of four days of meetings in Rome organized by the Interreligious Information Center for the cantors and more than two dozen accompanying family members and other members of their congregations.

The group met with seminarians at the Vatican's Pontifical North American College and attended Pope Benedict XVI's weekly public audience. They also toured Rome's ancient Jewish ghetto and met with Rome's chief rabbi, Riccardo Di Segni.

That meeting also was a form of religious dialogue.

Italy's Jewish community is Orthodox, and although there are a few small Reform congregations in the country, the Reform denomination is not recognized by the Italian Jewish communal organization. Di Segni did not attend the concert.

Cantor Claire Franco of Port Washington, N.Y., one of the co-ordinators of the concert, said Di Segni had been gracious to the group and answered its questions.

"But he was clear that there are boundaries that they won't cross," she said. "We are Reform cantors and we are very proud of this. That's who we are – and half of us are women."

Several cantors noted that interreligious matters were part of their hands-on experience as Reform cantors, as many members of their congregations were intermarried.

Franco noted that she was the child of a Christian father and Jewish mother.

"I grew up as one of the few Jews in a small town in Florida," she said. "I knew what being a minority was, what it meant to have to explain who we are. So I am committed to teaching community."

To watch a video of the cantor's concert, visit bit.ly/bbvAfg.

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Happy Chanukah

Ve'ahavta shines at volunteering in Israel

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

Toronto-based Ve'ahavta, a non-profit humanitarian and relief organization dedicated to assisting the needy both locally and in 15 countries around the world, was singled out for its work at the first ever Leadership Development Through Service Study Tour in Israel this week.

The tour, held by Masa (Journey) Israel, the Jewish Agency for Israel's flagship hub for more than 200 long-term (five months-plus) Israel experience programs, brought together representatives from 18 different North American volunteer organizations to learn about volunteer and social activism opportunities in Israel to include in their program rosters; share best practices in the fields of volunteering, leadership development and community service; and help Masa integrate leadership development into its programs in Israel.

"We chose to invite organizations that have the most experience in leadership development and service," said Avi Rubel, 38, North American director of Masa. "Ve'ahavta has a lot of experience in empowering young people to get involved in [volunteer] service."

Kirill Zaretsky, 33, director of development at Ve'ahavta, was proud to participate. "We have 15 years of experience inspiring young people to change the world and we're happy to share our perspective on how to inspire youth to become leaders in their communities and build a connection to Israel," said Zaretsky.

"Canadians tend to be very quiet and modest about our volunteerism, though there is a natural tikkun olam both inside and outside the [Jewish] community. This is something unique. We should stand up and be proud of what we do in the volunteer world."

The lone Canadian organization to participate in the meet-up, Ve'ahavta was joined by Teach for America, Peace Corps, City Year, the American Jewish World Service, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and Hillel, to name a few. "This [tour] is a revolutionary concept, both for Israel and for the NGO world as a whole," said Zaretsky. "It's the first time an organization has brought so many volunteer professionals from North America together to roundtable on how to engage youth, and how to create leaders through the service industry."

> ***'We want Israel to be a place where more and more young people feel they can be of service'***

In addition to bringing the NGO representatives together to compare notes, the meet-up aimed to encourage the non-profit leaders to include Masa programs on their volunteer opportunity rosters, and thereby increase the number of Jewish youth participating in meaningful community service in Israel, one of the Jewish Agency's new primary mandates.

"We want Israel to be a place where more and more young people feel they can be of service and have a connection here," said Rubel. "Birthright Israel opened the door for so many young Jews to get a taste of this country, and now that they've gotten a taste we want them to come back for a longer, deeper, more meaningful experience."

The group visited several Masa volunteer program sites, including the Ashelim student village, one of 11 run by the Ayalim Association, which connects volunteers to kids and at-risk youth in communities in the Negev and Galilee; the Yahel Social Change Project, which connects volunteers with opportunities in the Ethiopian community in Gadera; and the Tikkun Olam Project, a volunteer organization focused on coexistence projects in Jaffa.

"It [the tour] really opened my eyes to what's going on in Israel. I'm amazed by the number of NGOs here. I'm amazed at the culture of volunteerism in Israel, and at the commitment to Israel expressed by volunteers participating in the programs. I am also inspired by the partnerships between the volunteer organizations and the Jewish Agency, and how [this partnership] enhances the projects themselves and supports the volunteers," said Zaretsky.

Ve'ahavta, which has sent volunteers to Israel and established funds, such as the Support Israel Fund, created at the end of 2008 to purchase much needed emergency medical equipment for the Soroka Hospital in Be'er Sheva, then under heavy rocket attack from Hamas in the Gaza Strip, intends to expand its Israel volunteer program.

"We have always been committed to Israel and now we're here to increase it, and commit more of our economic and volunteer resources to Israel," said Zaretsky. "Part of the secret to [the success] of our tikkun olam work is in giving people opportunities, connecting them to really good projects and organizations that are making real changes in the world."

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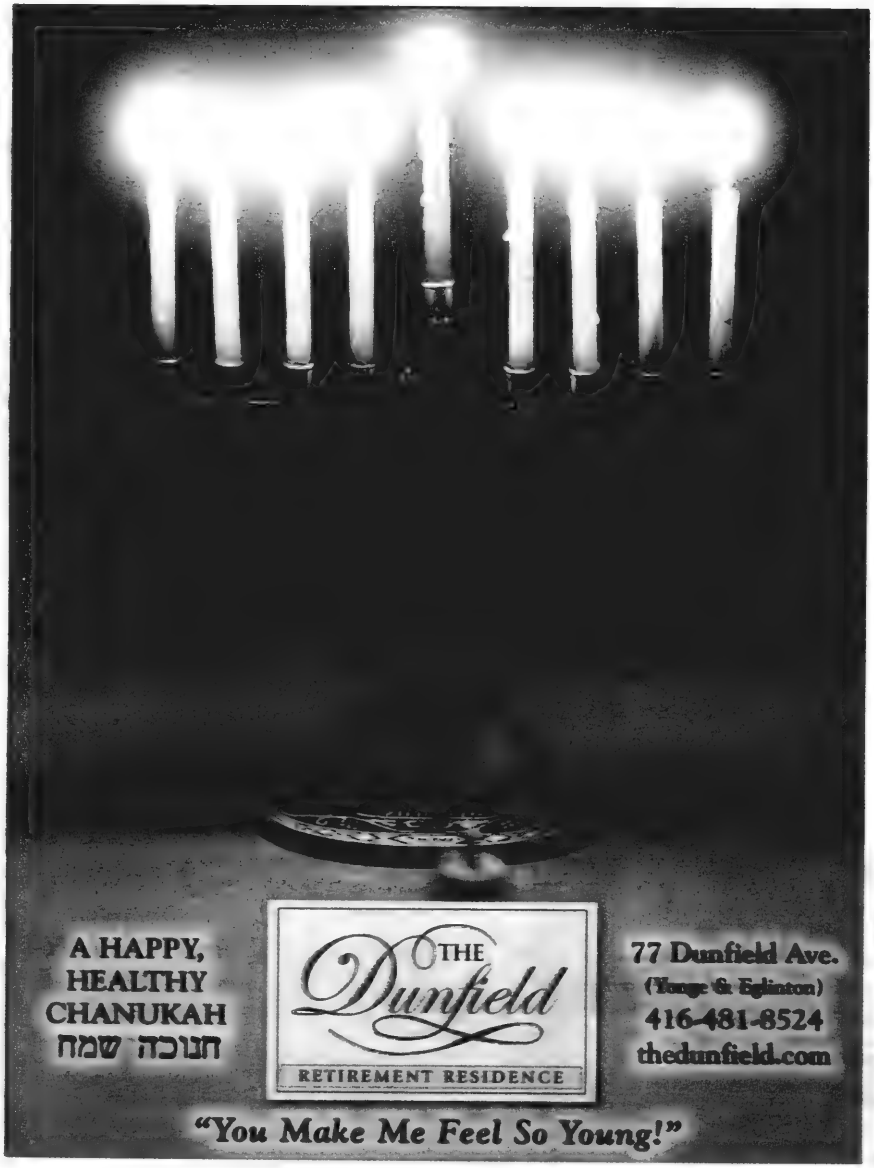

Showing mettle with the pedal

More than 100 cyclists – 60 from North America and 50 disabled Israeli veterans – recently took part in Courage in Motion, a five-day cycle-a-thon in northern Israel. The cycle-a-thon supports Beit Halochem, the Israeli organization that cares for disabled soldiers of the Israel Defence Forces. Cyclists chose one of two routes for their charitable pedalling: one over 300 kilometres and the other more than 500 kilometres. The group raised in excess of $350,000 (Cdn) for the Beit Halochem Centres in Israel. At the end of the five-day marathon, the 60 North American cyclists donated $15,000 for the purchase of three tandem bicycles.

One of the participating disabled veterans, Edov Toren, wrote the following letter about the annual event.

"This was my third year participating in Courage in Motion. It is a heartwarming special experience for everyone and a unique opportunity to discover what Israel and its people are about.

"The spirit of the people who come from abroad to cycle with the Beit Halochem members is more than inspiring. While Courage in Motion provides significant funds to Beit Halochem, it is about more than fundraising, it is about love.

"When I cycle with Courage in Motion, my love for sports, Israeli history and the beauty of the land develops a new meaning. As we cycled through the Golan Heights, I thought of the bitter battlefield it has been, in contrast to the peaceful and beautiful place it is now, a land of advanced agricultural settlements, wineries and cycling paradise!

"At night when we sat on the balcony of our hotel in Tzfat, looking east I could see the army base where my 20-year-old son, Tal, is serving as a tank commander. To the west I could see the shore line and border of Israel. That is how small this country is. But it is the only country we have!

"Israel is our country and vital to our existence as a people. Courage in Motion is about saying thank you for your sacrifices to those heroes who have been injured, ensuring that our country continues to be here for us.

"I want to thank everybody from abroad who came to Israel to 'just do it' and express their love and support by cycling with us. I encourage everybody to join us in 2011 and experience this unique and special opportunity."

Above is a photo of the Courage in Motion participants. *[Beit Halochem photo]*

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The Israel Government Tourist Office recently launched a new advertising campaign in Toronto. A luxury six-wheel bus that ferries travellers between Toronto's Pearson International Airport and several high-end hotels downtown has become a display ad for the State of Israel. One side of the bus shows images of Jerusalem, the other of Tel Aviv. "The exposure [for Israel] will be enormous," Oded Groman, head of the Israeli tourist office in Toronto, told *The CJN*.

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Chag Sameach!

Wishing you and those you love a very Happy Hannukah and all the best of health and happiness in 2011!

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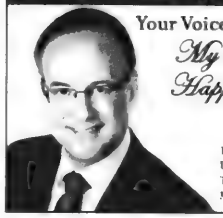

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Israeli international development agency serves the global village

By ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN
Israel 21c

Haim Divon was just eight years old in 1958, when Israel launched MASHAV, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Agency for International Development Cooperation.

If as a child he had contemplated such matters, he might have found it curious, even audacious, that Israeli leaders already felt prepared to share their know-how with the rest of the developing world. At the time, his Jerusalem family was still experiencing food shortages and austerity rationing that would not end until 1960.

But as deputy director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the current head of MASHAV, it makes perfect sense to him.

"I heard [first Israeli Prime Minister David] Ben-Gurion talking about our moral obligation to share with others at a time when we had no food and had to absorb more people than our actual population," Divon recounts. "He was a pragmatist but also a philosopher. That is where I come from."

Putting Israel's own creative solutions at the disposal of developing nations, MASHAV took on the same weighty objectives that the United Nations more recently formalized as its priority development goals: poverty alleviation; food security; sustainable development; empowerment of women; child and maternal health; social equity; environmental sustainability; and upgraded public health and education systems.

Since 1958, MASHAV professionals have trained some 200,000 participants from approximately 140 countries in Israel and abroad, and developed dozens of demonstration projects worldwide in fields of Israeli expertise.

Divon, a 35-year career diplomat, took the helm at MASHAV in 1995. He brought with him experience from postings in Bombay, Ethiopia and Sri Lanka.

"It was more than eye-opening to see what was happening out there," he says. "What hits you is the real meaning of poverty and human suffering. In the Western Hemisphere we live in a bubble, and we don't grasp the real challenges of this global village of ours, which is getting smaller."

An attorney by training, Divon had long been excited by the idea of diplomacy. "We had no TV as kids, but our parents subscribed to *National Geographic* magazine, and I lived off it," he recalls. In addition, many of his physician father's patients were in Israel's Foreign Service sector, and the young Divon relished hearing about the exotic places they had visited.

Haim Divon

"What a way to serve the country!" he remembers thinking. "I love people and communication, and I feel that I can bring a different face of Israel wherever we go. You have to know the people to know the country."

After serving as Israel's ambassador to Canada, Divon returned to MASHAV in 2005. He is now steering the agency in a new direction, orienting its staff to find out exactly what each country needs from Israel rather than continuing with a blanket educational approach.

Up until around the year 2000, he explains, MASHAV would offer similar projects such as drip irrigation year after year, and people from many countries were invited to come and learn. This approach was not without positive outcomes, particularly in the area of general goodwill.

Divon explains: "Many people, when they come to Israel, are affected by CNN and BBC headlines, and their families don't want them to come here. Often we receive them at the airport, and they are shocked that the airport is so nice. Then they leave the airport, and they are shocked to see that we have real highways. At some point, they say, 'Wait a minute! This doesn't fit with what we thought.' On top of that, there are friendly people here who provide solutions for them. They leave as enthusiastic and huge admirers of Israel."

But Divon began wondering what participants did with their newfound knowledge when they returned home. Did they make real inroads in agronomy, animal husbandry, emergency preparedness and education? Or did they simply go back to sitting in a government office cubicle with little more to show for the experience than personal admiration for the Jewish state?

Continued on page B23

Happy Chanukah

'In spite of our difficulties, we are able to move forward'

Continued from page B22

If the goal was to be "active change" rather than "attitude change," MASHAV's mode of operation needed dramatic overhauling.

"If you look back 50 years, so much money was poured into so many countries and where are the results? We realized that participants in our programs have to be agents of change, and there have to be goals," Divon continues. "We had to change. And most of the big aid agencies overseas, such as the UN, adopted the same new approach."

Today, MASHAV is a demand-driven agency. "We ask, 'What are the needs of your country?' and then we assess how we can help. They have a macro picture of how we can fit our strengths to their needs. By co-ordinating better with our partner countries and with third parties, we have a better chance to succeed."

Because his own life has followed Israel's trajectory from poverty to plenty, Divon keenly appreciates what it takes for a nation to succeed: "I didn't know what a mango or an avocado was when I was a kid. I ate a mango for the first time when I was posted in India. And now, one of our programs is helping India improve their mango crops."

Foreign agencies such as US-AID lent Israel assistance along the way, and Divon believes that Israel is obligated to return the favour – even if it still has its own struggles. "Americans didn't say, 'We have our own homeless, so we can't afford to assist others.'"

Beyond practical solutions, he adds, Israel also strives to convey the spirit that continues to see it through rough times. "All the experts who come to Israel divide the question in two: 'What are your approaches and technologies?' and 'Where does your spirit come from?' In spite of our difficulties, we were able to move ahead, and so can they."

A visiting Indian government minister recently composed a poem in homage to his host country, Divon says, adding, "I'm proud that small Israel is a place others want to learn from because they see tangible results."

Divon met his New York-born wife, Linda, when she came to the Hebrew University on a one-year exchange program in 1969. "The one year turned into 40," Divon says with a smile.

The Divons live in the Jerusalem bedroom community of Mevasseret Zion. But because of their frequent and broad travels, he refers to his family, which includes three grown children, as "citizens of the world."

Linda has been involved in projects wherever they go, such as a Canadian "peace camp" for Israeli and Palestinian children that grew out of their youngest daughter's vision. This power couple belongs to a line-dancing club and also enjoys ballroom dancing. "For me, the best way to unwind is with aerobics," Divon says.

He truly needs his energy. Divon also is the CEO of a government company, Igud, which provides MASHAV with a platform to run extension centres in Israel and to recruit Israeli experts who form its permanent nucleus. And he personally oversees the development of tailor-made programs for specific countries.

One of the newest projects is helping Kisumu, Kenya's third-largest city, to establish a strategic planning unit to empower periphery cities. After an Israeli MASHAV affiliate devised a concept that was enthusiastically endorsed by Kenyan officials and the international donor community, the Kisumu mayor arranged to come to Israel for a study tour. Bringing change agents to Israel remains a key part of the strategy.

"We have a nursery project in Ethiopia, so we brought the head agronomist here to see what we are doing in biotech and irrigation – anything related to his nursery's needs," says Divon. "He learned how to develop a state-of-the-art nursery to grow the highest-quality mangoes and avocados for export."

Continued on page B24

On behalf of the Mayor and Council of Richmond Hill

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Happy Hanukkah!

From Members of the Ontario Liberal Caucus

Frustrated by lack of media recognition for agency

Continued from page B23

Ethiopia's rural farmers are the backbone of the national economy. "so they must boost their quality and diversity for local consumption, and exports must meet certain standards. We can show them how. We must be linked to development programs at the country level so we can support and enhance them with whatever we're good at."

Medicine is another area Israel is "good at." Adding to a long string of medical missions in many countries, MASHAV recently facilitated the creation of neonatal and intensive care units at hospitals in Ghana and Kenya and will be establishing an ICU at a hospital in Haiti's capital city. This summer, it hosted a contingent of educators from Moscow. "You had to see their enthusiasm. They were full of appreciation," says Divon.

However grateful recipients of MASHAV aid may be, however, Divon is frustrated by the lack of media recognition for his agency's far-reaching work. Conflict, he observes, makes for more attractive news than does co-operation.

"Imagine how people would look up to Israel if every activity in every country we are involved in would get front-page headlines," he says. "In the developing world, they appreciate our help. When there is a natural disaster, we quickly mobilize and send experts, and their doors are open. We have good approaches to alleviate suffering. But Israel is still perceived as a country of receivers."

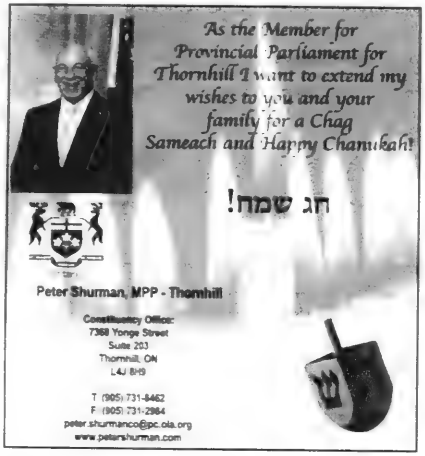
A recent case in point is MASHAV's aid mission to the city of Sange in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Following a July 2 fuel tanker explosion, resulting in the deaths of more than 250 people and injuries to almost 200, MASHAV dispatched a delegation of six doctors from Sheba Medical Center with medical equipment – before any other country responded.

The result of such efforts gives Israel accessibility for future projects, notes Divon. "The road is open to other possibilities that every ambassador is looking for." Yet even these high-profile achievements have little effect on negative attitudes toward Israel, including at the UN, he points out.

Divon's many aspirations for MASHAV are not easy to achieve on a total budget of about $20 million – an amount the Minister for Foreign Affairs would like to triple. Demands for Israeli know-how continue to grow, especially now that Israel is a member of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

"We're putting our emphasis on human capacity building rather than infrastructure, because we believe that is the best and most effective investment," Divon says.

MASHAV sent a delegation of Israeli ophthalmologists to Georgia to help people suffering from eye diseases. *[MASHAV photo]*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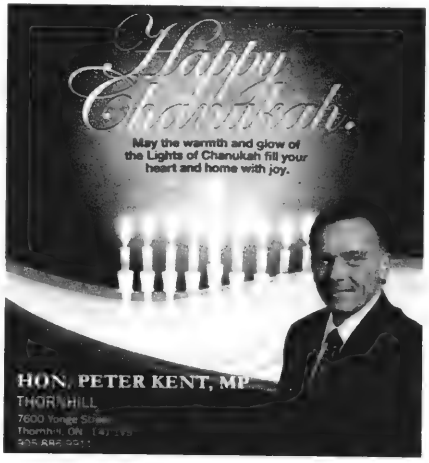
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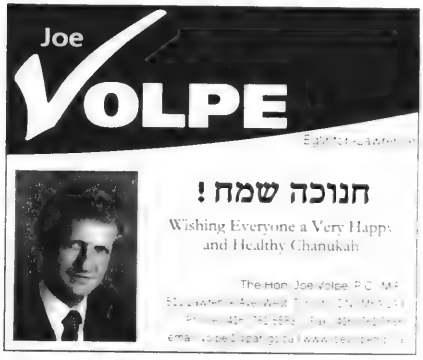

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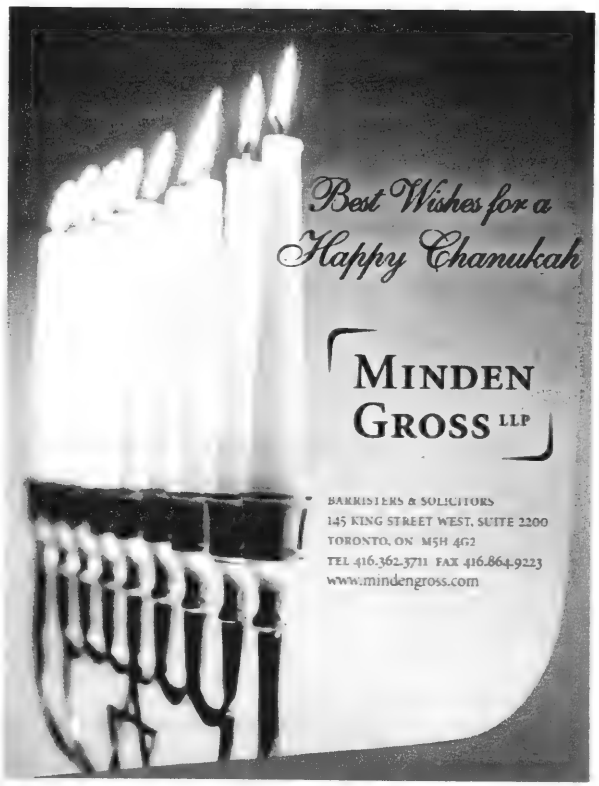
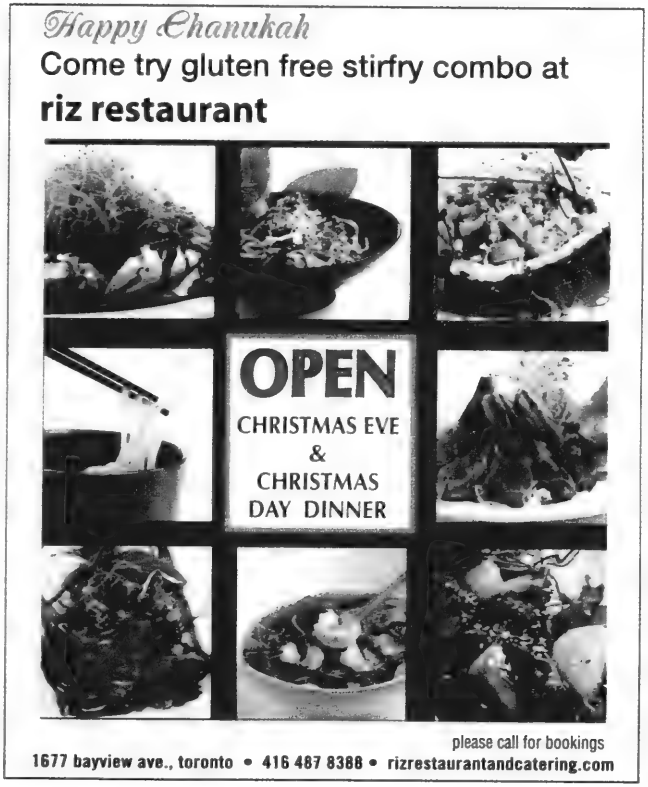
Peres pays a visit

Israeli President Shimon Peres last week travelled to the village of Peki'in in the northern Galilee where he visited with its Druze inhabitants. In these photos, we see Peres enjoying a coffee and speaking with village elders. ***[Israel Sun photos]***





Fight desertification – feed the world

By ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN
Israel21c

"Desertification" may sound like a course to end a sumptuous meal. But with just one "s," it refers to fertile land becoming dry desert. Many factors contribute to the problem, such as soil erosion, climate change and groundwater mismanagement. Israel, which is 97 per cent dry land, was one of the first countries to begin to address this crisis.

"Desertification remains the orphan of global environmental problems on our planet," declared Ben-Gurion University (BGU) of the Negev professor Alon Tal, a desert ecologist at the university's Jacob Blaustein Institutes of Desert Research and founder of the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies.

Tal organized the annual International Conference on Drylands, Deserts and Desertification, held Nov. 8 to11 at BGU's Sde Boker campus in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). More than 500 government officials and academics from 50 countries, including Palestinian and Jordanian delegates, took part.

He said he was heartened by the response. Despite major conventions on desertification signed at Rio de Janeiro in the 1990s, many western countries still treat the issue as a low priority, he says. The perception started to change four years ago, when the UN and the World Bank re-emphasized that desertification, a problem that affects more than 200 million people, is a major cause of global poverty and hunger.

"We believe that by bringing a diverse group of academics, professionals and policy-makers together to confront the myriad critical issues of desertification, the BGU conference can serve as a meaningful catalyst for cooperative and collaborative projects in the future at the global level," said Tal, a North Carolina native who moved to Israel 30 years ago.

A successful agricultural project of date farming in the Arava desert.

Israel is one of the few countries that has successfully restored marginal lands and is recognized worldwide as a leader in protecting its dry lands from further deterioration. The Negev desert is smaller than it was in 1948, and parts of it having been transformed into a fertile breadbasket.

Forests thrive in places where trees never took root before and salt- and drought-resistant plants flourish, innovated by Israeli scientists. Commercial fishponds dot the desert, and algae grow abundantly for use in pharmaceuticals and health foods.

"The goal has to be to take the disadvantages of the desert and turn them into advantages," Tal said. Algae actually grow faster in dry regions, and the desert is the perfect setting for solar and wind power. Sun and open spaces are also attractive to eco-tourists.

Water management is a crucial part of controlling desertification. About half the water used for agriculture cycles through 240 reservoirs built by the Jewish National Fund, another key player in desertification efforts and education. Israel reuses about 74 per cent of its waste water. Spain, the second most efficient country in waste-water recycling, reuses only 20 per cent.

Continued on page B27

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'We have to make the world a better place'

Continued from page B26

"As the world becomes more urbanized, sewage is both a problem and an opportunity," said Tal, who co-authored a model for an agreement on environmental co-operation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. "We made huge mistakes and had the humility to learn from them. Now we have standards that can help other countries recycle their sewage."

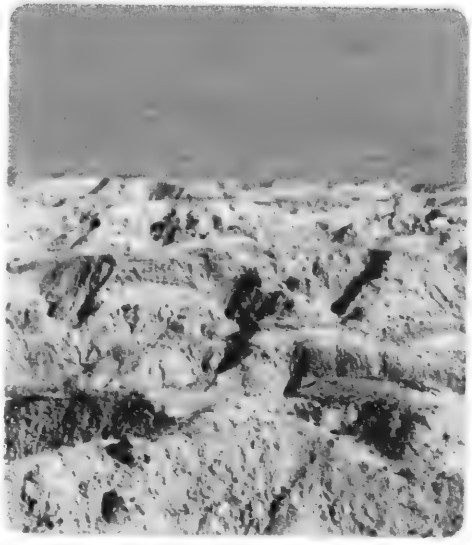
Tal gives much of the credit for all these accomplishments to Uriel Safriel, a professor of ecology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the world's leading authority on desertification.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs chose Safriel and Tal, among other experts, to represent Israel at previous UN conventions on desertification. "The other representatives have learned to respect Israel. Even the Arab countries in this forum are co-operative and there is lots of formal discussion," Tal said.

Attendees to the conference this year heard presentations about the public health aspects of desertification, sustainable building in desert environments, remote sensing to assess how flora are responding to anti-desertification attempts, grazing and the Bedouin community, the future of the Dead Sea, environmental education and dry-land agriculture, and soil and water restoration.

Tal said the UN expects developed nations to provide assistance to developing nations, which is an ideal shared by MASHAV, the Foreign Ministry's agency for international development, which works with ecologists and forestry experts from several countries, particularly in Africa.

"If you do nothing about desertification, people will starve and die," Tal said. "So there is a need for Israel's status as a leader in this field to be expanded into public policy. We have to dig into our pockets to make the world a better place."



The harsh Arava desert near Eilat

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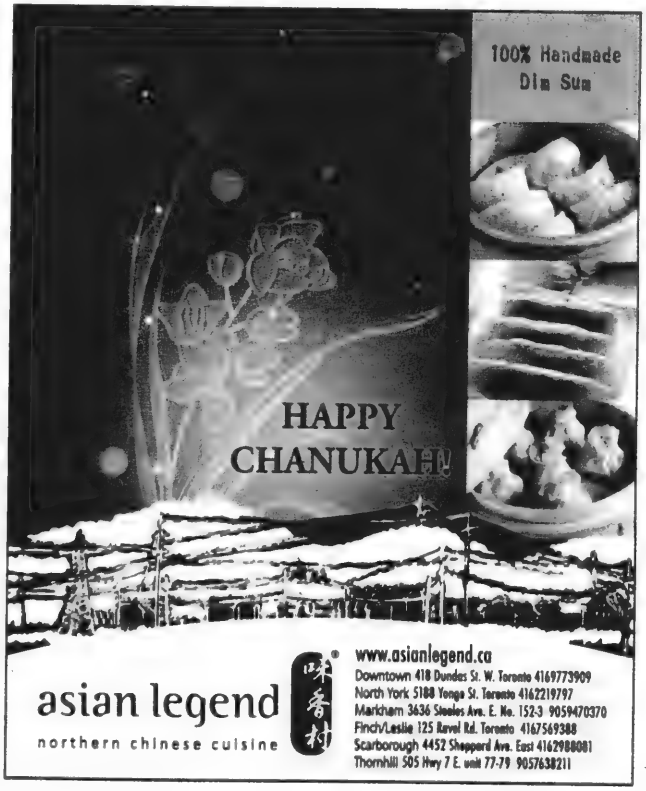
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Rabbi Steinsaltz brings entire Talmud to the masses

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The perpetually sleep deprived scholar sits slouched in a large chair, a pipe to his lips, his long white beard curled into knots, strands of hair poking out from beneath his black skullcap. Lacking a rabbi's traditional booming voice, he speaks so softly one often has to lean in closer to hear his insights.

But Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz's message resonates clearly to the far corners of the Jewish world. The 73-year-old rabbinical scholar has just completed a monumental 45-year project hailed in Jewish scholarly circles as a breakthrough of biblical proportions – the most comprehensive translation and commentary of the Talmud, with its 63 basic sections and nearly 6,000 pages.

The Talmud is the central text of mainstream Judaism, detailing rabbinical discussions over the centuries pertaining to Jewish law, ethics, philosophy, customs and history. But because of its complexity, obscurity and the fact that much of it is written in the ancient Aramaic language, the rarified text has for centuries remained beyond the scope of comprehension of all but a select group of scholarly Jews.

Rabbi Steinsaltz coins his quest to educate Jews, Let my People Know, a play on Moses' passage from Genesis: Let my people go. Now, thanks to his 45-volume series, anyone with a command of Hebrew can study the sacred text.

"I do believe that this knowledge is not just knowledge of history, it is knowledge of ourselves, it is our own picture," Rabbi Steinsaltz told Associated Press at his modest Jerusalem office. "Talmud is a book that has no real parallel ... it is a constant search for truth, for absolute truth."

Rabbi Steinsaltz has spent the majority of his life doing just that. For 4 1/2 decades, for as long as 16 hours a day, he laboured over the ancient texts, translating them from the Aramaic into modern Hebrew – and parts into English, Spanish, French, and Russian as well.

More importantly, he added his own explanations of phrases, terms and concepts, as well as listing the rulings of Jewish law derived from the text.

There have been other, partial translations into English and other languages, but none are as comprehensive or have as extensive a commentary.

"I have opened the gate – you please enter. I cannot do it for you, and I am not trying to do it for you," he explained.

Shalom Rosenberg, a professor emeritus of Jewish thought at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said Rabbi Steinsaltz was upholding the legacy of Shlomo Yitzhaki, the famed medieval French rabbi known by his acronym Rashi, who authored the first comprehensive commentary on the Talmud more than 900 years ago.

Rashi did the first revolution, turning it into a book you could read. Now Rabbi Steinsaltz has opened it up even to people who didn't go to Yeshiva (religious seminaries), he said.

Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz

Still, he said, Rabbi Steinsaltz's Talmud is like giving someone a map to the jungle – but there is still a way to go before understanding the jungle, he said.

The project has not been without its detractors. Over the years, some haredi scholars criticized Rabbi Steinsaltz – even boycotted him – saying Talmud study should be reserved for rabbinical experts.

Jewish historian Menachem Friedman said Rabbi Steinsaltz's work takes away the rabbis' monopoly over knowledge of the Talmud.

They perceive the popularization of the Talmud as too bold a move, with too much chutzpah, he said.

Rabbi Steinsaltz, whose three children have adopted the Hebraized surname Even-Israel, was born in Israel to secular parents but became observant in his teens, when he entered seminary schools and learned Aramaic.

After studying physics and chemistry at Hebrew University, he became a math teacher and at the age of 24, according to his website, the youngest school principal in Israel's history. Three years later, in 1965, he began working on what he called his hobby – the translation of the Talmud. The effort earned him the 1988 Israel Prize – the nation's highest civilian honour.

Over the years, he has established a network of schools in Israel and the former Soviet Union, and he has written more than 60 books on subjects ranging from zoology to theology.

The completion of Rabbi Steinsaltz' herculean feat was marked Nov. 7 with the Global Day of Jewish learning.

The six-continent event kicked off with a live broadcast of Rabbi Steinsaltz completing the final words of the translation.

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Happy Chanukah

Where is Anwar Sadat when Israel needs him?

By AKIVA ELDAR
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A great wind all at once blew
The bold bells of peace all rang out
Egypt's Sadat into Israel then flew
Can we say it's no dream, without doubt?

These thrilling words were written on November 22, 1977, by the rough hands of none other than foreign minister Moshe Dayan.

The day after the Egyptian president's visit to Jerusalem, Dayan entrusted the limerick to his close adviser Elyakim Rubinstein. The latter, who was to become a Supreme Court justice, tells in his 1992 book *Paths of Peace* (in Hebrew), that although he has had many exciting experiences in his life, the moment the door of Anwar Sadat's plane opened at Ben-Gurion International Airport, "I will always remember with an unparallelled thrill."

Thirty-three years after Sadat captured the hearts of Israelis with his "No more war" speech in the Knesset, and his visit to Yad Vashem, they have closed again behind walls of hatred, fear and prejudice.

In an article in the newly published book *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (edited by Yaakov Bar Siman-Tov and published by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies), Neta Oren, Eran Haperin and Daniel Bar-Tal present research revealing that some 80 per cent of Israeli Jews believe Arabs are dishonest, do not consider human life valuable and force Israel into war despite its desire for peace.

Ten years after the outbreak of the second intifadah and the rise of current Defence Minister Ehud Barak's claim that there is "no partner," only 44 per cent of Israeli Jews believe that most Palestinians want peace, as opposed to 64 per cent in 1999.

The fear of "concessions to the Arabs" is not the province of a handful of radicals whose passion for their ancestors' tombs has driven them to extremism. Israel has gone back to having a majority of people who view peace as a dangerous trap that the Arabs and their partners on the left are laying at the feet of weak politicians. Seventy-one per cent believe that the Arabs' ultimate goal is to annihilate Israel. There is no Israeli leader, not even on the horizon, who has the power to force this large group to "give up territories to the Arabs."

Sadat used to say that "two-thirds of the Arab-Israeli conflict is psychology." Indeed, one visit of the Arab leader in Israel's capital pushed aside 30 years of hatred, fear and suspicion. Four years after thousands of their sons were killed or injured in a cruel war with Egypt, Israelis wiped away a tear at the sight of the Egyptian president shaking the hand of their prime minister. Six months after the political upheaval that brought Likud to power, another upheaval took place in the way the Israeli public perceived the Arab enemy and the feelings of that enemy about Israel. The vast majority of Israelis, including most Likud members, supported the evacuation of settlements from the Yamit region, a return to the international border on the southern front and even recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.

> *'What would happen if President Hosni Mubarak, Jordanian King Abdullah and Saudi King Abdullah, together with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, laid a wreath at Yad Vashem?'*

In July 2009, Bahrain's crown prince wrote an article in the *Washington Post* called "Arabs Need to Talk to the Israelis." In it, Shaikh Salman ibn Hamad ibn Isa Al Khalifa criticized the Arab leadership for not being wise enough to show the Israelis the advantages of the Arab League peace initiative of March 2002. "An Israeli might be forgiven for thinking that every Muslim voice is raised in hatred," he wrote, ending with: "We must do more, now, to achieve peace."

The prince's call remained a voice crying in the Arab wilderness (he himself rejected this writer's proposal to be interviewed by *Ha'aretz*).

The Arab leadership insists on treating dialogue with Israeli society as part of "normalization" – the "fruits of peace" that the Israelis will get to taste only after they pledge to withdraw from all the territories.

In his book, Rubinstein revealed as baseless the claim that Sadat came to Jerusalem in November 1977 only after he received a promise that he would get back all of Sinai. Sadat understood that the war-weary Israelis would not make do with peace. They want to be made love to.

Indeed, what would happen if President Hosni Mubarak, Jordanian King Abdullah and Saudi King Abdullah, together with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, laid a wreath at Yad Vashem, and promised from the Knesset rostrum, "No more war?"

That would be much easier for them than what Israel is being asked to do: evacuate tens of thousands of people from the settlements and divide Jerusalem.

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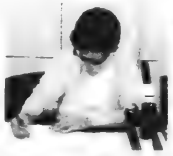

The open racism of the future state of Palestine

By SHMUEL TRIGANO

During a meeting with the Egyptian press in Cairo at the beginning of August, Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority and the man on whom the United States and Europe have placed all of their hopes for peace, revealed what was at the back of his mind with regard to the Jews and the nature of the regime he plans to set up in the future state of Palestine.

Shmuel Trigano

The official demands of the Palestinians for a settlement are known. Israel's agreement in advance to withdraw to the borders of 1967, a freeze on construction in the territories including Jerusalem, the division of that city, including the Old City, which must become part of the Palestinian Authority, the solution of the problem of the "refugees" in conformance with Arab demands and Resolution 194 of the UN General Assembly.

When considering the possibility that a third force, such as NATO, could be given the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of the planned agreement, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas imposed a condition: that there should not be a single Jewish soldier nor any Israeli: "I am ready to accept a third party which supervises the implementation of the agreement, NATO forces for example, but I will not accept the presence of Jews in these forces or a [single] Israeli on the Land of Palestine," Abbas said.

Is such a demand tainted with antisemitism? It should not come as a shock if we remember that Abbas defended his doctoral thesis, which was based on Holocaust denial, at a school for political indoctrination in the Soviet Union.

Some may see a polemical and ideological expression in the term "racist," but Abbas' demand with regard to NATO leaves no doubt in this respect. What does it really mean when he demands that the European states, members of NATO, exclude their Jewish citizens from the ranks of their forces?

Palestinians march on behalf of Jerusalem.

Can one imagine such a situation and the juridical mechanisms that these states would have to activate in order to separate the Jews from their citizens? As it happens, Abbas does not help them by defining the criteria of who is a Jew: religious law, ethnic origins, the father, the mother, the grandfather?

It is all the more remarkable that Saudi Arabia, during the Gulf War in 1990-1992, permitted American Jewish soldiers to serve with the American forces on its territory, a land which, according to the Qur'an, is sacred and should not shelter any non-Muslim. In all of these cases, it is not a question of Israelis, but of Jews, and one knows that the Arabs, in their immense majority do not make a distinction. "Yahoud" (Jew), in this region, designates without hesitation "The Israeli." What Abbas says about Jews he says about Israelis, as we have seen, and he demands that the Europeans, so attentive to his wishes, accept his conditions.

The refusal to recognize Israel, the Jewish state

There is a perfect coherence between this demand to the West and the refusal to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, which Abbas or Saeb Erekat, his "minister" of foreign affairs, has articulated on many occasions.

The two positions with regard to NATO and the refusal to recognize the Jewish state as such share the same antisemitism. The thinking behind this refusal, currently repeated as a leitmotif, has not been sufficiently analyzed.

We can immediately dismiss the most current explanation that a state does not have to recognize the "religion" of another state. This is a stalling tactic, which the PLO used numerous times in the past, especially in the Palestinian National Charter, as we shall see below. To be specific, "Jew" here means a "nation," not a "religion." It is with that intention that UN Resolution 181-II of November 1947, uses the expression "Jewish state" 23 times when it advocates the creation of "two states in Palestine, a Jewish one and an Arab one." (See especially Article 3 of the resolution.)

In order to understand what this refusal means and why it is not motivated by nationalistic but rather by racist intentions, we shall have to consider it in the context of collateral evidence.

If one examines its link to the demand for the return of the "refugees" of 1948, the picture is clear. Under the weight of some five million individuals defined as refugees, Israel would automatically become a country with an Arab and Islamic majority, a binational state where the Jews would be a minority, while Palestine would become uniquely Arab. Not one Jew, not even under the flag of NATO or the United Nations, would be allowed to be in Palestine, but five million Arabs would join the million Israeli Arabs already residing in the State of Israel and openly rebel against the notion of a Jewish (national) state.

Continued on page B31

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Jews would be 'respected'

Continued from page B30

The Palestinian Authority is building a racist regime based on the principle of establishing an apartheid between a Palestine untainted by Jewish blood and a mixed State of Israel where the Jews would become a minority.

In its refusal to recognize a Jewish state, there is, in fact, more than a rejection and denial of Jewish history and identity. One may well understand that this improper and exorbitant demand serves as a politically correct fig leaf for its fundamental refusal to recognize the State of Israel. On this point, the PLO abandoned its bluff of a "secular and democratic Palestine," which it had promoted in the decade between 1980 and 1990, except that the Palestinians now demand that this formula be imposed on Israel as they would like it to be, while Palestine proper would be purely Arab.

State-sanctioned racism and segregation

Palestine proper would indeed be Arab and Islamic. That is written explicitly in the draft constitution of the planned state. "This constitution is based on the will of Palestinian-Arab people" (Article 1); "the Palestinian people are a part of the Arab and Islamic nation" (Article 2); "sovereignty belongs to the Palestinian Arab people" (Article 10); "the legal character of the Arab-Palestinian people will be embodied by the state" (Article 13); "Islam will be the official religion of the state" (Article 6).

We can verify this last principle (the Islamic quality of the state) in the light of the use of rhetorical obfuscation (Article 6) to which the drafters of this constitution resort when they give the appearance of making space for non-Muslims: "Islam will be the official religion of the state. The monotheistic religions will be respected."

Who are these odd "monotheists," and what about the Hindus, the Confucians, the Baha'is, etc. – forbidden to live in Palestine – if not a politically correct version of the old *dhimmi* status imposed on non-Muslims by the Qur'anic law? In practice, this article would apply only to Christians, because as they have stated, there should be no more Jews in the State of Palestine.

This strange "monotheistic" statute permits us to understand by deduction the Palestinian Authority's vision of the state of Israel – that is to say of Jewish Israelis.

In Palestine, the Jews theoretically would not be citizens, because they are neither "Arabs" (the key to Palestinian nationality according to articles 10 and 13), nor "Muslims," (key to the Palestinian national law according to article 6). Although they would be "respected," they would fall outside of national sovereignty, the exclusive privilege of the Arabs (Article 10) – Christian or Muslim – but with a restriction.

Since the law would conform to Islamic law, Christian Arabs could only be second-class citizens, subjected to the status which Qur'anic law imposes on them, a status that excludes them from the general law that applies to the Muslims, a status granted, however, as a privilege.

As they are not subject to the rules of (Islamic) national law with regard to their personal status, they will be permitted to act autonomously within the framework of their law and religious tribunals.

This was already the case before the colonial era, before Islam lost all power over non-Muslims. This is indeed what the Palestinian constitution provides for in its Article 7: "the principles of Islamic *sharia* are the first source of legislation.

Continued on page B32

The late PLO leader, Yasser Arafat, emphasizes a point in a speech in Ramallah.

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Original PLO Charter 'nullified' the Balfour Declaration

Continued from page B31

The legislative power will determine the law of personal status under the authority of the monotheistic religions in conformity with their religions, with due respect to the clauses of the constitution and the preservation of unity, of the stability and progress of the Palestinian [Muslim] people."

The problem, however, is twofold: *sharia* will not apply to monotheistic non-Muslims only when their "personal" status is at stake but also in their quality as citizens. It will indeed govern the citizenry as the law of the state (Article 6). Non-Muslims will be subject to its rulings as citizens and not only as monotheistic believers.

How does the "monotheistic" statute reveal the vision the Palestinian Authority has with regard to what the State of Israel should be, which it does not want to recognize as "Jewish"? Would it recognize the "monotheist" character of the Israelis but not the Jewish character of their state? Would not the term, "Jewish," designate a "monotheist"?

Palestinians protest the "Judaization" of Jerusalem

Understanding of the status of the *dhimmi* could help us to grasp this apparent contradiction that contains a nasty trick for those who do not understand the categories of Muslim culture. The status of the *dhimmi*, one must know, is not personal but applies to collectivities, to the "nations" politically subjected to Islamic power since the "Conquest."

It is necessary to explain the theological basis of the collective condition of the *dhimmi*. According to the Qur'anic vision, there were different "*umma*" (peoples) in history, each one rising to the call of a prophet (Moses, Jesus, etc.), until the advent of the final "*umma*," which rose to the call of Islam.

The basis of an *umma* is thus a "religion." In this sense, the Palestinian leaders cannot recognize the right of a Jewish state (and in fact any state that would not be Islamic) that would entail the self-determination and sovereignty of a collectivity whose only possible status under Islam is that of *dhimmi*. This would be an affront to the Islamic *umma*.

A Jewish state thus constitutes essentially a scandal. The two terms, "state," and "Jewish" therefore constitute, as theological-political matter, an impossible alloy. The Jews cannot have a state. They are not a people of political standing, because there can only be *The Umma*. The Jews can neither be free nor sovereign.

An unclear 'nationalism'

This classical Islamic perspective was much more evident in the '60s and '70s when the PLO did not resort to double talk to such a sophisticated degree, even if it already made use of western concepts (religion and state) to express Islamic notions.

Indeed, what does one read in the PLO charter in its first version (1964)? "The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate for Palestine and everything which derives from them are declared null and void. The claims of the Jews to historical and religious links with Palestine are incompatible with the historical facts and the true concept of what a nation consists of. Judaism, being a religion, does not constitute an independent nationality. In the same matter, the Jews do not constitute a unique nation with its own identity. They are citizens of the states to which they belong" (Article 20).

This is a strange remark for a culture that confuses the political and the religious… It does not prevent the PLO, in the same text, from insisting on the exclusive Arab character of Palestine: "Palestine is the homeland of the Arab Palestinian people. It is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland, and the Palestinian people is a part of the Arab nation (Article 1)"… "Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine constitute two complementary goals" (Article 13). "The people of Palestine play the role of the vanguard in the realization of this sacred objective." Here, the term, Arab nation, really designates the *umma*.

We discover in this remark the extent to which the strictly Palestinian "national" framework is current. (The second version of the charter was published in 1968.)

"The Palestinian people believe in Arab unity. In order for them to contribute to the realization of this objective, it is necessary, however, at this stage of the struggle to safeguard the Palestinian identity and develop its consciousness of this identity" (Article 12). This is so because of Article 1, which says: "Palestine is the home of the Arab Palestinian people. It is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland, and the Palestinian people is an integral part of the Arab nation."

Continued on page B33

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'Why should one believe myth of Abbas' moderation?

Children in Gaza figuratively spill blood from the Mavi Marmara flotilla on the Israeli flag.
[Flash90 and Israel Sun photos]

Continued from page B32

Actually, despite the "nationalistic" formulation of this clause, the term, Arab nation, is defined in conjunction with other words such as the Islamic *umma*. Palestine belongs to the *umma*, which cannot renounce any part of Islamic land.

It is noteworthy that in their constitutional documents, the Muslim Brotherhood write the same thing about Jews/Israelis, although in a more extreme manner, as does Hamas.

Let the reader judge.

With regard to the *dhimmis*, the Hamas charter declares that "the Islamic Resistance Movement... is guided by Islamic tolerance when it deals with the faithful of other religions. It does not oppose them except when they are hostile. Under the banner of Islam, the faithful of the three religions – Islam, Christianity, and Judaism – can coexist peacefully. But this peace is not possible *except* under the banner of Islam."

With regard to the nature of the Palestinian country, Hamas takes the view that: "the Movement of Islamic Resistance believes that Palestine is an Islamic Waqf [religious patrimony] consecrated for [the future] generations of Muslims until the Last Judgment. Not a single parcel of this can be divested or abandoned to others. (Article 11).

PLO charter: an antecedent of this old-new racism

The charter of the PLO is more explicit with regard to the racist motives beneath such an apparently nationalistic statement and it finds expression with regard to all the Jews outside the State of Israel. It states in Article 23: "The need of security and of peace, as well as that of justice and law, require of all states that they consider Zionism as an illegitimate movement, that they declare its existence illegal, that they forbid its activities, so that the friendly relations between peoples can be preserved, and that the loyalty of citizens to their respective countries may be preserved."

What does this canned expression, "loyalty of citizens toward their respective countries," describe other than the Jews of the world – essentially of the western countries – whom the PLO charter singles out for suspicion and for the vindictiveness of their respective states implying that they are not faithful and could stand up for Israel against the interest of their respective states: that they are in fact Israelis, that is to say, more crudely, "The Jews."

They are depicted precisely with the classic traits of anti-semitism: the Jewish conspiracy.

Article 22 of the charter thus traces the borders of this "anti-Zionist" antisemitism. "Zionism is a political movement bound organically to an international imperialism and hostile to all action for liberation and every progressive movement in the world. The Zionist by his nature is racist and fanatical, aggressive, expansionist, colonial in his objectives, and fascist in his methods.

"Israel is the instrument of the Zionist movement and the geographical base of world imperialism, strategically placed in the midst of the Arab homeland to combat the hopes for liberation, unity and progress of the Arab nation. Israel is a constant source of threats to the peace of the Middle East and in the whole world. Because the liberation of Palestine will destroy Zionism and the imperialist presence and will contribute to the establishment of the peace in the Middle East, the Palestinian people demands the aid of all the progressive forces [that are] oriented toward peace, and enjoins them, without distinguishing between their affiliation and creed, to offer their aid and support to the Palestinian people in its struggle for the liberation of its homeland."

Zionism is another word for the classic "Jewish Conspiracy."

International and Israeli passivity

There has been no European or American reaction to condemn Abbas' odious remarks in Egypt. Could it be that the world knows very well what to expect from the "moderate" Palestinians?

But if this is the real reason for this astounding silence, why should one believe in the Palestinian desire for peace and the myth of Abbas' moderation? No reaction of protest emanated from European and American Jewish institutions.

No reaction was forthcoming from the Israeli government. Where are the idealistic souls of the European JStreet, JCall, to castigate this "moral mistake" and this openly bellicose declaration?

This silence creates the impression of the indulgence of the public regarding the Palestinian and Arab-Islamic demands and their lack of interest with respect to the impasse into which they want to throw Israel and the whole Jewish world.

Shmuel Trigano is a professor at Paris University in sociology of politics). Among his recent publications in English is The Democratic Ideal and the Shoah, the unthought in political modernity. *SUNY Press, 2009.*

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Happy Chanukah

Antisemitism on the rise in Venezuela

By NATASHA MOZGOVAYA and SHLOMO PAPIRBLAT
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"I am not even horrified anymore when I see swastikas and antisemitic slogans such as 'Hitler didn't finish the job' on walls near my synagogue," says a former Israeli who lives in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela.

"This is an influence that trickles down from the top – from the government – against the Jews. I know that Chavez is exerting efforts not to appear antisemitic to the outside world, and that he welcomed the leaders of the Jewish community, but I haven't heard of him ever punishing someone for antisemitic writings or remarks."

She would rather her name not be mentioned. "This gets translated and immediately appears on various Internet sites. I don't need trouble," she says. "A few years ago, it was heaven here. Who could have believed that it would turn into such a burdensome place?"

She isn't the only one who feels this way. According to data from the Venezuelan Confederation of Israelite Associations, the number of Jews in Venezuela sharply decreased in the 10 years President Hugo Chavez has been in power.

In 2000, there were some 18,000 Jews listed, and today the number stands at a little less than 9,000. The outward flow of people increased in the last two years, when more than 5,000 Jews left the country, in particular to Miami in the United States.

"This antisemitism worries us all, and it must be immediately stopped," David Bitan, vice-president of the Jewish community in Venezuela, said recently. "We aren't saying that it is government policy, but the government does have the power to stop this phenomenon."

Huber, a Jew from Europe, immigrated to Venezuela in the 1980s and assimilated in the Jewish community. He built a successful business and is very satisfied with his job. Nevertheless, he says that he would pick up and leave tomorrow if he was able to afford it.

"My older children are studying abroad. I sent them far away from here," he says. "Caracas is an extremely dangerous place. Crime is a daily occurrence, people get murdered over nothing, and all the honest people live under heavy security. Our situation is frightening, since if you ask anyone here they would tell you that the Jews are always rich, so we are a double target."

According to Huber, there is official antisemitism in Venezuela. "I think it is a combination of dark Catholic beliefs," he says. "It's the fearless embrace of senior government officials with people such as [Iranian President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad – who are vocal Israel-haters – and also partially the government's attempt to distract the people's attention from everyday troubles.

"There's inflation? Missing products in stores? No employment opportunities? As always, the newspapers can write that the Jews are smuggling the wealth to the United States, that the Jews here are double agents, that the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* already proved that there is a worldwide Jewish connection – this time against Chavez – since he is a stark opponent of the Israeli occupation. Every time the television shows the Israel Defence Forces bombing Gaza, they tell me at my job: 'Why are you guys murdering those poor people? You act toward them just like Nazis.' That is what they see and hear in the media."

Hannah Rosenthal, the U.S. special envoy for the battle against antisemitism, was the first senior U.S. diplomat in years to receive a visa for Venezuela.

Rosenthal recently visited the country and tried to convey the concerns of the Jewish community to government officials and the national council. Depite her plans, she was unable to meet Chavez and his foreign minister, as the two were in Iran at the time of her visit.

She added that the foreign ministry official who handles Middle East affairs and antisemitism seemed very concerned when she told her about her impressions from the visit.

"When Chavez cut ties with Israel, he was applauded everywhere. As of right now this isn't necessarily the general public sentiment, but the feeling is that we are treading on the edge. A few swastikas here, an attack on a Jew there – and it is always defined as a criminal act and not an antisemitic one," Rosenthal said.

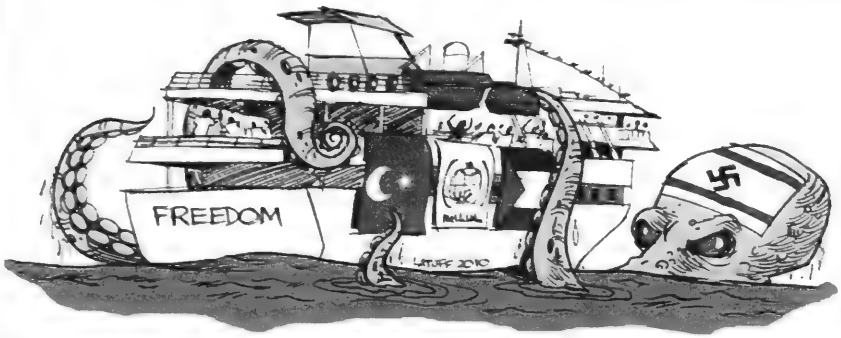
Rosenthal spoke about a meeting that took place early October between members of the Jewish community and Chavez.

Continued on page B35

Venezuelans protest against 'terrorist' Israel

Happy Chanukah

Young people have said they intend to leave



An anti-Israel political cartoon that was published in Venezuela after the Mavi Marmara flotilla incident last May. *[Photos courtesy of ADL]*

Continued from page B34

"Some of [the members] refused to go because they didn't want to give him any credibility, but others went there to meet Chavez face to face and express their concern about government-sponsored depiction of Jews in the media and degrading comments made by the president. Despite this opportunity to speak to him, nobody believes there has been a change."

According to Rosenthal, Chavez thanked the Jewish representatives for the meeting, but did not guarantee that he would make an effort to change things.

Rosenthal said the Jews in Venezuela don't feel hatred on the streets. "Intimidation, vile statements that were made about Jewish bankers – it all comes from Chavez. They don't feel it from neighbours or the people they know."

She added that "the Jewish community said that whenever there is activity in the Middle East, additional antisemitism would echo that."

Many people feel that the increase in crime has turned Venezuela into a dangerous place, she said.

"The young people I have met – in Jewish school, Catholic and other Christian denominations at the University – all said they intended to leave Venezuela. It has to do with the danger they feel living in Caracas, which is where most Jews live.

"It's so dangerous to be on the street. They all have someone in the family or the extended family or close friends who have been murdered, kidnapped. Everybody has been mugged. Many of the businesses have been expropriated. They don't see a future for themselves in Venezuela, and that was very painful to see," Rosenthal said.

Beyond expressing her support for the Jewish community, Rosenthal said all she can do is to raise the world's awareness of the situation. She also guaranteed that she would inform U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton of the situation.

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Timing, noodging advance new push for Jonathan Pollard

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

A combination of timing, diplomatic considerations and, above all, good old-fashioned *noodging* has culminated in the biggest push in years to free Jonathan Pollard.

Insiders associated with the push, which resulted last week in a congressional letter to President Barack Obama asking for clemency for the American Jew convicted in 1987 of spying for Israel, say the main factor was one man: David Nyer, an Orthodox activist from Monsey, N.Y. Nyer, working under the auspices of the National Council of Young Israel and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, repeatedly called dozens of congressional offices and pressed Jewish groups asking for a leader to take on the case of Pollard, the former U.S. Navy analyst who has spent 25 years in prison as part of a life sentence – the longest sentence for spying for an ally.

Congressional staffers described Nyer as "relentless," and he eventually struck gold: Democratic Rep. Barney Frank, who chairs the U.S. House of Representatives Banking Committee, agreed to sign on. That prompted a total of 39 signatures all from Democrats – to the letter sent to Obama.

Getting Frank was a coup, one congressional insider said, not only because he has a leadership position, but because his pronounced liberalism in other arenas adds credibility to an effort that has been identified in recent years with the Israeli and pro-Israel right.

Frank took up the cause because he long has believed that Pollard's life sentence was disproportionate to the crime, his spokesman said. "It is something he feels strongly about," Harry Gural told JTA.

Jonathan Pollard

Launching the initiative at a Capitol Hill news conference Nov. 18, Frank listed two factors that made the matter timely: Pollard's 25 years in prison as of Sunday, and the parlous state of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

"The justification of this is the humanitarian one and the notion that the American justice system should be a fair one," Frank said. "We believe that clemency after 25 years for the offences of Jonathan Pollard would do that.

"My own hope is that if the president would do this, it would contribute to the political climate within the democracy of Israel and would enhance the peace process."

Frank alluded to Obama's low popularity in Israel where, fairly or not, the president has been saddled with a reputation as cool to Israeli interests.

"There are clearly people in Israel who are concerned about the nature of the American-Israeli relationship," Frank said. "An affirmation of that relationship would go forward" to alleviating such concern.

Frank was joined at the news conference by reps. Steve Rothman and Bill Pascrell, both of New Jersey, and Anthony Weiner of New York.

Continued on page B37

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'It is always the right time to do the just thing'

Continued from page B36

Pascrell met with Pollard in 1998 at Butner, the federal facility in North Carolina where he is imprisoned. Another initiator of the letter was Rep. Edolphus Towns of New York.

The letter's emphasis is on what it says is the disproportionate length of Pollard's sentence.

"We believe that there has been a great disparity from the standpoint of justice between the amount of time Mr. Pollard has served and the time that has been served – or not served at all – by many others who were found guilty of similar activity on behalf of nations that, like Israel, are not adversarial to us," the letter says. "It is indisputable in our view that the nearly 25 years that Mr. Pollard has served stands as a sufficient time from the standpoint of either punishment or deterrence."

It also emphasizes that Pollard is guilty.

"Such an exercise of the clemency power would not in any way imply doubt about his guilt, nor cast any aspersions on the process by which he was convicted," the letter says.

The absence of Republicans on the letter was striking.

Frank said he had reached out to Republicans and had delayed sending the letter until after the elections in order not to make it a political issue. Speaking on background, Jewish organizational officials – some of them allied with the most conservative groups – confirmed that was the case. Pro-Israel figures in some cases called the Republicans and said not signing would stain otherwise spotless pro-Israel records, but it didn't help.

Two congressional Republicans known to have been on Nyer's call list did not return calls from JTA seeking comment.

Nyer said he had secured the endorsement of conservative figures known for their closeness to the party, including Gary Bauer, the president of American Values, and John Hagee, the founder of Christians United for Israel. Hagee had reached out to Republicans, Nyer said, but to no avail.

Among the Jewish groups backing the effort were the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the National Council of Young Israel, B'nai B'rith International, the Religious Action Center of the Reform movement, the Zionist Organization of America, Agudath Israel of America and the Rabbinical Council of America. Other mainstream groups stayed out – a signal of how sensitive the matter of a Jew spying for Israel remains.

One official at a pro-Israel organization said the multitude of groups backing the initiative shows how much the American Jewish community has moved on from the anxieties that beset its reactions to the revelations in 1985 that Israel had run a spy in Washington. Now, the official said, Pollard's proponents are more vocal and more numerous.

Pollard's backers in Israel are aware of the change and are encouraging activists like Nyer to mount an active offence.

Nyer, at Frank's news conference, sounded nonplussed by his own achievement.

"I came across scores of ordinary Americans in the country, as well as prominent figures, who have joined the calls for Jonathan's release," he said.

Beyond the congressional letter, the 25th anniversary of Pollard's incarceration has spawned a number of Op-Eds calling for Pollard's release, including one in the *Washington Post* recently by his father, Morris Pollard.

IS POLLARD BEING PUNISHED FOR HELPING ISRAEL AGAINST SADC
U.S. GOVERNMENT DISPENSES REVENGE NOT JUSTICE TO JONATHAN POLLARD

Americans demostrate on behalf of Jonathan Pollard

Rabbi David Saperstein, who directs the Religious Action Center, said Frank weighted the matter properly: The justice of the matter was key, but the timing of the peace process helped.

"It is always the right time to do the just thing in the face of the disproportionate sentence," Saperstein said. "If it has an ancillary benefit, if this is the way to move the process along, I'm all in favor of it – but it should be done on its own merits."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has favoured such a release since he first proposed it during his first term, at the Wye River negotiations in 1998. President Bill Clinton reportedly was ready to agree but was rebuffed by top intelligence officials. The CIA director at the time, George Tenet, said he would quit if Clinton agreed, and the president backed down.

Netanyahu is again prime minister, and negotiations again are fraught. Netanyahu is negotiating with the White House over concessions for freezing settlement building as a means to draw Palestinians back to direct talks.

Meanwhile, the reasons for the U.S. intelligence community's strong stance against Pollard remain unknown.

"Anyone who knows isn't talking, and anyone who is talking doesn't know," Weiner said.

But two figures involved in the prosecution now have come forward to say Pollard has served enough time.

Lawrence Korb, an assistant secretary of defence in 1987, said in a letter that his boss, the late Caspar Weinberger, had a "visceral dislike for Israel" and that played a role in his pressing the judge to ignore the plea bargain Pollard had worked out with prosecutors.

The other Reagan administration official recommending clemency is Abraham Sofaer, who helped investigate the breadth of the secrets Pollard stole for the Israelis.

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Montefiore was 'one of the first global celebrities'

By SHALOM GOLDMAN
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

In her introduction to this extensive and engaging biography of Sir Moses Montefiore (1784-1885), (Belknap, Harvard) Abigail Green notes that her subject's life "reminds us that Jewish history is never simply about the Jews, but always about their relationship with the rest of society." The observation could serve as the epigram of Green's work, as it regularly reminds us that Moses Montefiore's remarkable life is both a Jewish story and an international one, even if today, Montefiore, if he is remembered at all, is remembered almost exclusively in Jewish circles.

One hundred and twenty five years after his death in 1885 (at age 100), Moses Montefiore's name has been memorialized in a wide range of places: in Jerusalem's Yemin Moshe neighbourhood, where the windmill he erected in the 1850s still stands; in the Bronx, where the city hospital named for him still operates; and in Montefiore, Kan., a spot on old maps that commemorates a Jewish agricultural colony founded there in the 1880s.

Born into an Italian Sephardi family of wealth and prestige, Montefiore moved to London as a young man. But it was Jerusalem, to which Montefiore made seven pilgrimages during his long lifetime, that was at the centre of his concerns. Among the many delightful details that Green enlists to illustrate his occupation with the welfare of the city's Jews is that "his comfortable four-poster bed at Ramsgate was adorned with a perpetual reminder of his love for Zion, the Hebrew inscription from Psalm 137, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem."

Through family connections, Montefiore became one of the few Jewish brokers on the London Stock Exchange, where he invested some of his own considerable inheritance. This was in 1803, when the British financial system was at the height of its power, and when vast fortunes could be made through investment and trade. There were 700 stockbrokers operating on the exchange, but only 12 places were allotted to Jewish brokers. In 1812 Montefiore married Judith Barent-Cohen, whose father was also very wealthy. As Green notes: "Marriage in such circles was always about money and connections." Through this marriage, Montefiore was to make his most important business connections, connections that would make him one of the richest men in England.

Sir Moses spent the first half of his life making a vast fortune and the second half dispensing it widely and wisely. He was assisted by his two closest companions, his wife, who is deserving of a biography of her own, and his secretary assistant Louis Loewe, also a dynamic figure who, like Barent-Cohen, should have been given a larger role in Green's narrative. Judith's sister was married to Nathan Rothschild, another of Europe's richest men. Within a few years of their first meeting, Montefiore, then in his early 30s, was acting as Rothschild's stockbroker.

Green calls Montefiore "one of the first truly global celebrities ... In an age when the global public sphere first became a reality, his centennial birthday celebrations captured the imagination of the world." A biography was commissioned in honour of the event. This was Lucien Wolf's authorized, and somewhat hagiographical, work, *Sir Moses Montefiore: A Centennial Biography* (London, 1884). All subsequent biographies were handicapped by restricted access to whatever remains of the Montefiore papers.

Through family connections, Abigail Green, a lecturer in history at Brasenose College, Oxford, has to some extent overcome the problem of restricted family papers. As she notes in the preface's opening sentence, she was born into the Montefiore family, "and with a different family background I would have not written this book."

But Green, like Montefiore's previous biographers, still had to confront the strangest and greatest obstacle to creating a complete picture of Montefiore's life and work – the deliberate destruction of his vast, personal archive by his nephew and heir, Sir Joseph Sebag-Montefiore. Why he did this has not been explained. Green speculates that "the existence of guilty secrets may possibly explain the burning of Montefiore's diaries, but they cannot excuse the wanton destruction of his entire archive." Green does not immediately suggest what those guilty secrets might be, though later in the book we learn that Moses Montefiore may have had an illegitimate child with one of the family servants. He kept the child's existence a secret from his friends and family, though he provided for the boy and his mother.

This biography is quite extensive. Perhaps to a fault. Green herself admits in the preface that when she embarked on a full biography based on archival materials, she "did not fully appreciate the scale of the challenge." The thoroughness of her research is both remarkable and commendable, but at 423 pages plus notes and bibliography, this is a hefty tome. It could have been shorter, and if it had been, more people would be likely to read it all the way through.

Historians of Zionism and the Yishuv, who have long been interested in Montefiore's visits to Jerusalem and his charitable efforts on behalf of the Jews of the Land of Israel, are divided about how to interpret and situate those activities.

Was Sir Moses a Zionist, or perhaps a precursor of Zionism? When he celebrated his 100th birthday, the Hovevei Zion movement (eastern European groups that organized non-political immigration to Palestine starting in the 1880s) tried to claim him as one of their own, but one gathers that was out of the hope that he would contribute to the cause and not out of ideological identification. In his 1919 work *History of Zionism 1600-1918*, Nahum Sokolow made the case for Montefiore as a Zionist, but Sokolow's project is all-inclusive, and anyone who played a part in the conversation on the return of the Jews to Zion was by his definition a Zionist.

Continued on page B39

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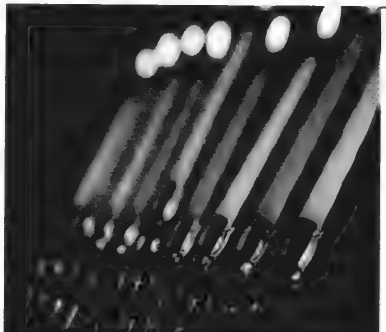

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A classical Jewish philanthropist

Continued from page B38

During their 1839 visit to Jerusalem, Montefiore and his wife took a lively interest in the fledgling plans for Jewish involvement in agricultural enterprises. Sir Moses confided to his diary that he was enthused by his survey of fertile areas in Palestine and that he intended to negotiate a lease with Muhammad Ali (the ruler of Egypt and Sudan, whose domain extended to the Land of Israel) for land use in a number of villages. He speculates about the amounts of land he might need and what would constitute desirable financial terms for a lease, and then hopes that "This grant obtained, I shall, please heaven, on my return to England, form a company for the cultivation of the land and the encouragement to our brethren in Europe to return to Palestine ... By degrees I hope to induce the return of thousands of our brethren to the Land of Israel – I am sure they would be happy in the enjoyment of the observance of our holy religion, in a manner which is impossible in Europe."

Portrait of Sir Moses Montefiore

Green notes that "this famously prophetic diary entry has led generations of Zionists to claim Montefiore as their own." But she herself is not convinced, for even in this diary entry, "the language of nationalism is strikingly absent." At the time of the Montefiore centennial celebration, Zionist activists seem to have understood that "Hasar Moshe" could not be counted upon for help in the same way that "Hanadiv" (Edmond de Rothschild) could. They understood, in Green's words, that Baron de Rothschild "had already done more for Jewish agricultural settlements in the Holy Land than Montefiore had achieved in a lifetime."

Baron de Rothschild (1845-1934) was actively involved in establishing long-term settlement projects in Eretz Israel. In the 1880s he gave financial support to agricultural colonies on the verge of collapse and was known by many as the "father of the Yishuv." Hanadiv was quoted as saying his work for the Yishuv was "not merely philanthropy, but something entirely different." Today , we might call it sustainability.

Montefiore, in contrast, was more of a classical Jewish philanthropist, who saw his contributions as tzedakah. The many projects that he supported in the Land of Israel were more in the realm of charitable support than part of an effort to create a sustainable and self-supporting Jewish presence in the Land.

Green understands Montefiore's ideas on Jewish settlement in Palestine as "the product of his dual identity as a religious Jew and a successful London businessman." She also situates Montefiore's advocacy for persecuted Jews in a context not articulated by his earlier biographers, that of 19th-century British universal humanitarianism. For Montefiore, along with the French Jewish-rights advocate Adolphe Cremieux and other crusaders, sought to "universalize the Jewish cause . Indeed, the ability of British and French Jewish leaders to persuade their governments to intervene in the Jewish question testified to the importance of liberal and humanitarian groups within the wider body politic."

Montefiore's best known and most enduring effort in this regard was the Holy Land Relief Fund, which he and British Chief Rabbi Nathan Adler established in 1854. This fund "changed the face of international Jewish philanthropy forever." It did so by appealing, successfully, to Christians of various denominations – Anglicans, Methodists, Evangelicals and Catholics – as well as to Jews. Its fundraising efforts presaged much more recent efforts by American Christian Zionists on behalf of the State of Israel. One of the English newspapers of the day reminded its readers that during the Irish famine, "when the poor Irish were perishing with want, the Rothschilds and the Montefiores sent princely subscriptions in their assistance." Christians, therefore, should be equally generous in return.

When Moses Montefiore reached the age of 100 in 1884 it was a national event. "No one could remember the last time a private individual had attracted such an overwhelming display of affection," writes Abigail Green.

Shalom Goldman is professor of Hebrew and Middle Eqstern studies at Emory University, in Atlanta. His book Zeal for Zion: Christians, Jews, and the Idea of the Promised Land *was published earlier this year by University of North Carolina Press.*

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Photo by Chayim Alevsky

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Canadian Friends of Yad Sarah
Canadian Hadassah-WIZO Toronto Centre (CHW)
Canadian Jewish Congress, Ontario Region
Canadian Magen David Adom for Israel
Canadian Technion Society
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Jewish Vocational Service
Jews for Judaism
Jewish Women International of Canada
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Lodzer Centre Congregation
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Netivot HaTorah Day School
One Family Fund
ORT Toronto/ORT Canada
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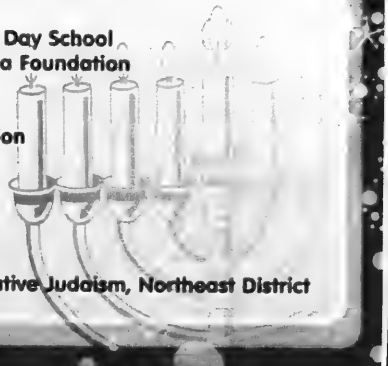

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This Week

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Chinese immigrant has a fascination with Judaism. *Page 12*

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A little change went a long way in 2010.

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Fire rages in all directions last week in the Carmel forest near Haifa. At left, an Israeli firefighter extinguishes a house on fire in Yamin Ord, near Haifa. The fire was the worst in Israel's history. It killed 42 people and destroyed some 50,000 dunams of land, forcing more than 17,000 people to evacuate their homes. ***Please see related stories on pages 4, 8, 9, 21 and 30.*** ***[Flash90 photos]***

Fire in Carmel forest kills 42

BY ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff reporter

Relief efforts by the Canadian Jewish community and government were quickly up and running in the wake of Israel's worst-ever forest fire last week.

The fire, which erupted Thursday and torched a huge swath of natural forest on Mount Carmel, was finally contained on Sunday after firefighters spent 77 hours battling the blaze with firefighting forces that included 35 waterbombing aircraft, 24 of them provided by foreign countries, including Canada.

According to Israel's Foreign Ministry, 42 people died in the fire, and nearly 50 square kilometres of forest and 250 homes were lost. The fire also caused over $2 billion NIS ($555 million Cdn) in damage, according to Israeli government estimates.

Many of the major Canadian Jewish community institutions, including the Jewish National Fund (JNF) of Canada, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and Toronto-based humanitarian relief organization Ve'ahavta, quickly set up online donation pages and phone lines to help fight the fire and aid those affected in Israel.

As of *The CJN*'s deadline, the three organizations had raised nearly $200,000 nationally – $100,000 of which was contributed by a single donor for JNF to put toward the purchase of an additional fire truck for the organization's fleet in Israel.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper extended Canada's support and condolences to the victims of the fire after receiving a phone call from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu late last week.

A spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada told *The CJN* that the department "is working rapidly to identify Canadian assistance that could be provided to Israel" as soon as possible.

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Rick Hansen teams with Hebrew U for spinal cord research – please see page 30

The News in Brief

Canada

Neo-Nazi Acquitted

VANCOUVER — A man labelled by a Federal Court judge as "a neo-Nazi" and "virulently anti-Jewish" was acquitted of contempt charges on a technicality last week. The court ruled that former University of Saskatchewan math lecturer Terry Tremaine could not be in contempt of a court order since he was not informed that the court had registered a decision of the Canadian Human Rights Commission that ordered him to stop posting hate messages on the Internet. In 2007, after receiving a complaint from Ottawa activist Richard Warman, a commission tribunal fined Tremaine $4,000 and ordered him to stop posting hate on the web

World

Dreidel Record

NEW YORK — Yeshiva University students and others broke the Guinness world record for most dreidels spun simultaneously. Some 618 students, alumni, faculty, staff, neighbours and friends of Yeshiva U topped the record Dec. 1 at "Dreidel-Palooza," an event organized by Students Helping Students, a student-run group that raises money for undergraduate scholarships. The previous record of 541 was set in 2005 at Temple Emanuel in Cherry Hill, N.J.

YU Schools Grant

NEW YORK — The Avi Chai Foundation has given a $1.6 million grant to Yeshiva University to help Jewish day schools improve their financial situations. The grant will go to the YU Institute for University-School Partnership to support its efforts in helping 30 day schools in five Jewish communities figure out long-term financial strategies, as well as offering three-year matches for funds that each school brings in from local donors and Jewish federations. If successful in the five yet-to-be-named areas, Avi Chai and YU plan to expand the project to up to 200 schools in 30 communities.

Parents Pick Mates

NEW YORK — A new Jewish online dating site lets parents search for their children's mate. TheJMom.com, launched Dec. 1, allows parents to contact other parents for information and set up casual dates. "Moms have been setting up their children for centuries," said site co-founder Danielle Weisberg. "TheJMom.com puts parents behind the keyboard and lets them do the clicking and the matching." The site was the brainchild of Weisberg and her brother, Brad, who conceived of it after their mother asked Brad to see his online dating profile and spent hours searching a matchmaking site to find him a woman.

'Rabbi' Convicted

JERUSALEM — A self-proclaimed rabbi who counselled followers to commit child abuse was convicted Dec. 1 in Jerusalem of abusing several children who lived with him. Elior Chen was convicted of abusing the eight children of the woman he lived with, a follower whose husband had given her over to the charismatic leader. Chen fled Israel for Canada and then Brazil in 2008, and was extradited back to Israel several months later, after he counselled his followers to severely beat and burn the children to rid them of the devil. Some were forced to drink alcohol and turpentine until they vomited, and to eat their own feces. Some of the abuses led to serious and life-threatening injuries. One child has been in a persistent vegetative state since suffering abuse at the hands of Chen.

DePaul Orders Return of Sabra Hummus

CHICAGO — DePaul University in Chicago has asked its food service to reinstate the sale of Sabra hummus.

The sale of Sabra hummus had been suspended last month after a request by a pro-Palestinian student group, even though the request didn't go through DePaul's internal Fair Business Practices Committee, as is customary.

Students for Justice in Palestine objected to the fact that Sabra is half-owned by the Strauss Group, which has publicly supported Israeli troops and provides care packages and sports equipment to Israeli soldiers.

Its request led to objections from Jewish students and discussions between Chicago's Jewish federation and DePaul's top leaders, who indicated the appropriate university processes weren't followed, *JUF News* reported.

The request will now go to the Fair Business Practices Committee, which will examine the complaint and make recommendations to the university president.

The reinstatement followed a vote last week by students at Princeton University on whether to ask Princeton's dining services to provide an alternative brand of hummus to Sabra. Voting on the referendum, placed on last week's United Student Government ballot by the Princeton Committee on Palestine, concluded Dec. 1.

The national effort to ban Sabra hummus is part of the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement.

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Missionary group builds new facility in Toronto

Jews for Judaism Toronto's director of education Rabbi Michael Skobac, left, and Julius Ciss, the organization's executive director.

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Julius Ciss calls them "Hebrew Christians."

Ciss, executive director of the Toronto chapter of Jews for Judaism, is referring to Christian missionary groups that have made it a specialized practice within the evangelical community to target unaffiliated or "assimilated" Jews who are searching for a deeper spiritual connection to the world.

Of particular concern to Jews in the Toronto area, Ciss said, is a group called Chosen People Ministries (CPM), a rival to the Jews for Jesus organization. This group, he said, uses quasi-Jewish propaganda to great effect to lure susceptible Jews away from even a nominal connection to their Jewish roots and toward the acceptance of "Messiah Yeshua" – a.k.a. Jesus.

CPM recently announced that it's nearing the final stages of building its new Toronto Messianic Centre and national headquarters on Bridgeland Avenue, just west of Yorkdale Mall. For the past 15 years, it had operated out of a small house on Sheppard Avenue, between Yonge and Bathurst streets.

Ciss said the group has refined its pitch to Jews over the years, creating spaces where the Gospel is preached in a Jewish cultural atmosphere that makes it easier for Jews to believe they're staying true to their roots while they're being taught that they can only be saved by accepting Jesus.

Jews for Judaism's primary mission is to prevent groups such as CPM from recruiting Jews.

A reformed Jew for Jesus member himself – he said he spent several years in the organization before realizing he'd made a "horrible" mistake – Ciss said the methods used by the various missionary groups are specifically designed to break down psychological barriers that many Jews have erected against Christian proselytizing.

"These are basically churches operating under the guise of a Jewish patina," Ciss said. "Their presentations can be very deceptive to an assimilated Jew who is looking for spiritual alternatives."

For instance, one of the ways missionaries get Jews to attend services is instead of holding them on Sundays like other churches, they will instead "ask you to visit their 'synagogue' on Shabbat. And that has a totally different, Jewish ring to it."

Instead of referring to the New Testament, the missionaries refer to the "Brit ha'Hadashah" – the Hebrew translation for the name of the Christian Bible – and instead of asking Jews to accept Jesus as their lord and saviour, they instead ask them to accept "Yeshua ha'Mashiach," he said.

Continued on page 15

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Greater Toronto Area

Can a phoenix arise?

From the editor's desk...

The image we are most used to seeing is of Israelis, with the inspiring blue and white Star of David patches on their arms, travelling far and wide to assist other countries through dark hours of natural disaster and national emergency.

Last week the image was inverted.

The natural calamity occurred in Israel. Starting midday Thursday, fire raged for 77 hours through the Carmel forest near Haifa, killing 42 people, displacing thousands, threatening thousands more, destroying 50,000 dunams of forest and burning down millions of trees.

Israel's firefighting resources were insufficient for the emergency. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sought help from friendly countries. The ministry was in contact with almost all European countries and with Middle Eastern states seeking assistance in extinguishing the blaze.

The response was immediate.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper said that Canada would do everything possible to help Israel with this emergency and was prepared to offer any assistance required, including firefighting aircraft and personnel. Canada dispatched four water-bombers to combat the blaze.

The prime minister also expressed condolences to the families of the people who perished in fire.

British Prime Minister David Cameron – whose unfolding Mideast policy may not be all that friendly to Israel – called Netanyahu on Friday afternoon to extend condolences and sympathies for the lives lost in the fire. He also dispatched two helicopters based in Cyprus.

U.S. President Barack Obama spoke with Netanyahu early in the crisis. He sent the Boeing 747 supertanker, "Evergreen," to release its cargo of more than 40 tons of fire-extinguishing material.

Before the Evergreen arrived into Israeli airspace, Russia sent an Ilyushin-76 cargo plane Saturday to help in the fight against the fire. The plane jettisoned some 42,000 litres of water at one time over the burning forest.

Australia's Prime Minister Julia Gillard spoke directly to Netanyahu to "confirm Australia's assistance and convey her condolences, and those of the people of Australia, to the people of Israel at this difficult time," according to a statement.

Perhaps most surprising was the response by Turkey. Turkey sent two airplanes and crew to assist in the battle against the Carmel blaze.

Prime Minister Netanyahu personally thanked Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan for his aid. Erdogan said Sunday that Turkey still demands an apology for the May raid on the ship the Mavi Marmara, which was part of a flotilla that aimed to break Israel's blockage of Gaza, and that Israel pay damages to the families of those killed and wounded. Nevertheless, Netanyahu said he hoped the gesture of assistance by Turkey "will serve as an opening to improve relations between Israel and Turkey."

The Palestinian Authority also sent firefighters. Bethlehem Civil Defence Chief Ibrahim Ayish told Palestinian news agency Ma'an that it was good to work alongside the Israeli teams."

Ha'aretz reported that PA firefighters arrived at nine in the morning on Sunday. "We were received respectfully. After all, we're dealing with a humanitarian issue which knows no borders," Ayish said.

When asked by Israel Radio how they felt about fighting a fire in Israel, the Palestinians responded that it was partly a humanitarian work, partly their job as firefighters, and that they believe Israel would help in the same way should the Palestinians ever find themselves in a similar situation.

Greece, Cyprus, Great Britain, Turkey, Russia, France, Italy, Bulgaria, Jordan, the United States, Spain, Azerbaijan, Switzerland, Canada, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority helped Israel.

From the command centre at Haifa University, Netanyahu said the following on Saturday: "I have spoken with approximately 30 heads of state and government, presidents and prime ministers in the past three days. I must tell you that their mobilization, the warmth of their remarks, their willingness, the desire to help immediately, sometimes even before we have managed to request it, must warm the heart of all Israelis...

"We have also witnessed displays of admiration and assistance from Egypt, from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, from Jordanian King Abdullah, and from Palestinian Authority [President Mahmoud Abbas], who volunteered to send three firefighters. I think that these things are very important.

"I had a very good and warm talk with him. I expressed appreciation both for this step and for his solidarity in conveying his condolences, as others have also done, and I told him that we're in the same neighbourhood. The fire is once here and once there. We are, in effect, creating a regional network. After we purchase the planes, the planes will join a regional network that I believe we can establish here for the benefit of all of our peoples."

What sort of phoenix will arise from the ashes of the Carmel forest fire? Perhaps one that will carry the branch of peace among neighbours in its beak?

– MBD

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See JN

Prime Minister Stephen Harper lights the shamash last week at a ceremony in Ottawa. With him are, from left, Rabbi Chaim Mendelsohn of Chabad Centrepointe in Ottawa and Rabbi Menachem Matusof of Chabad Lubavitch of Alberta.

[Jason Ransom photo]

Greater Toronto Area

Beth Tzedec leaves Conservative shul group

Infrastructure offered by CCCS not seen as necessary

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Beth Tzedec Congregation is citing budgetary reasons for leaving the Canadian Council of Conservative Synagogues (CCCS), a breakaway group it helped form in 2008.

The shul was among four Toronto congregations that were the group's original constituents. Three of them – Beth Tzedec, Adath Israel Congregation and Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue – had recently left the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), the umbrella for Conservative congregations in North America. Beth Sholom Synagogue had not been affiliated.

Norman Kahn

The group had grown to eight – now seven – Canadian congregations, and held its second annual convention in June.

In October, it launched its Congregational High School with additional funding from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. The school is an outgrowth of Adath Israel's congregational high school program. A second location was started at Beth Tzedec, which will henceforth be unaffiliated.

In a letter to congregants dated Nov. 5, Beth Tzedec president Norman Kahn said the shul's board of governors decided at its Nov. 2 meeting to withdraw from the CCCS after weighing the benefits of membership against the cost.

The synagogue will save "a substantial amount of money… at a time when we have no choice but to control all expenses, as we continue to spend where we must on infrastructure and growth," he wrote in the letter, which is downloadable on the shul's website.

In a phone interview, Kahn told *The CJN* that Beth Tzedec, "like other congregations throughout North America, has suffered because of the economic downturn."

Although membership levels have remained "more or less" steady – the shul has close to 2,700 member families – membership dues haven't risen significantly, and costs continue to rise, he said. As well, Beth Tzedec's 55-year-old building requires "constant maintenance and repairs."

"There's a crunch there," Kahn said, adding that the board has looked at other expenditures as well, restructuring its afternoon school, for example, "to reduce costs and make a program that would be more appealing" by adding home study and online study and reducing in-class time.

Kahn said board members – and others at the synagogue who have offered input – don't believe they need the infrastructure offered by the CCCS.

The shul remains committed to collaborating with other Conservative synagogues on educational and youth programming, Kahn wrote in his letter.

"We cannot see the value in continuing to fund the infrastructure of CCCS, or in relying on its paid employees to facilitate programming, conversations and collaborations among Conservative leaders and synagogue professionals which we are already managing successfully on our own," he wrote.

Among Beth Tzedec's youth programs is a Paper Clips trip to Whitwell, Tenn., planned for February. It's open to teens from other synagogues.

The high school program, considered the CCCS' flagship youth program, offers a Jewish heritage trip to New York in the spring. It is also open to teens who are not in the program.

CCCS president Eric Gossin said Beth Tzedec's decision came as a surprise, and a disappointment. "It caught us a bit off guard."

Financially, it means the the organization is losing one of its largest contributors, if not the largest, said Gossin.

The amount Beth Tzedec paid for CCCS membership "was not that different" from the amount it paid in USCJ dues, Kahn said. Although the membership fee typically assessed by the USCJ for a shul Beth Tzedec's size was significantly higher than what the shul paid to the CCCS, the amount it actually paid the USCJ had been reduced after negotiations, he explained.

The CCCS is now looking at its own financial structure and mission statement, and its national youth director is winding down her duties.

Gossin said that Beth Tzedec is still "absolutely" part of the CCCS high school program. "We're not going to hurt the kids, first of all… We're trying to build the community, and make everyone feel welcome."

He believes the two-year-old organization is still suffering growing pains. "We don't have a long history."

Following a regular monthly meeting of representatives of all seven congregations – as well as Beth Tzedec representatives – last Thursday night, Gossin told *The CJN* that "everybody is still embracing the organization and the notion of continuing on."

He said that the CCCS is "not trying to replicate USCJ. We want to be something that's uniquely Canadian."

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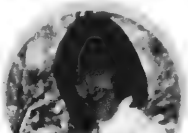

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Jewish feminists look back and ahead

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Twenty years ago, Francine Zuckerman's film *Half the Kingdom* explored Jewish feminism, a project with roots in a 1983 conference on the role of women in Judaism.

The topic was considered very controversial at the time, recalled Rabbi Elyse Goldstein at a recent 20th anniversary event.

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

But she derives hope from the fact that baby namings for Jewish girls – an innovation shown in the movie – have become "normative," and from other changes in recent years.

Rabbi Goldstein, director of Kolel, the Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning, was part of a panel discussion celebrating the film's 20th year and putting it in context 10 years after the last anniversary event.

The Nov. 30 program, a sold-out evening organized by Kolel at the Bloor Cinema, was titled "*Half The Kingdom*: the next generation."

Along with Rabbi Goldstein, panelists who appeared in the film with her included journalist Michele Landsberg, University of Ottawa professor Naomi Goldenberg, and Concordia University associate professor Norma Joseph, who is also a *CJN* columnist.

Representing the younger generation were novelist Alison Pick, Rabba Sara Hurwitz, an Orthodox religious leader who made headlines when she was ordained last year by Rabbi Avi Weiss, and Rabbi Miriam Margles of the Danforth Jewish Circle, who co-founded an organization in the United States that brings together Jewish leaders and Palestinians.

Zuckerman also spoke, and actor Marilyn Lightstone moderated the panel.

Alice Shalvi, who won the prestigious Israel Prize for her work in advancing women's rights, said in a video from Israel that the Orthodox rabbinic establishment there still shows no indication of becoming more open, lenient or tolerant.

However, she added, there are more opportunities for women to practise their Judaism. A former president of the Masorti movement's Schechter Institute – a departure from her Orthodox background – Shalvi said it has been extremely gratifying to be accepted as both religious and feminist.

Likewise, Joseph recalled the anger she expressed in the film at being told there was no such thing as an Orthodox feminist. "I'm no longer an oxymoron," she said.

Goldenberg, an atheist, recalled a scene of women praying at the Kotel. "Even though I'm a Jewish secularist, the power of that wall is so important."

But she denounced the "sexism enforced by male violence" at the Kotel, referring to shouting and even chair-throwing by haredi men.

As well, she said, a scene that showed Women in Black "standing up for justice for non-Jews [Palestinians]" moved her. "I haven't seen that in a long time, and that used to be a tremendous part of secular Judaism.

"How did it happen that Jewishness got reduced to being religious?" Goldenberg replied to an audience member who said there has been a "killing off" of the secular community.

Joseph clarified that secular Jews "had to do Jewish… you couldn't just declare it."

Landsberg lamented the loss of dynamism that was evident in the film. At that time, she said, "You could be a self-respecting strong feminist, and still have a rightful, prideful place within the Jewish community. I feel that's diminished tremendously."

She said she was disheartened by the "extent of patriarchal sexism" in Israel as well as the path that Canadian Jewry has taken in terms of self-definition.

"It used to be a point of pride that Jews argued and debated," Landsberg said. "Now we're not allowed to question. Everything has hardened. Wherever on the spectrum you stand, there's anger and animosity towards Jews who don't have the same view."

Rabbi Goldstein took a more positive view, recalling her first position in Toronto as assistant rabbi at Holy Blossom Temple in 1983. "It was exhilarating and excruciating, and unbelievably lonely. I was an exotic specimen, and people would come to Holy Blossom to see me – not to hear me, not to learn from me, but to see me."

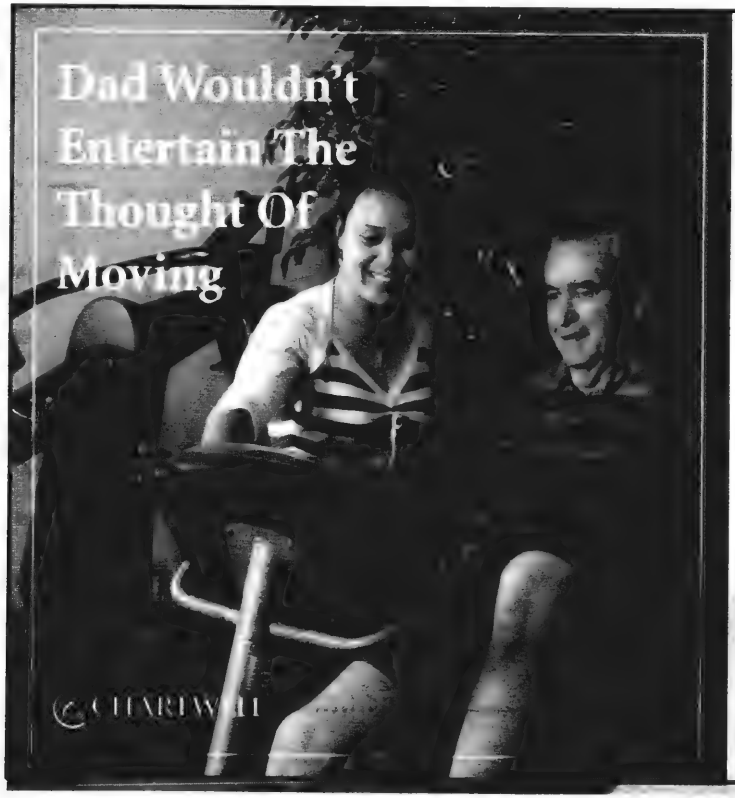
Among unexpected milestones in the past decade, Rabbi Goldstein was elected the first woman president of the Toronto Board of Rabbis and was involved in organizing an all-female cantors' concert. As well, she noted, a female rabbi was hired to teach rabbinics at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

She also mentioned the Toronto Partnership Minyan, an Orthodox group that gives women Torah honours, including aliyot.

"So, honestly, I feel more optimistic than I felt 10 years ago," she said.

Rabbi Margles expressed gratitude to the women who appeared in the movie, and to their generation.

She expressed concern, however, that advances have been in one direction only, and that qualities associated with women, such as emotional intelligence, spiritual attunement and empathy, are dismissed as "touchy-feely."



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The fire

More than three days after it began, the raging fire in the picturesque hills and forests of the Carmel range south and east of Haifa was brought, finally, under control. Firefighters fought the flames for some 77 hours before they could proclaim that the inferno was at last contained.

The words "fought the flames" are entirely inadequate to convey the unique fury of fire that is a unpredictable, ubiquitous, blazing hell in which men and women struggled day and night to save life and forest.

The fire killed 42 people, one of whom, 32-year-old Rabbi Uriel Malka, had recently been the principal of Ohr HaTorah Day School in Winnipeg. Most of the lives lost belonged to prison guards and prison guard cadets rushing through the heart of the inferno to a nearby prison to evacuate the prisoners there. Most of the guards and cadets were burned alive when the bus in which they were travelling was engulfed in flames on the first day of the fire. Rabbi Malka, training to be a prison chaplin, was among the ill-fated bus of rescuers. Two firefighters who rushed to rescue the guards and a 16-year-old volunteer also were killed.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the "divine heroism" of the men and women who fought to defend life. But then we have always known that courage, self-sacrifice and heroism have never been in short supply in Israel.

The fire also destroyed nearly 50,000 dunams of land in the Carmel region and demolished or severely damaged some 250 homes. It was the worst forest fire in Israel's young history. And it appears, sadly, that human error and negligence may have been the cause.

In addition to the men and women and soldiers of the Israel Defence Forces fighting the fire on the ground, 35 airplanes flew innumerable sorties in the sky to douse the flames with water and flame retardant. Of those 35 aircraft, 24 were from other countries. Israel received aid from countries as near as Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece and Bulgaria and as far away as Britain, France, Canada, the United States and Russia.

Firefighters from the Palestinian Authority also joined the fight to subdue the fire.

The flames are now doused. The Carmel forest in large part is now ash, cinder, brittle dead branch. The country, the people, are mourning the dead.

But the forest will be replanted and rebuilt and the life-sustaining ecosystem that was lost will eventually be restored.

This is one of the monuments – perhaps the most everlasting – that must be erected to the memories of the brave men and women who lost their lives trying to save others from harm's way.

All of us will have a role to play in helping build this monument. May the memories of the 42 be for blessing.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The World Jewish Congress launched a global campaign for "formal recognition" of Israel by the Vatican. WJC president Edgar Bronfman urged Jewish leaders in 70 countries to raise the subject of diplomatic recognition of Israel at every meeting they have with the Pope or Vatican representatives.

Dry Bones
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ARAB LEADERS WERE PLEADING WITH AMERICA TO STOP THE THREAT FROM IRAN
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Community restructuring and Congress

For years, the only organization that has been truly the voice not only of the community but also of those, like ourselves, who survived the Nazi inferno, is the Canadian Jewish Congress. Whether it was advocating with the Claims Conference for Holocaust survivor benefits or lobbying the federal government to have Nazi war criminals exposed and denaturalized, we knew that we could count on CJC.

We join CJC lay leaders Barbara Bank and David Schwartz in expressing our deep concern about the centralizing of Jewish advocacy agencies ("Congress wary of CIJA restructuring plan," Nov. 25). We implore the restructuring committee to understand that the name Canadian Jewish Congress brings honour to Canadian Jewry, and its loss would be a profound mistake. As Holocaust survivors, we want to support the invigorated efforts of our leadership in its plans to help make Jewish advocacy the best it can be. Let us do so by ensuring the viability of CJC, a name the community and Canada trusts.

Nathan Leipciger and Sidney Zoltak
Co-Presidents
Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors

* * *

The work of Canadian Jewish Congress on issues of human rights, justice and public affairs advocacy over these many years is well-known and highly regarded, not only by the Jewish community but by the larger Canadian community. The structure of CJC links its activities to local communities, large and small. Therefore, I am deeply disturbed by the possibility that CJC is being overlooked by the restructuring process. Instead of being considered as the ideal structure to unite the multiplicity of national boards and agencies, the article implies the reverse ("Congress wary of CIJA restructuring plan," Nov. 25). The restructuring committee should consider the history of the activities of CJC and focus on ensuring that a stronger and more unified CJC continue to serve our community.

Herb Rosenfeld
Past President Toronto Jewish Congress (now UJA Federation of Greater Toronto) and Past Chairman National Budgeting Conference (now UIA Federations)

* * *

How sad it is to learn that the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) "is seeking to centralize control of the host of Jewish advocacy agencies it administers" ("Congress wary of CIJA restructuring plan," Nov. 25). It was only six years ago that CIJA took control of the advocacy file in the Canadian Jewish community, and now it wants absolute control by creating a "single Jewish public affairs organization encompassing the national and regional level." The creation of CIJA was a very costly procedure, and now the community is being asked to spend more funds to undo this unwarranted reorganization. Before the advent of CIJA, Canadian Jewish Congress was the address to which all Jewish advocacy matters were sent, including advocacy for Israel in Canada. Through a campaign of budget-cutting and then outright power politics, the role of CJC has been diminished, and what was once an admired and respected democratic organization is being phased out of existence. CJC was and still should be the single organization for advocacy in Canada.

Manuel Shacter
Montreal

* * *

It is profoundly disturbing that the proposed restructuring of Jewish community advocacy could result in the disappearance of Canadian Jewish Congress ("Congress wary of CIJA restructuring plan," Nov. 25). Canadian Jewish Congress is committed to fighting antisemitism and discrimination, and to fighting for human rights and social justice. CJC has partnered with Kulanu Toronto for two years to oppose the anti-Israel rhetoric of the hateful group Queers Against Israel Apartheid (QuAIA) at Toronto's Pride Parade. Congress supported Kulanu Toronto every step of the way, both behind the scenes and through their visible presence in the parade. If CJC is disbanded, who will Kulanu Toronto turn to next year when QuAIA returns to spread its anti-Israel invective? The CJC has been Kulanu Toronto's link to the Canadian Jewish community. We trust the CJC, as do many others.

Justine Apple
Executive Director, Kulanu Toronto

* * *

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1629

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

B'nai Brith maintains its own voice

While Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy chair Steven Cummings is entitled to expect agencies funded by the federations and under CIJA's direction to speak with one voice, it should be noted that B'nai Brith Canada continues to maintain its own voice, and that this is a healthy factor in Jewish community life ("Advocacy restructuring nearly done, Cummings says," Dec. 2). In fact, B'nai Brith Canada and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto made an agreement some years back that mutually recognized the validity of both these major segments of the Canadian Jewish advocacy world speaking out for the community on key issues. In a vibrant and engaged community such as ours, collaboration and diversity of approach need not be mutually exclusive.

Frank Dimant
CEO, B'nai Brith Canada

For more letters, see cjnews.com.

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Perspectives

Netanyahu thanks international community for aid

By BARAK RAVID
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JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently spoke on the phone with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan for the first time since taking office more than a year and a half ago.

Erdogan expressed his sorrow in light of the heavy losses caused by the massive fires in the Carmel, and said Turkey is ready to continue to help Israel overcome the fires.

Netanyahu thanked Erdogan for his words, saying, "We very much appreciate your help, and I am sure that this incident will offer an opportunity for improved relations between our two countries."

Turkey sent Israel at least two firefighting aircraft to help control the huge brushfire that has been raging through northern Israel since last Thursday. Its aircraft were among the first to arrive, owing in part to its close geographic proximity, relative to the European countries that also sent firefighting aircraft.

Other countries sending aid, which arrived in Israel later, included Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, France, the United Kingdom, Croatia, Russia, Spain and Romania. Overall, more than 20 firefighting planes were expected to arrive in Israel, with New York's fire department also agreeing to send a firefighting airplane.

In conversation with reporters, Netanyahu said he watched as the planes entered the fire and smoke, and "I really appreciate how many states stepped up to help us.

"I spoke with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and President [Dmitry] Medvedev, and I thanked them and the Russian nation for immediately answering our call and the significant help that Russia has put on the line to fight the fires in the Carmel," Netanyahu said.

"The international answer to our call was outstanding, and the willingness to send help was also impressive, and it should bring comfort to all citizens of Israel. It demonstrates that there is affection for, and identification with Israel from all corners."

He added that the aid from Turkey is a "very commendable step. I know that Erdogan decided on it personally. Israel will find the proper way to express its appreciation for the Turkish efforts."

Turkey's offer came at a time when its relations with Israel, which have deteriorated in recent years, reached a low point last May when nine Turkish citizens were killed as Israeli naval commandos boarded a Gaza-bound aid flotilla.

U.S. President Barack Obama last Thursday night offered condolences to the families of the victims of the massive brushfire, pledging American aid to help fight the blaze.

"I want [to offer] our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of all those who died as a result of the terrible forest fire in northern Israel," Obama told the Jewish community at a Chanukah candlelighting ceremony at the White House.

"As rescuers and firefighters continue in their work, the United States is acting to help our Israeli friends respond to the disaster," he said.

Obama told reception guests, among them Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren, that planning had begun to send assistance to Israel.

"A short while ago, our ambassador in Tel Aviv, Jim Cunningham… launched an effort to identify the firefighting assistance we have available and provide it to Israel as quickly as possible," he said.

He added: "Of course, that's what friends do for each other."

The fire broke out mid-day on Thursday, and by the evening had swept down the slopes of the Carmel plateau toward Haifa, leaving 42 dead and more than 13,000 residents displaced. By the early hours of Friday, the blaze was still not under control.

The burned-out shell of the bus in which prison guards travelling to evacuate prison inmates died in the fire in the Carmel plateau.

* * *

As of Friday morning, mass evacuations continued across northern Israel as dry, easterly winds fanned the massive brushfire toward Haifa.

More than 17,000 residents, including 600 prison inmates, were evacuated as the blaze raged out of control, destroying hundreds of acres of pine forest before sweeping down the slopes of the Carmel plateau toward Israel's third-largest city.

By mid-evening Thursday, fire chiefs had admitted publicly that they had lost control of the fire, believed to have started in an illegal landfill site.

As the flames neared the city limits, residents of Denya, an affluent district of Haifa – a busy port city and the north's economic heartland – were moved to safety.

On Friday morning, the fire had swept its way to the coastal highway, forcing police to close one of Israel's busiest roads between Zichron Yaakov and Haifa.

Forty people were killed when a bus carrying prison service trainees to assist in the evacuation was engulfed by fire after a falling tree blocked its path. Two firefighters and a policeman were among the dead. At least two more fire crew were reported missing, and the Haifa district police chief was among the injured.

Across the region, traffic crawled to a standstill, with black smoke and flames visible for miles around.

The blaze broke out and spread rapidly across the tinder-dry Carmel countryside, left parched after the hottest November in Israel in 60 years.

One of the first residential areas to be evacuated was Kibbutz Beit Oren, where all 400 residents reached safety before the entire collective farm was razed.

Netanyahu said evacuations would continue and authorities would take no risks where civilian lives were in danger.

"Evacuations will be conducted as needed, with sufficient advance warning. We do not want any more injuries," said Netanyahu, who called an emergency cabinet meeting for Friday morning.

As the fire raged on, the town Isfiyeh, a centre for Israel's Druze community, much of which is concentrated in the Carmel mountains, was next to be evacuated.

Police evacuated students in Haifa University dormitories. They were transferred to a nearby high school. Some 200 patients from the Tirat Hacarmel psychiatric hospital were also evacuated.

Firefighters trying to contain the blaze. ***[Israel Sun and Flash90 photos]***

Opinions

My ode to friendship

If I were a poet I would write an *Ode to Friendship*. But I'm not, so I'll write this column.

When I first moved to Montreal, I had this strange idea that each person had a limited allotment of best friends. I figured I had used mine up, sort of like a pie, and I didn't expect to find any more. I also knew that making friends as the rabbi's wife was not ideal. People have strange expectations about rabbinic families. So naturally, like a self-fulfilling prophecy, it was difficult for me to find friends at first. (I must note that my husband had none of my hesitations.) Admittedly, Montreal was a hard city to engage in friendship terms. People here grew up together. They had a long history together that felt like a barrier to this newcomer.

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

But I was wrong on all counts.

Friendship, like love, is both boundless and endless. The more you love, the more there is. So as I opened up, more people opened up to me in friendship. Over the years, men and women have become close to me – friendly, welcoming, accessible, responsive, intimate.

What is it that makes friendship so wonderful and so necessary? We don't seem able to survive without our friends. It isn't enough to rely on family alone, or to have one partner exclusively. We need close friends. We're social animals, and our good survival requires a social existence. We expect a community of like-minded people, some of whom share many precious moments together with us. With some, we spend happy occasions, and we know we can call on them when trouble descends.

At each stage of life, we expect and need different qualities from our friends. We're capable of sustaining different types of relationships when we're young than when we're old. Our requirements shift.

Youngsters desire a playmate, a steady partner in games and gossip. In the teen years, loyalty and steadfastness are perhaps valued in a friend, as is a touch of the impulsive, the willingness to brave something new and exciting together.

Later as adults, friendships shift. Making new couple friends and perhaps losing old single friends, we look toward joint values and roots. In the final stage of old age, what's left? A life lived, a history of experiences, work and play, volunteering and studying, values shared, laughter and tears. These are the elements of life's friendship.

Be committed to your friends with laughter, confidence and love.

Jews and aboriginals: finding common ground

We have just returned from a trip to New Zealand and Australia, a gift to ourselves for a number of family simchahs.

We were fortunate to be able to visit a Maori Marae (settlement) in New Zealand, even catching a *haka* competition (see the movie *Invictus* for details of *haka*). In Australia, we saw numerous examples of emerging Australian indigenous art, meeting one artist who gave us insights into their use of symbols.

Jean McGerbet in Vancouver

Both in New Zealand and Australia, the coming of the white colonials was a disaster. In Australia in particular, unlike in New Zealand, the indigenous populations were hunted like animals, herded into settlements far from their own traditional lands – which were handed out to whites – and treated like sub-humans

The indigenous population was once up to one million strong, with hundreds of languages and traditions. Stories about the Dreamtime, origin tales, were their histories. Most of these languages are lost, and most of the stories and tribal wisdom, held by elders and passed on orally to the next generation, are only recently being reclaimed where possible.

Yet we found that a robust art tradition – only begun in the 1970s – has provided a way for them to express a return to their roots. Indigenous art could be ephemeral, such as sand paintings and body paintings associated with dances. It could be more permanent, as in rock carvings and body tattoos. But in the past 40 years, the traditional symbols have been translated onto canvas and bark, or carved in wooden grave poles, so that stories once almost lost can be told again.

That is to say, they will paint for the observer, but the secret meanings may remain hidden from all outsiders.

How does it feel to have one's identity wrenched from oneself and one's people? How did it feel when Australia's aboriginal children of mixed parentage were rounded up and put into Dickensian camps? The brutality of the repression made it a hard road back to owning one's past and being able to hand it on to one's children.

It seems that as the heavy hand of assimilationist policy has been slowly lifted, indigenous people have taken tools of the wider society and turned them to good advantage while maintaining their own traditions. So while there's anger, there's also, more importantly, hope. Where there's poverty and despair, there's also economic and psychological strength.

There are many roadblocks, but the youth seem to be up to task.

What's the connection to our lives?

Here in comfortable North America as Jews, we face other challenges as a minority community when it comes to retrieving, preserving and passing on our own heritage.

Acceptance has led to assimilation. Whereas in Australia persecution failed to erase an indigenous identity, perhaps they should have tried acceptance. I'm being facetious, of course. No one should be forced to abandon a heritage and culture that defines who they are. The indigenous people of Australia are in the process of rebuilding a heritage all but lost.

What's true in Australia also holds true in Canada. Centuries of persecution and forced assimilation all but destroyed many First Nations communities.

We now bask in the warmth of western democracy and hope that the winds of prejudice are stilled. If there's any chance that the idea of multiculturalism can work, that it can build a society in which everyone shares basic values while maintaining their own identities, it will be in a democratic society. That's an idea we must believe in.

Here's the bad news: First Nations activists often identify with Palestinian aspirations while considering Israel totally at fault for the situation in the Middle East.

Make no mistake. Persecution of Jews and the Holocaust are historical concepts. But nightly televised broadcasts of riots with Palestinian children facing Israeli soldiers are the current reality. We need to acknowledge this reality.

As companion minorities in a democratic society, we share some common ground, just not all of it. We should keep that in mind as we seek that common ground.

Kol ishah: the voice of a woman

Despite significant strides in past decades, women worldwide have yet to achieve egalitarianism. For example, recently in Iran, a woman who was originally found guilty of adultery was sentenced to death.

The United Nations continues to slide downward in repute and utility. In September 2011, it plans to convene Durban III in New York City, another conference ostensibly directed at stemming racism. The memory of the original World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, in 2001 and its display of antisemitism should serve as a warning to avoid yet another UN-sponsored fiasco. Wisely, the Canadian government has decided not to participate in this charade.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

And, recently, in "advancing" women's rights, the UN has established an agency, designated UN Women, to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. Saudi Arabia, where women are prohibited from driving and require a male guardian's permission to travel or to have surgery, has now been elected to the new agency's board. The thought is mind-boggling.

In Canada, we should be proud of the gains made toward gender equality, although there is much yet to be achieved. Egalitarianism is an entrenched constitutional right through sections 15 and 28 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the courts have provided a thorough analysis as to the nature and meaning of those provisions. We have had a female prime minister. Of the nine judges of the Supreme Court of Canada, four are women including the chief justice of Canada. The Alberta Court of Appeal, the province's highest court, is the only provincial court of appeal that includes more women than men, and the previous two Governors General were women.

We are readily offended by religious regimes that subjugate women, but what about our own faith community? Many rabbis, cantors, synagogue presidents and community leaders are female. But, sadly, branches of our community, in Canada and throughout the world, treat women as second-class citizens. In Israel recently, dozens of haredim clashed with around 200 worshippers from the Women of the Wall group at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. The men were disturbed by the mixed prayer taking place, as well as by the women's singing. Last summer, the group's leader, Anat Hoffman, was arrested for praying in public with a Torah scroll.

Closer to home, we frequently encounter the prohibition against the "voice of a woman" in formal prayer, celebration and other facets of Jewish life. This prohibition can be traced to the Talmud, in particular, the Gemara, and connotes the notion that the voice of a woman is attractive to a man and that a woman's singing will distract the man from prayer.

The issue of *kol ishah*, in terms of equality, is somewhat akin to the requirement of modesty. The dictates of modesty have led to several controversies in Quebec, including one at an exercise facility where women working out in front of full-length windows disturbed the sensibilities of chassidic men.

The prohibition of the voice of a women and the requirement of modesty underscore a view of the roles of men and women in traditional Judaism.

It's time to re-think an outdated, antiquated and discriminatory view of the traditional roles and responsibilities of men and women. The Talmud is rich in interpretation and reinterpretation. Even Halachah has been the subject of interpretation. Nothing is immutable, nor should be fixed for all time, and even the "word of God" must be applied contextually as circumstances change through passing generations.

What should be immutable, if anything, is the notion of egalitarianism between genders and respect, dignity and equal opportunity for all members of our faith. Regarding the notion of modesty, what do the traditionalists fear – that men exposed to the voice and sight of a women will lose control or become so distracted as to render them incapable of prayer? This is insulting to men, just as the deprivation of participation in all facets of Jewish life is insulting to women.

Let us be uplifted, inspired and enriched by all voices that celebrate our rich heritage, including *kol ishah*, the voice of a woman.

The Kirshner File

A cornucopia of books ...

The days grow dark as December descends, but these books, wide-ranging, eclectic and never less than interesting, let in a spray of light during Chanukah.

The Life and Legends of Simon Wiesenthal (Doubleday), by Tom Segev, is a thoroughly researched and nuanced biography of the late Nazi hunter.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Segev, having mined 16 archives and read Wiesenthal's private papers, has produced a book rich in detail and unconventional in interpretation. Tracing his life from the Galician town of Buczacz to Vienna, from where he conducted his relentless search for war criminals, Segev takes a reader on a tumultuous journey. Although he clearly respects Wiesenthal's achievements in tracking down Nazis, Segev, an Israeli journalist known for not pulling his punches, claims his subject had a complicated relationship with the truth and was not averse to inflating his importance.

Anthony Julius' *Trials of the Diaspora A History of Anti-Semitism in England* (Oxford University Press) is magisterial in conception and sweep. Counting the index and notes, Julius' magnum opus runs to more than 800 pages. With the exactitude of a good lawyer, he examines four distinct aspects of antisemitism: the medieval variant of defamation, murder and expulsion, the literary antisemitism of British writers such as Chaucer, Shakespeare and Dickens; the antisemitism of insult and exclusion that prevailed from 17th century readmission of Jews to Britain to the 20th century, and the antisemitism that delegitimizes Israel.

Robert Wistrich's massive and highly informative work, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad* (Random House), does not leave a stone unturned. A professor of modern European history at the Hebrew University, he delves deeply into the oldest hatred.

The notorious Alfred Dreyfus affair unfolded at the intersection of the birth of political Zionism and the rise of modern antisemitism. Ruth Harris' *Dreyfus: Politics, Emotion, and the Scandal of the Century* (Metropolitan Books) is a probing and enlightening account of a significant and telling event that foreshadowed Vichy France.

Louis Begley's *Why the Dreyfus Affair Matters* (Yale University Press) skilfully analyzes the forces that brought down an innocent Jewish army officer and divided a nation in a spectacular historical drama.

Dreyfus' persecution serves as a launching pad for Sarah Hammerschlag's book, *The Figural Jew: Politics & Identity in Postwar French Thought* (The University of Chicago Press). In this intellectually complex study, she uses the proverbial wandering Jew, the target of nationalist rhetoric, to explain how this much maligned figure has been positively recast by contemporary philosophers in France.

Olivier Philipponnat and Patrick Lienhardt, in *The Life of Irene Nemirovsky* (Alfred A. Knopf), recount the tragic story of a Russian Jewish émigré in France who achieved literary fame in the late 1920s, only to be arrested and deported to Auschwitz during the Holocaust.

The Glatstein Chronicles (Yale University Press), edited and with an introduction by Ruth Wisse, consists of two autobiographical novellas by the renowned poet Jacob Glatstein (1896-1971). The novellas, brimming with childhood memories and observations of prewar Poland, are based on a trip to his native land in 1934.

In *Prophets of the Past* (Princeton University Press), Michael Brenner, a professor of Jewish history at the University of Munich, delivers a discerning analysis of how modern Jewish historians, from Simon Dubnow and Cecil Roth to Jacob Katz and Salo Baron, have interpreted Jewish history.

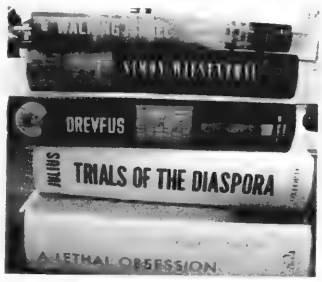
Arnold Reisman, in *An Ambassador and a Mensch* (self-published), tells the story of Behic Erkin, a Turkish ambassador in Nazi-occupied France who saved the lives of Jews.

With the fall of czarist Russia in 1917, Jewish writers and intellectuals devised a radical new vision of Jewish culture broadly based on art rather than religion. Kenneth Moss deftly traces the arc of this short-lived development in *Jewish Renaissance in the Russian Revolution* (Harvard University Press).

One of the pre-eminent Jewish figures of the 19th century was the British financier and philanthropist Moses Montefiore. Abigail Green, a young British historian, has written a first-rate biography, *Moses Montefiore. Jewish Liberator, Imperial Hero* (Harvard University Press).

Martin Fletcher, a seasoned television correspondent based in Tel Aviv, knows Israel well, having reported from the Jewish state since 1973. But in *Walking Israel: A Personal Search for the Soul of a Nation* (St. Martin's Press), he rediscovers and reconnects with the country as he walks along its coast from Gaza to Rosh Hanikra and meets a diverse array of people. Quite a journey.

The Crusaders sought to reclaim the Holy Land from Islam, and for a while, they were successful. In *Holy Warriors: A Modern History of the Crusades* (Random House), Jonathan Phillips, a specialist on this era, charts their conquests. Paul Berman, in *The Flight of the Intellectuals* (Melville House),



presents a searing critque of how thinkers in the West have fumbled in grappling with Islamist ideas and violence.

The modernization of Europe ushered in an orgy of ethnic cleansing: Jews in Russia and Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, to cite but two examples. In *Genocide Before the Holocaust* (Yale University Press), Cathie Carmicheal exposes instances of bloody-minded persecution from the early 20th century to 1941.

A companion volume, *The Jew in the Secret Nazi Reports on Popular Opinion in Germany, 1933-1945* (Yale University Press), edited by Otto Dov Kulka and Eberhard Jackel, is extremely revealing. The book clinically presents 752 German documents, accompanied by commentaries, showing the extent to which Germany's population supported Nazi antisemitic measures. Chilling, to say the very least.

Hitler's Germany nazified German Christianity, placing antisemitism at its theological core. Susannah Heschel expertly examines this phenomenon in *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany*. (Princeton University Press).

Gordon Horwitz's illuminating *Ghettostadt: Lodz and the Making of a Nazi City* (Harvard University Press) has been republished in a soft-cover edition.

A whiff of Americana: Tom Nolan's *Three Chords for Beauty's Sake* (W.W. Norton & Company) is an authoritative biography of jazz giant Avram Isaac Arshawsky, otherwise known as Artie Shaw. It appears on the 100th anniversary of his birth. *A Fine Romance: Jewish Songwriters, American Songs* (Schocken), by David Lehman, celebrates some of America's finest composers and lyricists.

Walter Schneir's *Final Verdict: What Really Happened in the Rosenberg Case* (Melville House) revisits the arrest, trial and execution of accused spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.

U.S. commentator Norman Podhoretz tackles a contentious subject with relish in *Why Are Jews Liberals?* (Doubleday).

In general: Laura Hillenbrand, in *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience and Redemption* (Random House), vividly recounts the amazing tale of a courageous and resourceful U.S. soldier who cheated the odds after his airplane crashed into the Pacific Ocean during a routine flight.

Empires in World History (Princeton University Press), an erudite volume by Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, carries us from Rome and China to the Ottoman, Mongol, Spanish, French and British empires. *World Heritage Sites* and *Unforgettable Places* (Firefly Books) guide you to visually thrilling locales around the world. Ditto *Unforgettable Canada* (Boston Mills Press). *50 Aircraft That Changed the World* (Firefly Books), by Ron Dick and Dan Patterson, is fascinating.

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From left to right: Bill Myhill, Gloria Sullivan, Betty Krunys, John Blewett, Trustees of Willowdale United Church

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Chinese Judeophile hopes to convert

By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN

Like many Chinese immigrants, Aaron Wood anglicized his name when he arrived in Canada – in his case, partly to avoid association with a kind of strong tea.

He used to be Aaron Chai.

In his native Mandarin, "chai" ("ch" as in "children") means wood, and he smiles and nods knowingly about the auspicious meaning and symbolism of the word in Judaism.

"Yes, it means 'life,'" Wood says. "I know." And he pronounces it perfectly.

Wood knows this because he has immersed himself in Jewish studies and Hebrew in the hope of converting one day and "becoming a member of the community."

In fact, Jewish studies have become a chief priority for the earnest 37-year-old, who trained as an engineer and now works as an acoustics consultant. Books on Jewish philosophy, Israel, Hebrew and Holocaust memoirs, which he devours, are strewn about the apartment he shares with his wife, Lisa. Taped to the wall above his computer is a chart of a Hebrew keyboard.

"I am learning Hebrew for one purpose," Wood tells *The CJN*. "To understand the Torah." He shows a reporter his dog-eared copy of the Jerusalem Bible. Hebrew words he does not understand are highlighted in yellow marker. There aren't many.

Wood is a fixture at Toronto's Village Shul – a shlep, he concedes, from his home near Humber College in Etobicoke, where his wife is studying to become a nurse. She too has joined him on his path to Judaism and attends synagogue with him each Shabbat and, sometimes, during the week for women's classes.

Aaron Wood holds a Hebrew primer, written in Mandarin. ***[Ron Csillag photo]***

"It's not easy for us to go to any synagogue," Wood says. "We want to move closer to Bathurst Street so we can be more exposed."

Wood's exotic story began in his native Tianjin, a city southeast of Beijing. He was raised in a "totally secular" family (like many Chinese, he feels that Buddhism and Confucianism are cultural forces rather than religions). Ironically, his first contact with Judaism came by way of Christian missionaries he met at university about 15 years ago.

"They gave me a Christian Bible, Old and New Testaments. I started to learn it and went to a few churches," he recalls. Comparing the Christian sources with the Tanach, "I found something was wrong. I said, 'This is the opposite of the Torah.' [Christians] borrowed and twisted Judaism into something else."

Wood knew virtually nothing about Judaism. "I heard about this other 'ism,'" he says, "but that's all." He began reading Jewish sources such as Maimonides and Martin Buber, and went online to discover more.

"This made a tremendous intellectual impact on me," he says.

Soon, he was leading Bible study groups and he visited a Chabad centre in Beijing. He encountered a few other Chinese who shared his interest. Officially, the Communist government recognizes just five religions, and Judaism isn't one of them. "As long as religion is private and not against the government, they don't care," Wood says.

He also began to learn Hebrew. "That was very hard for me. There was no material. It took me a year to figure out how to write a daled."

Wood also began listening to distant radio broadcasts about Israel and why Jews should "return" there. That intrigued him. He was more used to Chinese media depictions of Israel as an aggressor and an American proxy.

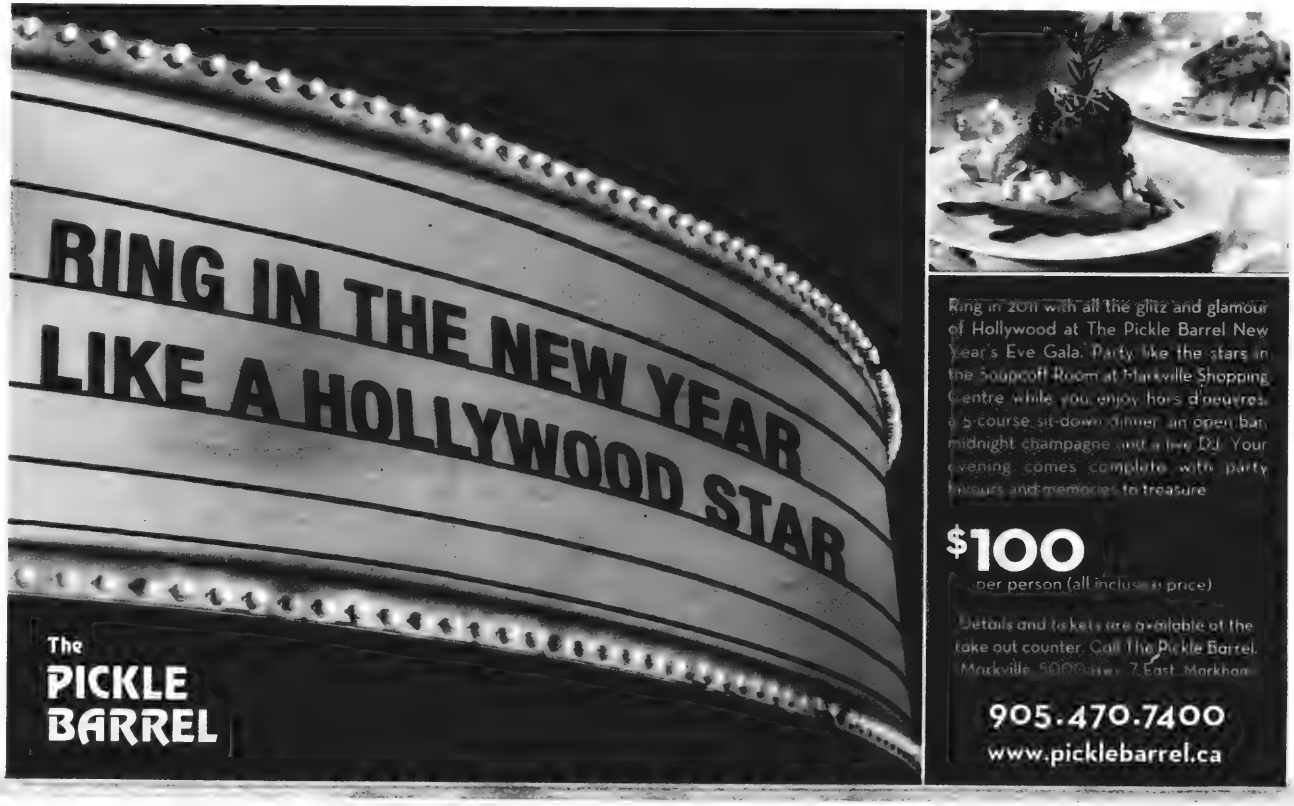
A friend directed him to Canada, and he arrived in 2005. It was only after he left that he discovered Tianjin had a synagogue that was built in 1939 by Russian refugees.

As a gentile – for now – Wood feels a duty to defend Israel. "I'm quite right-wing on Israel," he says. "The surrender of land is wrong. China once tried land for peace, and that dynasty collapsed."

Today, Wood firmly believes the Torah "is based on fact, not blind belief."

He also blogs in Mandarin on Jewish affairs at jewishjournal.com/you_tai_ren.

In all, he says, "I feel very comfortable here."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NY woman plays pastoral role in Orthodox shul

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Elana Stein Hain is one of a handful of Orthodox women filling synagogue leadership roles that have traditionally been reserved for men.

Elana Stein Hain

Although her title at New York's Lincoln Square Synagogue is "community scholar," she is listed on the synagogue's website as one of the clergy.

Her role comprises a pastoral element, and includes shivah visits, attending funerals (albeit not officiating, other than to sometimes read psalms), counselling, teaching and delivering sermons on Shabbat mornings after the service ends.

Stein Hain, 29, spoke to *The CJN* at Ulpanat Orot Girls School on Nov. 19, a Friday. She had just addressed students at the school, beginning a packed weekend as scholar-in-residence at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation and also guest speaker at Torah in Motion.

After Lincoln Square hired Stein Hain three years ago to bring young people into the shul, she started a monthly young professionals minyan, which now averages between 40 and 60 people each week, she said. A rabbinic intern runs the service.

In forging a relatively new path for Orthodox women, Stein Hain has kept in mind advice from her father, Martin Stein, a lawyer: "My dad always said, 'Do what you think is right… just be yourself.'

"I sort of see myself as just being myself. I enjoy what I do. It's my skill set, and my community's so lovely."

Last year, Stein Hain was named one of the *New York Jewish Week*'s "36 Under 36," young adults who are having an impact on the Jewish community.

Stein Hain, who was born in New York and raised in Teaneck, N.J., also has a Canadian connection. Her mother, Mindy Silverberg Stein, national president of Emunah of America, is from Toronto, and Stein Hain's grandparents still live here.

As a community leader, she said any change is "much more about what the community needs than some abstract objective standard.

"I think every community needs to set parameters for itself… You might be able to be one step ahead of the community, but you have to respect the process."

Only a handful of women have full-time leadership positions in Orthodox synagogues, but female scholars-in-residence are "going everywhere," she said.

Stein Hain, who is a graduate of Yeshiva University's graduate program in advanced talmudic studies, is pursuing a doctorate in religion at Columbia University. She is writing her dissertation on halachic loopholes.

Growing up, she wanted to be a lawyer, but eventually she decided she "liked Torah stuff more."

LIGHTING THE CHANUKIYAH: Rabbi Tzali Borenstein, co-founder of Chabad of Durham, is seen with Whitby Coun. Lorne Coe and regional Coun. Don Mitchell at the town's menorah lighting ceremony, held Dec. 1 in front of the Whitby Central Library. Durham Region, where Whitby is located, is experiencing a growth in its Jewish population.

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Children of Holocaust remembered in new garden

Compiled by CJN Staff

Construction recently began on a testimonial to the children who perished in the Holocaust, the Samuel Edelstein Children's Garden at Toronto's Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue

The late Samuel Edelstein was a Holocaust survivor who believed that the best answer to the horrors of the Holocaust was each succeeding generation of Jewish children. Two of his three daughters, Rena Attar and Tami Benayon, were on hand to witness the first stage of construction

The sisters said their father believed in building gardens in tribute to the children rather than memorials, as gardens represent the total life cycle from beginning to end, and then renewal

The garden will be filled with indigenous Canadian plants, shrubs, ground-cover and prairie grasses chosen to attract and house birds and butterflies, including the monarch butterfly, considered a species of "special concern" by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada.

Anne Frank will be among the children remembered in the garden. Beth Emeth is one of the designated organizations in Canada to plant a sapling from the Anne Frank chestnut tree.

The purchase of the sapling was facilitated through the generosity of Beth Emeth board member Michael Kerzner and his wife, Rochelle

"The memory of Anne Frank will now have a permanent and umbilical link to my synagogue, Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda, which was founded by Holocaust survivors in the late 1950s," Michael Kerzner said.

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue marks the beginning of construction of the Samuel Edelstein Children's Garden. Seen are two of Edelstein's daughters, Tami Benayon, left, and Rena Attar

Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, said that "Canadian Jewish Congress is also delighted to join Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue in incorporating Anne Frank's memory, hope and inspiration as part of this unique and special garden."

The children will be remembered with paving stones inscribed with the name of a child 14 years old or under and his or her home town. The stones will be interwoven into the environmentally sustainable garden. A stone had already been purchased to honour the memory of Anne Frank, and there will be an even closer connection to her through the ever-growing chestnut tree, the offshoot of her private and special connection to the outside world, the synagogue says.

The garden will be open to the community, and everyone is invited to participate and to dedicate paving stones and other special features to honour and remember Jewish children whose lives were taken away.

A children's learning concourse will be incorporated into the garden, specifically designed to provide a special resource area where groups of children can congregate to learn the lessons of the Holocaust and hear survivor stories first hand.

In addition to the the Edelstein family, Beth Emeth acknowledges the many donors who contributed to the garden through the Yakir Hakahal – Precious to the Community Gala Tribute Dinner, held last May 6 in honour of Sir Nicholas Winton, who saved the lives of 669 children from Czechoslovakia and found them a safe haven in England.

For more information about the garden, call Claire Horowitz, director of financial development, at 416-633-3838, ext. 242.

A FAMILY SAYS THANKS TO THE COMMUNITY

Just a few years after she was born, our beautiful daughter Sheree began to have seizures and had to undergo many tests. She was heavily medicated and was hospitalized on several occasions Doctors had no answers for us as to why she was in such distress, and we were told that because there were no schools or training facilities available at that time, Huronia Regional Hospital would benefit our daughter and help her with her developmental disabilities. She existed there for six years. Then came Reena, the brain child of Rabbi Joseph Kelman. Without the incredible dedication and foresight of the late Rabbi Kelman, there never would have been a Reena.

Rabbi Joseph Kelman z"l

Sheree with her parents at a Reena Gala

Shortly after Reena was established, Marilyn and I rescued Sheree from her confinement at Huronia. With the professional skill and caring of Reena's staff, Sheree has progressed from living in group homes to the point where she now lives independently in an apartment that she shares with two other Reena clients. She travels to and from her apartment on her own, to work, shop, bank and socialize and has attained a measure of self-confidence beyond our expectations.

Joe Berman z"l

While Sheree developed and blossomed, Reena expanded by opening one group home after another. Through the generosity of the late Joe Berman, Camp Reena was built. With aid from the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services the number of clients serviced by Reena continued to grow and group homes were expanded with the establishment of the Municipal Housing Apartments.

Reena partnered with JVS and B'nai Brith to add more group homes and apartments to its residential base.

By way of further expansion, Reena entered into arrangement with Kehilla Residential Program, the housing arm of United Jewish Appeal Federation in establishing more residential facilities. An incredible milestone was reached with the construction of the Battle Centre funded through a bequest from Toby and Henry Battle and generous donors in the community. It became available for day programs and other Reena undertakings.

An important milestone to cope with Reena's aging clientele came with the opening of the first elder home soon to be followed by the second and third elder homes for seniors.

Always willing help guide and improve other social agencies, Reena has been acknowledged by the Ontario government as a leader and role model with respect to persons with developmental disabilities.

Reena expanded its service base by dealing with youth with autism which eventually led to the opening of a Reena group home for children and youth with autism.

Reena's Toby & Henry Battle Developmental Centre

Reena Community Residence under construction on the Lebovic Campus

Reena prides itself in having a highly professional and committed staff which is aided and abetted by volunteers. None of the activities of achievements could have been attained without the generous support of the United Jewish Appeal Federation and the Ontario Governments Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Marilyn and I have derived a tremendous satisfaction with over 35 years of service in working as board members, being on various sub-committees and fundraising dinner events. Volunteerism is the heart and soul of Reena and more hands are always needed especially now that the UJA Federation has welcomed the building of the Reena Community Residence on the Lebovic Campus in Vaughn which will be Reena's crowning jewel to date. But Reena will not stop there. There are members of the community in dire need of Reena's services so that facilities must be expanded. The most crucial issue to be addressed is Reena clients' aging population. We hope through the support of Federation, the Ontario government and generous donors that the invaluable work of Reena will continue to be a shining light in the community to enable Reena's clients to develop to the full extent of their potential and to take their rightful place as proud members of our society.

Bert Raphael, Q.C., Honorary Legal Counsel

Space sponsored by Bert and Marilyn Raphael

Greater Toronto Area

'Chosen People Ministries has become increasingly aggressive in the last few years'

Continued from page 3

In their presentation to Jews, Ciss said, these groups have "altered, renovated and distorted all of Christian terminology, customs, symbols and traditions to make them look Jewish in order to make [Jews] feel less inhibited at considering Christianity as an option."

Ciss said it's his understanding that CPM is the second-largest group of its kind in the world, next to Jews for Jesus.

Rabbi Michael Skobac, Jews for Judaism's director of education, said the ministries have an increasingly vigorous mandate.

"Chosen People Ministries has become increasingly aggressive in the last few years," Rabbi Skobac said. "They opened a centre in Sderot [Israel] and another in the heart of the Jewish community in Flatbush, New York. Their successes are our [communities'] failures."

Rabbi Skobac said the typical profile of converted Jews he encounters are those who grew up in traditional Jewish households and went to Jewish school but say they never experienced Judaism in a spiritual way.

"They say they only ever experienced it as a heritage or tradition that didn't resonate as a vibrant, spiritual path [and] didn't involve building a personal relationship with God" that Christianity offers them, he said.

Jews for Judaism keeps an inventory of missionary groups operating in Canada. There are some 100-plus such organizations now in Canada, the majority of which are based in southern Ontario, Ciss said.

"Unfortunately, this messianic approach to evangelizing Jews is becoming very successful," Ciss cautioned. "They are attracting intermarried couples... because there's always a conflict between the Jewish and gentile partners" as to how to make the marriage work and how best to raise children.

He said missionary groups "are very good" at making both partners feel spiritually comfortable by blending Christianity and Judaism together to make them feel harmonious.

But the reality is very different, Ciss said.

"There's nothing about Christianity that Judaism can accept, which is why [Jews] reject the entire premise and why, as a people, we've never accepted the claims of Christianity," he said.

"But today, these missionary groups are making Jews feel that it's kosher" to convert, he added.

He said it's only recently that the groups have made more inroads in the Jewish community, likely because of growing rates of assimilation and intermarriage.

According to a 2001 census analysis by UIA Federations Canada and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, of people in Toronto who identify ethnically as Jews, some six per cent, or 10,955 people, practise a religion other than Judaism. And most of those, Ciss said, are practising Christianity.

"One thing is clear: the numbers [of Jewish converts to Christianity] are growing," he said, adding that while missionizing accounts for a lot of them, the missionary movement is now educating other Christian evangelicals on how to better target Jews for conversion.

"The reality is, let's be honest, a Jew who is assimilating is not interested in wearing a yarmulke, or keeping Shabbat or wearing tzitzit... and many Jews are even converting to Christianity through the mainstream evangelical churches. The Jewish community is not aware of how great the problem really is. They're not aware of the scope."

Ciss worries that the Jewish community is blind to the phenomenon because it's not happening in the public sphere but is occurring much more on the Internet.

"Just because the community doesn't see the missionaries on the street corners" doesn't mean the missionizing isn't happening, Ciss said.

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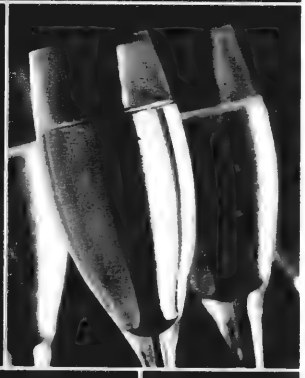

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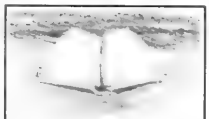
Jewish Life

The role of the menorah

BY RABBI YITZCHAK FEIGENBAUM

The party is over and another Chanukah has passed. Other than some presents and possibly a stomachache from too many doughnuts, what will we take with us from this eight-day festival?

Every holiday strengthens a particular value that we are supposed to hold for the rest of the year. What is the lasting message of Chanukah? It is interesting to note that notwithstanding the great military victory and re-establishment of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel that features prominently in the Chanukah prayers, the only public celebration is the lighting of the menorah to commemorate the miracle of the oil.



Rabbinic Reflections

That miracle itself is puzzling. There was plenty of oil to rekindle the menorah in the Temple – but it was "defiled." It would have burned clean and bright, yet it was invalidated for use because it lacked a certain sanctity. Why did God have to change the laws of nature so that one day's supply of "pure" oil would last for eight days? I understand the splitting of the sea – the Jews were in danger and needed to be saved from their pursuers. But oil is oil!

Of course, the classic Jewish format for answering a question is by posing another question. We will pose the famous Chanukah question asked by rabbis over the ages. Since the vial of pure olive oil that was discovered contained sufficient oil to burn for one day, the miracle was actually only seven days long! So why do we celebrate Chanukah for eight days?

To understand all this, we must understand the unique mission of the Jewish People to be "a light unto the nations." Our responsibility is to add sanctity and moral stability in an increasingly materialistic and morally relative world.

That's why our God-given "user's guide," the Torah, contains laws that structure and give meaning to the food we eat, the clothes we wear, how we conduct our business, how we treat the elderly and how we relate to family. We do not take religion out of our pocket when convenient and apply it only to certain days and specific places. Rather, our entire day-to-day life can be either "defiled' or "pure" depending on our goals, values and mode of conduct.

Thus God had to make a miracle to let the small vial of pure oil burn eight days to teach us that "oil is not just oil" but rather a gift from God to be used appropriately.

And this is the lesson of why we light our menorahs for eight days. There is really no difference between the overt miracle of the last seven days and the "natural" burning of the first day. We must view our very waking up, the sun rising and our five senses as daily miracles and gifts from God. Thus it's our responsibility to thank God for all that He does for us, and our obligation to use these gifts within His guidelines every day.

As was once said in a eulogy for one of the giants of Jewish leadership in the previous generation, the mark of a great person is not in the great things accomplished, but in the day-to-day small accomplishments. If we remember this, then our menorahs will burn brightly all year long, illuminate our homes and businesses with meaning and values, and hopefully shed some of that light on our communities.

Rabbi Yitzchak Feigenbaum is the principal of Yeshivas Bais Yaakov High School in Toronto.

An 'A' for effort

Money Matters

One of the key aspects of the world of business is the crucial importance of the bottom line. And that's the way it should be. The primary – some would argue only – goal of business is to make money, or as economist Milton Friedman famously noted: "The business of business is business." It is not the role of the private, profit-driven sector to address social needs, crucial as they may be. The only proper limitation on money making is the law.

Classical Jewish teachings would tend to agree, with the possible caveat that, at times, one must go beyond the letter of the law when, in a given situation, the law would not be able to address an ethical imperative. The amount of effort extended to achieve success is irrelevant from a business perspective. It is results that matter.

It's in the realm of religious growth that effort, not outcome, is what matters. God demands we give it our best, but people who have internalized their faith in God understand that results are often out of our control and it is our efforts that truly count. This distinction, while true in theory, often has little practical application. Poor results in every field may come from great but misfocused efforts. If we can produce better religious growth by refocusing our efforts, we must do so and not accept effort as a measure of success.

It is most unfortunate that many charitable organizations are run without the tools of modern business. Charities must not be a place where poor performance is tolerated. In fact, they likely have a greater obligation to ensure high standards are met, as wasted efficiency means that it is the most needy who will suffer. At least in the private sector, business inefficiency leads to the loss of private money "only."

I was thinking of this theoretical dichotomy between efforts and results when reading about the growing debate over the University of Manitoba's awarding a PhD in mathematics to someone who twice failed one of his final examinations. The student has exam stress disorder and finds it difficult to demonstrate his true ability on exams. This mitigating factor led the university to award him his doctorate, arguing that he is in fact an "exceptional student." The university has suspended without pay an outspoken professor who strongly protested the granting of such a degree.

It seems to me that the university has confused the two realms. A PhD is granted for accomplishment not effort. While failure may be due to a legitimate disorder, that does not change the fact that he failed the exam.

Had such an approach originated in a yeshiva, it would have been understandable. A yeshiva is a place where personal growth is primary, and thus honest effort is to be rewarded. In truth, however, such an approach was never common in the great 19th-century European yeshivot where intellectual achievement, even elitism, was the norm.

Coming from a university, such a position is rather startling. Universities are meant to be centres for the development of critical thought, where academic freedom is supreme and personal moral choices are irrelevant. Universities pride themselves on distinguishing between knowledge and living based on that knowledge. Finding alternate methods of evaluation may be understandable, even commendable, but would seem to have no place in awarding a doctorate.

Comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org

Jewish Life

Book on Hillel points to the essence of the Torah

By Martin Lockshin

One of the most famous rabbis in the Talmud was Hillel, who died 2,000 years ago, around the year 10 CE. Although his name and a few of his teachings are well known, very little is known about his life. When I started to read the latest biography in the Schocken "Nextbook" series, *Hillel If Not Now, When?* by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, I couldn't help wondering where the author was going to find enough material to write a "life of Hillel."

Rabbi Telushkin, a leading modern Orthodox thinker, admits right away that the task is impossible. He gathers and presents to his readers the few biographical hints about Hillel that appear in talmudic literature. But he acknowledges very reasonably that the stories have a legendary quality and can hardly be used to build a clear, complete picture of Hillel, the man. His book, then, is an attempt to create a portrait, not of Hillel's life, but of his temperament and values. Very little attention is paid to Hillel's many teachings on intricate questions of Jewish ritual law. Instead, Rabbi Telushkin relies on the ethical teachings of Hillel and his disciples as well as the stories told about him.

The book is written for a popular audience – no previous knowledge of Judaism is required. But even the expert student of rabbinic texts will benefit from some of Rabbi Telushkin's deep insights into Hillel's ethical teachings.

While I am always suspicious of facile attempts to contrast Jewish and Christian ethics, Rabbi Telushkin uses Hillel's sayings to make a few comparisons that I found persuasive. For example, he gathers a number of sources showing that Hillel, often disagreeing with other rabbis of his day, felt that truth-telling was not a supreme value in Jewish ethics.

The most famous saying on the subject is that of Beit Hillel (the "house" or disciples of Hillel) that when you dance before a bride at her wedding, you should always call her "a beautiful and graceful bride," (Ketubbot 17a) no matter what she looks like, since making a bride and groom happy is more important than truth-telling. The "house of Shammai," the consistent opponent of the Hillelites, disagrees, arguing that even a bride must be described "as she really is," following the biblical imperative to stay away from falsehood (Exodus 23:7).

Rabbi Telushkin points out that Hillel's became the standard Jewish ethical position, which Rabbi Telushkin contrasts with classical Christian teachings. For example, 400 years after Hillel, Saint Augustine taught that lying is never permitted, even to save the life of another human being: "Since eternal life is lost by lying, a lie may never be told for the preservation of the temporal life of another" (*On Lying*, in *Treatises on Various Subjects*). Modern Christian thinkers like Immanuel Kant and John Henry Cardinal Newman have reaffirmed this absolutist approach to truth, a position that Jewish ethicists would not support. According to Rabbi Telushkin, this is due to the pervasive influence of Hillel on Jewish ethics.

In another insightful comparison, Rabbi Telushkin compares the talmudic stories about Hillel with the Christian Bible stories about his younger contemporary, Jesus. He points out that while both Hillel and Jesus are portrayed as reaching out to uneducated Jews in the land of Israel, Hillel consistently challenged people to educate themselves and study as much Torah as possible. He taught: "Do not say, 'I will study when I have free time,' because perhaps you never will have free time" (Avot 2:4), and "One who studies a chapter 100 times cannot be compared to someone who studies it 101 times" (Hagigah 9b). On the other hand, Jesus (at least according to the stories about him) taught people to come close to him and to God and to God's Kingdom, but is never quoted encouraging people to study Torah.

JOSEPH TELUSHKIN
HILLEL
IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

The one text that Rabbi Telushkin keeps going back to in this book is the famous story of the potential convert who wanted to be converted on condition that someone teach him the entire Torah while he stood on one foot. He made that request of Shammai and was rebuffed. But Hillel obliged and converted him, teaching him: "That which is hateful to you, do not do to another. That is the entire Torah. The rest is commentary. Now go study" (Shabbat 31a).

It is in the discussion of this story that Rabbi Telushkin's agenda in writing this book becomes clearest. Rabbi Telushkin explains that this story, and others in the Talmud, show that Hillel was eager to encourage conversion to Judaism. There is no hint in this story that Hillel tested the convert to assure himself beforehand that the convert really intended to observe all the ritual commandments of the Torah. In fact, there is no reason to think that Hillel's convert had anything more than a hazy impression of the contents of the Torah when he converted. Hillel wanted to be sure that the potential convert accepted the interpersonal demands that the Torah makes of all Jews. He figured, Rabbi Telushkin writes, that as long as the convert understood that Judaism requires constant study of Torah (hence: "Now go study"), the convert would come to see the importance of the ritual commandments of the Torah, too.

Rabbi Telushkin contrasts Hillel's warm, trusting and speedy approach with the suspicious, discouraging and lengthy process that is required of Orthodox converts today, a process that centres on building commitment to Jewish ritual laws, like Sabbath observance and kosher food laws, and not on how to relate to other human beings.

Rabbi Telushkin certainly knows that contemporary Jewish law need not conform with every story told about a rabbi in the Talmud. I am sure that he is well aware of the many talmudic texts that can be cited to support the common contemporary approach to conversion. In fact, many historians suggest that, in the century after Hillel, Judaism had a strong motive for abandoning Hillel's welcoming attitude to converts, since so many pagan-born converts to Judaism soon "deserted" and joined the ranks of the new Christian movement, which did not require observance of the Torah's ritual laws, including circumcision.

Still, Rabbi Telushkin argues that what worked 2,000 years ago for Hillel is what Judaism needs now in the 21st century. He decries the fact that the religiosity of potential converts and of all Jews is generally measured today according to their adherence to Jewish ritual law, not adherence to Hillel's rule, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to another." And he suggests that welcoming outreach along with encouraging people to study Torah is as valid today as it was 2,000 years ago.

I found Rabbi Telushkin's message very moving. Hillel and Rabbi Telushkin were/are sincerely dedicated to observing the details of Jewish ritual law. When the message comes from them that the essence of the Torah still is "That which is hateful to you, do not do to another," it is particularly powerful.

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Josh Scheinert lights the menorah at the Chanukah party he and his fellow Canadian lecturer, Danny Auron, gave for their Gambian neighbours.

My Gambian Chanukah

By JOSH SCHEINERT

Guest Voice

It's not as hard as you'd think to order 30 sufganiyot and a challah in a Muslim West African nation. I did it recently. And it's a good thing too – I had promised a lot of non-Jews an authentic Chanukah!

The invitations to the Gambia Chanukah party went out with a disclaimer to our Muslim colleagues and hosts: Jewish celebrations come with wine, and while we (my friend and I) aren't trying to offend anyone, there would be alcohol at the party. Not a problem, answered one of our friends. He reminded us, correctly, that Gambia, a sliver of a country on the coast of West Africa, prides itself on religious tolerance – they would stick to the soft drinks and were looking forward to learning about Jewish culture and tradition.

So, after realizing I'd bought sweet potatoes instead of regular ones (they look the same here), I made a quick exchange and began the grating. Watching me, our 15-year-old female neighbour remarked, "I didn't know you could do this." It was the first time she'd ever seen a man cook and clean.

The party went off without any major hitches. Our water supply turned off about halfway through, but the electricity stayed on the whole night! The latkes – our Gambian friends took extra care to pronounce the word correctly – were a hit, and they enjoyed the addition of apple sauce to their list of potato condiments. The sufganiyot, though a little short on the jam filling, were still delicious – not that my laktes weren't!

Of course, no Jewish celebration can come without an explanation, so mid-way through the evening we paused, as I stood before Gambian Muslims, Filipino Catholics and other expats who'd never even heard of Chanukah, and recounted the story of the Macabees and why we were eating all this oily food. And thanks to a recent visit home for a wedding, I was equipped with a chanukiyah and candles, which were lit with the blessings, and *Maoz Tzur* was sung in the background (it was, unfortunately, a solo performance).

I think I become more religious, faithful, traditional, or whatever you want to call it, when I'm without other Jews to fall back on. It's a unique opportunity to be a true minority in a society that has no concept of your religious or traditional background. It forces you to really reflect on where it all fits into your identity and to what level is it going to define you.

For me, the year has so far been an opportunity to realize that some aspects of my upbringing are perhaps more important to me than I'd previously realized. Coupling that realization with the opportunity to share certain aspects of it to a curious audience has been a rewarding experience.

I don't know what I'll do during Tu b'Shvat. It might be a bit insensitive to celebrate trees in the middle of the dry season as everything around us turns brown. But seeing as Gambia just marked the Muslim holiday of Eid by having each household slaughter a ram, I think Passover's going to be a hit!

Happy Chanukah from Gambia.

Josh Scheinert of Toronto is spending the year as a visiting lecturer with the faculty of law at the University of Gambia.

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Coast to Coast

Leaks confirm Sunni Arab feelings about Iran

Last week saw a flood of media analyses and commentary about the fallout of WikiLeaks' release of the first batch of a quarter million confidential U.S. diplomatic dispatches. Three facts about the Middle East stood out. The dispatches confirmed what was generally already well known, if not publicized:

- The Sunni Arab states – in particular, Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia – view a nuclear Iran as *the* great threat to regional peace and security;
- These states are looking to the United States and Israel to disarm the Iranian threat and,
- Despite all the Arab pleadings (including Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah's imploring the American administration to attack Iran before it's too late), the United States has not acted militarily against Iran and probably won't do so.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Much has been made also of the fact that the Arab states say one thing in public while in private urging something else entirely – military action against Iran. To a large degree, that inconsistency (some would say hypocrisy) is true. Yet well before the WikiLeaks disclosures, there were quite a number of media reports about growing, if covert, ties between Israel and the Arabs, including Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, etc., against Iran. These included stories, denied by Saudi officials, that Israel would be given fly-over and even landing rights in their country should it decide to launch an attack on Iran's nuclear facilities.

What WikiLeaks did was bring some of this out into the open (which may have the negative effect of embarrassing Arab leaders and making co-operation with Israel more difficult, even if not less urgent).

* * *

In the December issue of *Foreign Policy* magazine, whose cover story is a ranking of the "100 Top Global Thinkers of 2010," Ahmet Davutoglu, Turkey's foreign minister, was accorded seventh spot. He's praised for his brilliance in pursuing Turkey's "global reawakening" – that is, using his country's "geographic position and identity as a secular Muslim democracy to build bridges between Europe, the Caucasus, and the Middle East."

Sounds charming. But according to *Der Spiegel*'s reading of the leaked U.S. dispatches, this glowing picture is grossly misleading.

As far back as 2004, American diplomats in Ankara were disturbed that a member of a leading AKP (ruling party) think-tank said that Turkey's role is "to take back Andalusia and avenge the [Muslim] defeat at the siege of Vienna in 1683," a view, the Americans argue, Davutoglu shares. They're "alarmed by his imperialistic tone." In a dispatch summarizing a speech Davutoglu delivered in Sarajevo in January 2010, the U.S. ambassador wrote: "His thesis: the Balkans, Caucasus and Middle East were all better off when under Ottoman control or influence."

Even more alarming is a report that appeared in the Nov. 28 *Ma'ariv* by Eli Bardenstein. Not only does Davutoglu maintain that Turkey should reassert its dominance in the Middle East, he also believes that Israel will disappear as a Jewish state, which he believes is illegitimate, and that it will be replaced by a binational state.

"Davutoglu is considered the top ideologist of the ruling AKP party" Bardenstein writes.

Davutoglu's ideas are widely shared throughout the Islamic party. According to *Der Spiegel*, Israel's ambassador to Turkey, Gabby Levy, was quoted as saying in a confidential U.S. embassy dispatch from October 2009 that prime minister Recep Erdogan is "a fundamentalist. He hates us religiously." And that's at the root of the Turkish government's animosity towards Israel, not Jerusalem's policy on Lebanon or Gaza.

While none of this was unknown before the leak of the American dispatches – as we see in Ankara's growing closeness to Tehran – what is now acknowledged is that, contrary to the official U.S. position on Turkey, the Americans are dismayed by the Islamic radicalism of Turkey's leadership, by the insularity and ignorance of key ministers, and by the corruption of many, including, it is alleged, Erdogan himself (a charge Erdogan has challenged).

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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פֿון אַהרן הירשהאָרן

אין סעפּטעמבער 1948 איז געקומען קיין מאָסקוע גאָלדע מאיר די אַמבאַסאַדאָרשע פֿון ישׂראל קיין סאָוועטן פֿאַרבאַנדט. באַלד נאָך איר קומען האָבן זיך אָנגעהויבן די ימים נוראים.

אין איינעם פֿון די אָנדערע מיטגלידער פֿון דער ישׂראלדיקער דעלעגאַציע, איז גאָלדע געגאַנגען צו פֿוס אין דער גרויסער מאָסקווער שול. טרוימנטער יידן זענען טיף נגרויס נעפּאָרן פֿון איר בי זיך תּי א פֿאַרשטיין פֿון דער נייַער יידישער מדינה. אָן די יידן פֿון מאָסקוע האָבן איר עפּנטלעך אַדיסנגעזיין זייער ליבשאַפֿט – אַ באַוויזן אַז אין זיי איז נישט פֿאַרלאָשן נעפּאָרן דאָס פּינטעלע יידּ. אַ שאָד תּאָס סטאַלינען איז נישט נעפֿאַלן נעפּאָרן דער אויסגיסנג פֿון ליבשאַפֿט צו גאָלדען.

איידער דייטשער האָט עשׂרים דערוויַלע אַז סטאַלין האָט נעזען אַס די אומגעהיינלעכע סצענע פֿון זיין פּנים נעמען אין קרעמל. ער האָט באַשלאָסן אַז יידן זענען אויפֿפֿאַלאַלעך, אַן אומזיכערער עלעמענט, אוּן אַז ישׂראל האָט אים אָפּגענאַרט מיט אומדאַנק.

היסטאָריקער דאָמיַנק די "סאָוועטש יאָרן פֿון די סאָוועטישע יידן" – די יאָרן הען מען האָט באַשולדיקט זיי אין "אופּפֿאָרצלטן קאָזמאָפּאָליטיזם," –פֿון דער גורליקער באַגעגענישׂ צוישׂן גאָלדען און די מאָסקווער יידן. אין סטאַלינס אירגן, האָבן די יידן נעגענט אַ קלאָרן באַווייַז פֿון אַ צעטיילטער לאָיאַלקייט.

איינע פֿון די תּאָם האָבען ספּציעל אַנליטן פֿון סטאַלינס פֿאַראַנטיון האָס איז נעזען מאַראָם מאַלאָטאָוו. די פֿרוי פֿון דעם מיניסטער פֿון אויסלענדישע ענינים. זי האָט נעליטן תּי אַ חשובע סאָוועטישע פּערזענליכקייט, און אויך אין איר איינעם רעכט. זי איז נעזען אַ פֿאַרבעטענער נאַסט בייַ אַן אירפֿנעם נעגענט פֿון מאַלאָטאָוו אין יאָרשאַג פֿון דער סאָוועטישער רעגאַלוציע. נאָלדע איז דאָרט אויך נעזען. אין איר אירשטאַבאַפֿע, האָט נאָלדע דערמאָנט איר צוזאַמענטרעף מיט פֿאַלינע מאַלאָטאָוו. "נאָכדעם תּאָס איך האָב נעדריקט מאַלאָטאָוס האַנט, איז זיי פֿרוי צוגעקומען צו מיר אוּן נעזאָגט, מיט אמתר חיוּרמקייט, 'עס נעפֿעלט מיר אזוי זיך צו באַנעמען מיט אייך צוליבט', "נאָכדעם האָט די צוגענעבן 'איך רעד יידיש. זיי איז דאָך אַ יידּ?' האָב איך נעמנט־פֿערט –יאָ. האָט די מיר נעמנט־פֿערט אַרויף יידיש 'איך בין אַ יידישע טאָכטער.'"

דער אויסלאָז איז נעזען ביטער פֿאַר פֿאַלינען. סטאַלין האָט נעהייסן אַז מען זאָל איר אָפּשאַפֿן פֿון איר שטעלע תּי שׂרף פֿון דעם קאָמסעוויק טראַסט, אַרעסטירן פֿאַר בגידה קנען דעם מוטערלאַנדצוליב אירע פֿאַרבינדונגען מיט דעם אינטערנאַציאָנאַלן ציוניזם, אוּן פֿאַרשיקן איר אַ לאַנגער.

כאָטש מאַלאָטאָוו איז נעזען צוגעבונדן צו איר, האָט סטאַלין אים נעניט אָנצוּטעמען די אָפּשאָצונג. אַלע מינגלידער פֿון פֿאַליטבוּרא האָבן נעשטימט פֿאַר איר אַרעסט, חוץ מאַלאָטאָוו.

די באָשולדיקער איז ניט נעלונגען אויסצולעשן דאָס פּינטעלע יידּ. פֿון די הונדערטער יידן תּאָס האָבן נעשטראָמט צוּתאָמען מיט גאָלדען צו דער גרויסער מאָסקווער שול איז נעזאָגן אַ מענטשנשטראָם רעפֿוזניקעס. דרייסיק יאָר שפּעטער האָבן די נעפּועלט צו עמיגרירן קיין ארץ אישׂראל. תּער קנן זאָגן אַז גאָלדע איז ניט נעזען דערהיַי צו באַגריסן זי תּי דער פֿרעמיער פֿון מדינת ישׂראל.

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Former Winnipeg principal among dead in Carmel fire

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Rabbi Uriel Malka, 32, a former principal at the Ohr Hatorah Day School in Winnipeg who fought against Hezbollah in hand-to-hand combat in the Second Lebanon War, was among those killed on the prison's service bus that was engulfed by flames in the Carmel forest fire last Thursday.

Rabbi Malka, from Karnei Shomron, who was training to be a chaplain in the prison system, was with prison service cadets en route to Damun Prison to evacuate prisoners from the path of the flames.

He was laid to rest Sunday night at the military cemetery in Yavne.

In an interview with *The CJN* in October 2008, Rabbi Malka recalled that he narrowly escaped death while fighting Hezbollah in 2006.

"It is a miracle that I am alive, as there were times in the war when I was shot at directly by Hezbollah terrorist fighters," he said. "I met them face to face. I could see their eyes."

Twelve of Rabbi Malka's colleagues from his paratroop unit were killed in a Katyusha rocket attack on Kfar Giladi as they were standing outside in a parking lot en route to deployment on Aug. 6, 2006.

"I was not in Kfar Giladi with them, because I was already in Lebanon," he recalled in the interview.

"We did not find out that those in our unit had died right away. Our commander had us take out the batteries to our equipment so we could not hear the names of those who died, so we wouldn't realize they were from our unit. Four days later, our commander called us together in the [deserted] home of a Hezbollah terrorist and told us what had happened. He told us we had to be strong.

"It was very difficult."

Rabbi Malka, who is survived by his wife, Ortal, and five children, recalled in the 2008 interview that on his very first day in the Second Lebanon War, he got a taste of how difficult things were going to be.

While fighting in the village of Rabat Talatin, he said, "Hezbollah terrorists were shooting at us in one direction, and as we pursued them from that direction, another group of Hezbollah came from the other direction.

"There were 60 of us from my unit in a Hezbollah home. Hezbollah had the opportunity to shoot three missiles at us in the house.

"Had they hit the house, all of us would have died. The first two missiles just missed the house. The third one hit the roof. We were all lucky to get out alive."

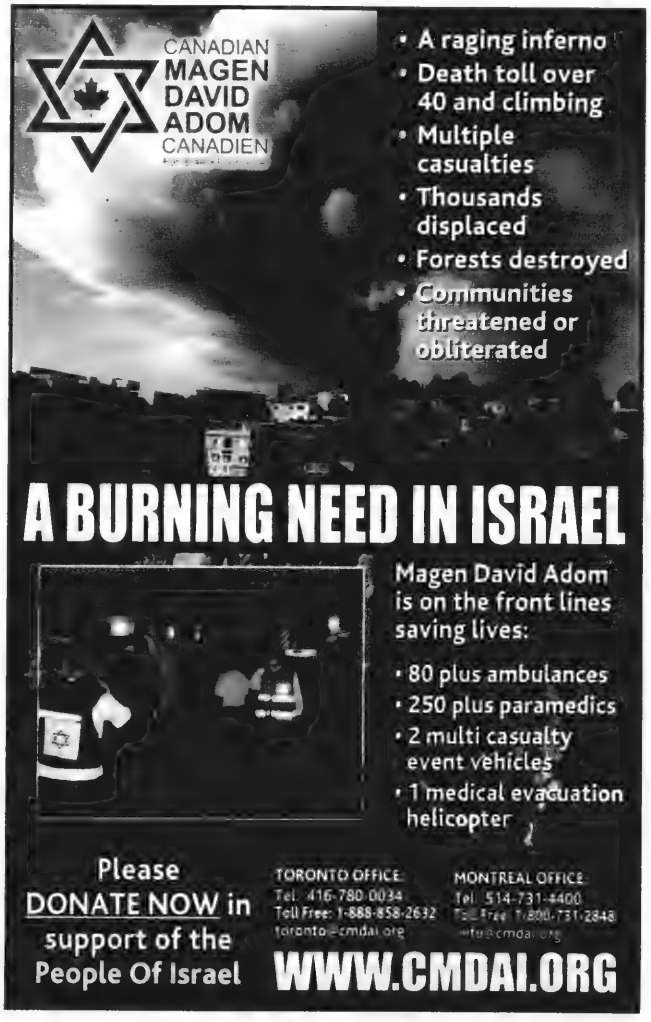
At the time Rabbi Malka got called up to fight with his unit, he was scheduled to go on *shlichut* (emissary service) with his family to teach in Denver.

"My ticket was booked and our suitcases were already packed. The Jewish Agency later told me that if I had explained the situation to the army, I would not have had to serve in the war... We are like brothers in my unit. I couldn't have left them to fight alone. So I cancelled my ticket and we got to Denver later than planned."

Rabbi Malka had a bachelor of education degree from the Beit Midrash for Teachers of Judaic Studies in Rehovot, and was a graduate of the Israel Defence Forces' hesder program, which combines study and military service within a religious Zionist framework. Before arriving in Winnipeg, he spent two years teaching at an Orthodox day school in Denver.

PREMIER LIGHTING: B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell lights a chanukiyah in front of the provincial legislature in Victoria. It was just one of the public lightings in five cities on Vancouver Island and Salt Spring Island.

HOUSE OF COMMONS CANDLELIGHTING: Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, centre, lights the chanukiyah in the House of Commons, with Conservative MP Scott Reid, left, and Rabbi Chaim Mendelsohn looking on. An invitation to the menorah lighting and a reception was sent to MPs and senators by Liberal MP Peter Milliken, Speaker of the House (not pictured), and the Canadian Federation of Chabad Lubavitch.



Catastrophe averted as shul finishes oil cleanup

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The cleanup of soil contaminated by heating oil around the vandalized Young Israel of Chomedey Synagogue was completed last week, after six weeks of excavation, and the beleaguered congregation is now awaiting the final bill.

Although total costs are expected to be at least $150,000, president Frank Cwilich said the shul is now more optimistic about its future. The worst-case scenario – seepage of oil under the foundation – did not occur. That would have been "catastrophic" for the congregation of about 150 families, he said.

Cwilich is bracing for the final bill this week from the companies that did the digging and soil testing. The first half of that work rang in at about $65,000, so he's expecting at least a similar sum for the rest. In the latter half of the work, the removal of soil from under a building used for storage required a more complex procedure.

Tests indicate that the remaining soil meets the standards set by the Quebec Environmental Agency.

The congregation's insurers will pay a maximum of approximately $25,000. The congregation is heartened by the generosity and moral support of so many people, even from strangers and other unexpected sources. Last week, donations totalled more than $30,000, and a significant part of that amount has come from non-Jews or those outside the Montreal area.

In addition, there are thousands of dollars in related costs, including the cleanup of the flooded basement; the replacement of the 2,300 litres of oil that were spilled; enhanced security measures, including more surveillance cameras, and landscaping.

On the night of Oct. 6, someone opened the synagogue's exterior oil pipe, put the nearby garden hose down the pipe and turned on the water. The water ran all night and by morning, all of the fuel in the four oil tanks had been forced out onto the back of the property and 3,200 litres of water inundated the basement and grounds.

The synagogue had surveillance cameras at the front and sides of the building, but none in the back.

Rabbi Zalmen Stiefel, left, welcomes Father Peter Sabbath to the Young Israel of Chomedey Synagogue.

Police have not given the congregation any news on their investigation. Cwilich suspects the culprit or culprits may be among the youths that hang out at all hours at a nearby shopping mall. There is no evidence the motivation was antisemitism.

Last week, representatives of the Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church in Chomedey, led by Father Peter Sabbath, came to the Young Israel to present a $1,000 cheque on behalf of the church. Individual parishioners either contributed or collected another $1,000, and the church is continuing to try to raise money.

Cwilich said the synagogue and church, although in the same district for many decades – 51 years in the case of the Young Israel, 45 for Holy Name – previously had no contact with one another, so the neighbourly gesture was all the more surprising.

"We are honoured and touched by this generosity and were pleased to have a special evening [at the synagogue] where we could express our most sincere gratitude to members of Father Sabbath's parish for helping us cope with our huge financial burden," Cwilich said. "This act of common decency fortifies our resolve to bring our synagogue back to its healthy state."

The Young Israel's Rabbi Zalmen Stiefel has invited the priest to join him at his family's Shabbat dinner. The experience will not be strange. Father Sabbath was born Jewish.

The Young Israel has been struggling for years to survive, due to a steep decline in membership from a peak of nearly 900 members in the early 1970s. It has no endowments or wealthy benefactors of its own to fall back on.

There have been other heart-warming incidents. A couple visiting from Calgary, not Jewish, read about the Young Israel's plight and wrote a $1,000 cheque. Employees of a nearby TD Bank branch chipped in $750.

Many donations are small. Only the day before, Cwilich said, an unknown woman came to the synagogue office and handed over a bag of coins, apparently her meagre savings.

The North American network of Young Israel, headquartered in New York, is appealing to its member congregations. Former Young Israel of Chomedey members or area residents have also contributed.

The Young Israel continues to contact philanthropic members of the Montreal Jewish community for donations, and is having encouraging results, Cwilich said.

No donation has been received from Federation CJA, but he is still hopeful of having a meeting with one of its leaders.

"It's ironic that this is Chanukah, which is the story of miraculous oil, while oil has been the source of our tragedy. But people's kindness and warmth has let us believe that some good can come out of all this."

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The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

• Congrégation Or Hahayim de Côte Saint-Luc recently honoured three of its longtime volunteers, Joseph Abehséra, Charles Barchéchath and Jacques Sabbag.

• In an interview when he was in Montreal, Israeli Zionist Rabbi Shlomo Aviner expresses his views on the life and philosophy of the average Israeli..

Also this week on the web:

• CHAT students Avigael Samson and Sapir Negrin describe the lasting effect March of the Living had on their lives.

• Israel Bonds stages its first interfaith evening in Montreal.

• *CJN* Correspondent Masada Siegel looks back on the year 2010 as a year of change.

Coast to Coast

Chanukah greetings

During Chanukah, Jewish communities around the world light menorahs in remembrance of the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and the Maccabean miracle. These eight days are a time to reflect on the illuminating power of faith to overcome the forces of darkness.

Canadians embrace the spirit of Chanukah through our efforts to build a tolerant nation where the light of hope burns brightly. Canada is committed to defending religious freedoms and denouncing the ideologies of hatred that threaten this ideal.

On behalf of the government of Canada, I would like to wish you all a memorable and blessed celebration. Chanukah Samayach!

Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada

On the first night of Chanukah, Jewish families across Canada gathered to light the menorah, spin the dreidel, eat sufganiyot and celebrate miracles old and new. The triumph of the Maccabees is the story of Jewish survival. We are proud, as Canadians, to continue that story in our country and in our time.

The Chanukah story is about freedom – the freedom to be true to one's own identity and beliefs. The liberty we love must never be taken for granted. In the 2,000 years since Antiochus desecrated the Temple and banned the study of Torah, his atrocities have been echoed with deadly symmetry.

On Chanukah, all Canadians join together to condemn all forms of discrimination and hatred – notably anti-semitism – as we celebrate our differences, and the freedom that makes them possible. We cherish the rituals of Chanukah, because they speak to how celebrations of faith, in all their rich and diverse forms, help bring us together as Canadians.

On behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada and our parliamentary caucus, I wish all Canadians the very best for the Festival of Lights. Happy Chanukah. Chag Samayach.

Michael Ignatieff
Leader, Liberal Party of Canada

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Class Acts

CHANUKAH AT LEO BAECK: Grade 4 students, teachers and Israeli emissaries from Leo Baeck Day School's north and south campuses took part in a collaborative Chanukah activity that included making their own chanukiyot. Pictured, from left, are Rebecca Train, Izabella Wise, Nicole Wolfe, Faith Pasternak and Sarah Nirenberg.

JNF WINNER: Zachary Cole, a Grade 5 student at Bialik Hebrew Day School, recently won the Jewish National Fund's video contest. Students from grades 5 to 10 were asked to make a TV commercial that explains the important work JNF is doing in Halutziot and the significance of the Negev to Israel's future. Zachary's video placed first, and he won two tickets to Israel. He's pictured with Bialik's head of school, Shana Harris.

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Class Acts

CHANUKAH TREATS: Students in Netivot HaTorah Day School's Gan Netivot – from left, Noah Lev, Lielle, Dov, Ezra, Eliza and Chesed – celebrated Chanukah with all the trimmings last week. *[Rebecca Ansel photo]*

LIGHTING THE MENORAH: Benjamin Switzer, dressed as the high priest, prepares to light the menorah at Torah Tots at Chabad of Markham, with assistance from his friend, Shayna Kukle.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Arlene & Murray Finkelman were thrilled to be in Israel for the birth of their great-granddaughter, Yael. Proud parents are Sarah & Idan Sharabi.

Mazel tov Annabelle & David Shulman on your 50th wedding anniversary. With love from your children and grandchildren.

Happy 19th birthday Jordana Rosen. May you have the best day and year ahead. Love, Mom & Dad.

Mazel tov to Ezzie Stavsky on his sixth birthday.

Happy first birthday to our grandson Tyler. With much love, Bubbie Renee, Bubbie Sharon and Zaide Keith.

Mazel tov to Libby Kraft on her recent 80th birthday, and many more in good health! Love from all the family.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to WWW.CJNEWS.COM and click the Family Moments button!

JNF
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What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

Our regular columnist, Leila Speisman, is away on medical leave.

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Deadline for Dec. 23 is Dec. 13. There is no paper Dec. 30. Deadline for Jan. 6 is Dec. 23. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Thursday, Dec. 9

TEMPLE SINAI CHANUKAH
Celebrate Chanukah with lights, latkes and laughter. Featuring klezmer band **A Touch of Klez**. 7:30 p.m. Refreshments served. $10. weducation@templesinai.net, 416-487-3281.

CHANUKAH PERFORMANCE
Chanukah with **Mark Youhanan**, singer and pianist. 2-4 p.m. $5, includes refreshments. Beth Tikvah.

Friday, Dec. 10

SHABBAT SERVICE
Join Solel Congregation of Mississauga for Shabbat with **Jay Brodbar**, executive director of New Israel Fund Canada. 8 p.m. Catered adult dinner, 6:15 p.m. Registration required for dinner. 905-820-5915.

Saturday, Dec. 11

MISHPACHAH MINYAN
Families with young children are invited to participate in Shaar Shalom's mishpachah minyan. 10:15 a.m. Service starts with Torah reading and ends to coincide with the main service so participants can join congregation members for kiddush. 905-889-4975.

GAMES NIGHT
Games at Beth Radom. 7:30 p.m. Texas Hold 'Em, mah-jong, blackjack. Silent auction and prizes. games@bethradom.com, 416-636-3451.

MOVIE NIGHT
Shrek pyjama party and movie night. 5:30-8 p.m. Shaar Shalom. The Giborim and Maccabee Youth groups will join the congregation for *Havdalah*. Movie starts at 6 p.m. Snacks served. Register: you@shaarshalom.ca, 905-889-4975, ext. 62.

Sunday, Dec. 12

BREAKFAST LECTURE
Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Brotherhood presents lecture with **Stephen Kraft**. "Science and the Bible: New Take on Stories of Bereshith." 9:15 a.m. $5, includes breakfast. 416-633-5500.

NCSY CONCERT
30th annual NCSY concert and gala dinner. **Eli Gerstner** and Yeshiva Boys Choir perform. 7:30 p.m. Toronto Centre for the Arts. ncsyconcert.com, 905-761-6279, ext. 230, for tickets.

JEWISH HEALING PROGRAM
Healing Service. 3-4 p.m. Miles Nadal JCC. **Rabbi Ed Elkin** and **Judy Shier Weisberg** facilitate. Free, wheelchair accessible. 416-638-7800, ext. 6287.

MUSICAL RECITAL
Concert at Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. New time: 2-4 p.m. Refreshments served. Tax receipts for donations $18 and over. Sponsored by Na'amat Canada.

YIDDISH CHANUKAH
Chanukah celebration with Yiddish folk and theatre songs by **Aron Gonshor**. 2 p.m. Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W. Refreshments served. $5 for Workmen's Circle and Friends of Yiddish members, $10 for non-members.

IRENA SENDLER
Toronto première of *In the Name of Their Mothers*, the new and most complete documentary film about **Irena Sendler**. Producer **Mary Skinner** speaks after the screening. 8 p.m. Congregation Habonim. irenasendlerfilm.com.

Tuesday, Dec. 14

INTERMARRIAGE GROUP
Beth Tikvah Men's Club hosts monthly meetings for family and friends of inter-dating or inter-married couples and those who would like support or information, or would like to help those in similar circumstances. 8 p.m. Discussions are confidential. Meetings are attended by professional facilitator **Andrea Litvack**. Free, all welcome. **Moe**: mhorenf@idirect.com, 647-282-0277.

Continued on page 27

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overall highest Grade 10 average
Laura Sheriff
overall highest Grade
Wallenberg Campus
Simon Axelrod
overall highest Grade
Lauren Rudolph
Derech Eretz Award
THANKS FOR MAKING LEO BAECK PROUD!

Continued from page 26

JIAS GENERAL MEETING

Annual meeting for Jewish Immigrant Aid Services Toronto. **Guidy Mamann**, partner of Mamann Sandaluk Immigration Law Firm, on "Recent Trends in Immigration and the Impact on Our Community." 7 p.m. Prosserman JCC

WRITING PERSONALS

Temple Har Zion presents **Lolette Kuby** discussing and reading from her new book *Writing Personals*. Bring your lunch at noon, presentation begins at 12:30 p.m. Coffee and cookies served. Temple Har Zion members $3, non-members $5. 905-889-2252

Wednesday, Dec. 15

SPIRITS WITH SINAI

Next Generation Group presents Spirits with Sinai. Spend an evening at the Duke of Kent with **Rabbi Eleanor Steinman**. Meet young professionals for a discussion on strengthening our spirits. 7-9 p.m. 2315 Yonge St. Register: education@templesinai.net.

Other News

SATELLITE AT SINAI

"Miriam's Mosaic: Diverse Women of the Rabbinate." Panel discussion with women who have entered the clergy. Hear from **Rabbi Dianne Cohler-Esses**, **Cantor Angela Buchdahl** and **Rabba Sara Hurwitz**. Moderated by **Rabbi Diana Gerson**. Dec. 16. Doors 7:30 p.m. program 8 p.m. Members $10, guests $15 at the door. 416-487-3281, education@templesinai.net.

MAD SCIENCE SHABBAT

Tot shabbat with mad science at Temple Sinai. Dec. 17. 6 p.m. dinner, 7:15 p.m. services. Adult members $16, member children (3-7), $9. Adult guests $20, children $10. Register by 12 p.m. Dec. 15. 416-487-3281.

BILLY ELLIOT

Beth Sholom is going to the theatre. *Billy Elliot the Musical*, Jan. 30, 2011. $130 and $150. 416-783-6103 ext. 228.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Bernard Betel Centre needs volunteers for Meals on Wheels, to help seniors with basic computer skills, Healthy @ Home program and visiting seniors, in person or over the phone. **Karen**, 416-225-2112 ext. 127 or karens@betelcentre.org.

THE JEWISH WORLD

Israel and the Jewish World on CTS channel 9. Dec. 12, 19 and 26. 9-11 p.m.

RABBI'S TISH

Dec. 25 following Shabbat services. Study session and kiddush with **Rabbi Martin Berman**. Shaar Shalom. 905-889-4975.

BAYCREST VOLUNTEERS

Baycrest is looking for volunteer gallery guides and arts and crafts facilitators. If you have an art background, skills in jewelry design, drawing, painting, photography, creative writing, storytelling and more, call 416-785-2500 ext. 2572.

JF&CS GROUPS

Call **Janice Shaw**, 905-882-2331, ext. 232, or visit jfandcs.com. Registration required.

High conflict divorce. Workshop for parents wanting to develop strategies and techniques to deal with a high-conflict situation and help lessen the impact of that conflict on their children. Requires active participation and is not for individuals in an abusive situation. Dec. 15, Promenade Mall, Suite 313. 6:30-9 p.m.

Adolescents and divorce. For parents who have adolescents and are going through a separation or divorce. Dec. 16, Promenade Mall, Suite 313. 7-9 p.m.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211. Dec. 9, 1:30 p.m. Chanukah musical celebration. **Aviva Chernick** sings in Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino and English. Refreshments. Reserve at ext. 155.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Sheila**, 416-665-3333.

Beth Tzedec Seniors. "New Horizons for Chavurah" with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**, Dec. 13, 1:30-3 p.m. (recurring). Rich discussion and a nosh as we learn from and with each other. All welcome.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Dec. 15, departs 10 a.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Social circle – needlepoint, etc. Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Seniors woodworking – skilled craftsmen. 416-630-6487.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Wellness lecture: "Exercise and the Heart," with kinesiologist **Melissa Nicholson**. Dec. 16, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Free.

Lecture: "Great Italian Composers – Gioacchino Rossini, Pt. 1." With **Myriam Shechter.** Dec. 14, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests.

Bingo bonanza. Dec. 15, 1-3 p.m. Two cards for $1.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St, www.prossermanjcc.com, 416-638-1881.

Registration for morning programs and full-day daycare is now open.

Registration for the Tic Tac Summer program is now open children ages 2 and 3 enjoy a fun and educational experience from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Kosher lunch included. To book a tour or to find out more, call **Kailah**, ext. 4351.

Registration for winter courses starting in January now open, with more Ryerson/Chang programs for 50+. Recorder, Latin dance, mah-jong and bridge lessons, acting classes, folk dance, current events.

Note: Creativity Club, Jokers Club and PRO won't meet in December.

"The Female Ruse: Stories of Women's Deception in Genesis." Why do women deceive in the Bible? Unique co-teaching with an Orthodox female scholar and a Reform female rabbi. Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. $10 at the door, no pre-registration required. Room 105. Ext. 4255.

Prosserman JCC offers the best family programs at competitive prices. Programs include Baby and Me Israeli Dance, Deborah's Sing-Along, Drama Tots, Little Superstars pre-Shabbat music class with **Mark Weinstock**, preschool dance, Sports with Jay, Lego Brand Brick Club, Kids Love Tech and the best Shabbat party. Register early.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Sundays, 8 a.m., and Thursdays, 7:15 a.m. Complete kosher breakfast after services. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

Give the gift of film this Chanukah. 2011 Toronto Jewish Film Society Subscription Season are selling out. 8 great film events from January to December at Al Green Theatre. Noted speakers introduce and discuss each film. 2011 paid-up members can buy 7:30 p.m. memberships for their kids (18+) for $60 if they've never been TJFS members. **Joelle**: ext. 139, joellem@mnjcc.org.

Renee Barda: Life Begins Again! With **Dorothy Krizmanic**, **Gideon Wilk** and **John Lettieri**. Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $22 regular, $18 group. Ext. 0.

Dec. 12, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. "Lighting the Night: Festivals of Light around the World," with Diana Mingail. $9 drop in, refreshments served. sharonis@mnjcc.org, ext. 154.

Registration opens Dec. 15 for all MNJCC winter programs. Register for classes at ext. 0.

Sign up for the winter session of Shabbat Club for 3- to 6-year-olds with **Sarah Brodbar-Nemzer**. Fridays 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. starting Jan. 21, 2011. Ext. 0 to register. For info: ext. 277, sarahbn@mnjcc.org.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

CLUB BEERSHEBA DONATES CHANUKAH GIFTS: **Members of Club Beersheba of Na'amat Toronto brought, to their recent meeting, gift bags filled with Chanukah presents for children who are being helped by Jewish Family and Child. From left are Judith Ross, Shirley Margel and Mollie Rothman.** ***[Frances Klinger photo]***

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 20

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OBITUARIES
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Benjamin Lieberman	Nov 21/10	24 Shorthill Rd
Sidney Baker	Nov 20/10	7460 Bathurst St
Harvey Pivnick	Nov 19/10	3397 Hwy. 38, RR#1
Sara Langer	Nov 21/10	23 Markwood Lane
Lee Greenspoon	Nov 21/10	154 Bentoak Cres
Honey Rotenberg	Nov 21/10	28 William Carson
Joan Greenspoon	Nov 21/10	50 Waterloo Ave
Adele Raizin	Nov 21/10	3900 Yonge St
Renee Aston	Nov 21/10	4003 Bayview Ave
Celia Eisenberg	Nov 23/10	625 Avenue Rd
Helen Florence	Nov 23/10	205 Cummer Ave
Moshe Tzelnik	Nov 24/10	4266 Bathurst St
Sylvia Robbins	Nov 24/10	2 Neptune Dr
Rose Cherry	Nov 24/10	4300 Bathurst St
Ethel Cooke	Nov 24/10	3560 Bathurst St
William Goldstein	Nov 26/10	7300 Yonge St
Anne Steiner	Nov 26/10	11 William Carson
Sandi Lublin	Nov 25/10	140 Erskine Ave
Murray Sibulash	Nov 26/10	225 Old Forest Hill
Irma Singer	Nov 27/10	3560 Bathurst St.
Luba Bard	Nov 25/10	339 York Hill Blvd.
Frimette Lyons	Nov 27/10	117 Scenic Millway

HEBREW BASIC

Ronald Powell	Nov 25/10	2574 Morrison Ave
Joyce Attis	Nov 25/10	56 Touraine Ave

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The family of the late

Harry (Herschel) Vandelman ז"ל

Architect/Artist

wishes to extend heartfelt gratitude to family and friends for their compassion and support which eased the pain of loss and brought us strength and courage in our bereavement for a beloved husband, brother, brother in law, uncle, great-uncle, cousin and friend.

On Campus

UBC students protest funding of Canadian Gaza flotilla

By LAUREN KRAMER
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — A controversial motion to transfer $700 of University of British Columbia student fees to the Canadian Boat to Gaza was approved Dec. 1.

The motion passed at a meeting of the Alma Mater Society (AMS), the UBC student government, by a 26-10 vote.

The result means the AMS must unfreeze the accounts of UBC's Social Justice Centre (SJC), one of the AMS' constituent groups, and allow the centre to send funds to the Gaza mission, which is slated to leave next spring to try to break Israel's blockade of the coastal strip.

The AMS receives a percentage of student fees each year and distributes them to various student organizations, including the SJC and UBC's local Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) student group, whose members are also active in the SJC and effectively control it.

The AMS recently faced pressure from anti-Israel groups across North America after SPHR issued a statement demanding that the AMS approve the use of student fees to help fund the Canadian Gaza flotilla.

The SJC receives $10,000 a year from the AMS and is supposed to be a safe place for all students, said Eyal Lichtmann, executive director of the Vancouver Hillel Foundation.

"The SPHR has taken control of the SJC and has ['Israeli] apartheid' posters up on the office walls," he said. "When our students asked them to remove those posters they refused and plastered the entire student union building with the same poster, as a provocation."

UBC's administration tried to mediate between SPHR, Hillel and the AMS to resolve the situation, but SPHR was "belligerent and unco-operative," Lichtmann said.

At the SJC's annual general meeting this fall, Jewish students showed up in large numbers to contest the centre's elections. Their goal, Lichtmann said, was to elect a new slate and pass resolutions to reverse the funding of the Gaza mission and the SJC's support of a recent talk in Vancouver by former British MP George Galloway, a vocal critic of Israel.

But SPHR members unilaterally cancelled the meeting and the elections. "Then [SPHR] continued operating the SJC as if nothing had happened, expecting that the $700 funding for the flotilla would still be supplied by the AMS," Lichtmann said.

But cancelling the meeting and elections violated AMS rules and procedures, he said. As a result, the AMS froze SJC's financial accounts and scheduled the Dec. 1 council meeting to discuss the matter.

"Our policy is to put a hold on things while investigations are conducted and ask student groups to remedy the situation before we release the funds," AMS president Bijan Ahmadian told *The CJN* before the meeting.

Rael Katz, president of UBC's Israel Awareness Club, was disappointed by the outcome of the AMS vote last week.

"There was a motion put forward… [to allow the] transfer to go ahead as planned on the condition that SPHR donates the money to a [Canadian International Development Agency]-recognized NGO that's on the ground in Gaza, and that was also voted down," Katz said.

"They voted in favour of the political means rather than the humanitarian means. When you can guarantee that aid will arrive on the ground rather than the chance that it might not… they still chose the more political, more dangerous, more possibly violent means," he added.

By allowing money to go to the flotilla, Katz said, the AMS could be criminally liable. "The AMS did seek a lot of legal advice on this matter. One thing that the legal advice said is if by any chance the Canadian Boat to Gaza or the Alternatives foundation, the charity they're working with, are found to have any ties with a terrorist organization, the AMS could be found liable after the fact under the Criminal Code of Canada."

The AMS has frozen the accounts of some 20 student groups this year for violating its rules and procedures. The groups' accounts were unfrozen as soon as the relevant issues were resolved.

Lichtmann said that Ahmadian was "a very brave individual" to take "a moral stand on due process in this issue. He [was] insisting that the SJC have new elections and that its accounts should be frozen until that happens."

At Galloway's talk in Vancouver on Nov. 22, SPHR had asked attendees to contact Ahmadian and denounce his actions. As a result, he and the AMS were flooded with negative e-mails from across Canada, Lichtmann said.

In response, Hillel began collecting signatures on a petition against allocating student fees via the SJC to the Canadian boat to Gaza. "This is a numbers game – our students need large numbers of signed petitions which will be sent to the student government to show that this is not a popular undertaking and discredits and tarnishes the reputation of UBC," the petition stated.

The petition had nearly 1,000 signatures by Dec. 1, Katz said.

Lichtmann said Hillel's lawyers are investigating whether the AMS can legally use student fees to fund the non-registered charitable group that's organizing the flotilla.

"The SJC is an autonomous body, and I believe precedent dictates it has the right to provide $700 in funding to SPHR for this purpose," he said. "I hope I am wrong, because our personal belief is that this is deplorable."

Efforts to reach representatives from SPHR and the SJC for comment on this story were unsuccessful.

With files from Laura Stricker

MENORAH MAKERS

Hillel recently hosted menorah-building competitions at Ryerson University, York University and University of Toronto in which students had one hour to build a menorah out of Mega Bloks. Pictured, from left, with their creation are the competition winners from Ryerson, Joel Silver, Eli Vandersluis, Adam Piet and Alan Hudes.

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WikiLeaks exposed the true Mideast conflict

By ARI SHAVIT
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

Opinion

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is a dangerous man. He is not merely a delusory anarchist humiliating the greatest power on earth. He is not merely an uninhibited megalomaniac disrupting modern diplomacy and undermining the world order. Assange is a dangerous criminal because he has shattered the accepted dogma on the understanding in the Middle East in the 21st century.

This dogma states the following: the main problem in the Middle East is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The main problem in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the occupation. The main problem in the occupation is the settlements. Therefore, if we just stop the settlements, the occupation will begin to end, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be solved and the Middle East will be stable.

In the last decade, this dogma became fixed and was sanctified. It became a kind of core belief that cannot be questioned. This was the truth they swore to in the White House, the Elysée Palace and 10 Downing Street. This was the truth they reported in the *Washington Post*, *Le Monde* and the *Guardian*. This was the truth that incorporated the supreme moral gravity that formed the worldview of enlightened elites in the West and directed the policies of the western powers.

Then along came Assange and shattered the dogma. The secret government documents that WikiLeaks published recently proved that the settlements, the occupation and even the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are not the main problem in the Middle East. The confidential e-mails proved that the world they were talking about in Washington, Paris and London was an imaginary world. Assange proved that there is no connection between the real Middle East and the Middle East they talk about in the *Washington Post*, *Le Monde* and the *Guardian*. He revealed that the entire Arab world is currently busy with one problem only – Iran, Iran, Iran.

There is no doubt about it – Assange is dangerous. But he is dangerous not because he penetrated the Pentagon's information systems, but because he revealed the western intelligentsia's lack of intellectual integrity. Assange is dangerous not because he leaked state secrets on an unprecedented scale, but because he revealed to us all that the West's

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

hegemonic discourse is superficial and mendacious. Assange is dangerous not because he embarrassed the West's allies but because he proved that the West is contaminated by political correctness that cuts it off from the diplomatic reality. Assange placed a giant mirror in front of us all and proved the extent to which we had been duped in recent decades. A false dogma has prevented us from looking logically at the historic challenge facing us.

But let's not confuse things. The settlements are indeed a disaster. The occupation is intolerable. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is dangerous. But now that Assange has opened our eyes, we must no longer shut them. The confidential e-mails must be read and reread so they can be understood. There is no chance for the current diplomatic process, they say. There is no chance of signing an Israeli-Palestinian agreement as long as Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is living under the menacing shadow of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. There is no chance of regional peace as long as the Arab world is living under Tehran's incessant threat.

After all, just as the Egyptian president, the Saudi king and the Gulf emirs whisper, Iran is the heart of the problem. Iran is the source of the poison and the source of the consternation. As long as Iran is growing stronger, is seeking nuclear weapons and is terrorizing the Middle East, there is no chance for peace.

The lesson is a bitter one. If Iran develops nuclear weapons, peace will disappear. A nuclear Iran will deal a final blow to the chance of achieving a compromise between Israelis and Arabs. Therefore the dove of peace has to be extremely hawkish toward Iran. The peace-seeker must deal with Iran.

The opposite is also true. Anyone who wants to appease Ahmadinejad is betraying peace. Anyone who takes a lenient view of the ayatollahs is abandoning Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Abbas. A moratorium on the settlements will help in the struggle against the centrifuges. But the strategic order of things is utterly clear – Iran first.

Brazil recognizes Palestinian state

JTA

JERUSALEM — Brazil has recognized a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva announced in a public letter.

The letter addressed to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, which was made public last Friday, recognizes what it calls the "legitimate aspiration of the Palestinian people for a secure, united, democratic and economically viable state coexisting peacefully with Israel."

Abbas had made the request to Lula last month to recognize a Palestinian state, Bloomberg News reported. Lula, who is stepping down next month as president after eight years in office, made his first visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories in March.

Israel's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that it was disappointed by the Brazilian declaration.

"Recognition of a Palestinian state is a breach of the interim agreement which was signed between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in 1995, which said that the issue of the status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip would be discussed and resolved through negotiations," the statement said.

"Every attempt to bypass this process and to decide in advance in a unilateral manner about important issues which are disputed only harms trust between the sides and hurts their commitment to the agreed framework of negotiating towards peace."

Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.), the incoming chairwoman of the U.S. House of Representatives' foreign affairs committee, also expressed her objections, as did Representative Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.), the outgoing chairman of the Latin America subcommittee.

"Brazil's decision to recognize a Palestinian state is regrettable and will only serve to undermine peace and security in the Middle East," Ros-Lehtinen said in a statement.

Engel blamed the decision on the leftward tilt of Brazil's outgoing government.

"Brazil's decision to recognize Palestine is severely misguided and represents a last gasp by a Lula-led foreign policy, which was already substantially off track," Engel said in a statement. "One can only hope that the new leadership coming into Brazil will change course and understand that this is not the way to gain favour as an emerging power or to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council."

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UJA Federation

Rehabilitation of forest has started

Continued from page 1

Amir Gissin, Israeli consul general for Toronto and Western Canada, expressed his office's appreciation to Canadians for their support in his country's time of need.

"We have received word that the rehabilitation of the forests is starting to take place, although the recovery will take some time, with great effort and resources. We also appreciate the hard work of the Jewish organizations who are channelling efforts and support," Gissin said.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry has recommended that Diaspora Jews who wish to make a donation to help should do so through their local JNF offices, as that organization will lead the restoration effort.

But Gissin noted that donations from all organizations "are welcomed."

Joe Rabinovitch, executive vice-president of JNF Canada, told *The CJN* that all initial donations had been routed toward extinguishing the fire, with the money being used to purchase much-needed fire retardants and equipment for beleaguered JNF and Israeli firefighters on scene.

He added that 100 per cent of donations to JNF Canada were being rerouted to Israel.

"We're not factoring in any overhead costs at all," he said. "Over two million trees have been destroyed, from what I've heard."

Once the fire is completely extinguished, JNF will begin assessing the damage, and trees will be strategically replanted shortly afterward, Rabinovitch said.

Of the 42 people killed by the fire, most were young Israeli prison guard cadets who became trapped on a bus when a burnt tree fell across the roadway while they were on their way to rescue inmates from nearby Damon jail during the onset of the fire.

In a statement last week, Canadian Liberal multiculturalism critic Rob Oliphant offered condolences to the cadets' families.

"The courageous actions of these young Israelis, risking their own lives to save the inmates they were tasked to guard, are a tribute to their dedication and compassion, and indeed a tribute to the State of Israel itself," Oliphant said.

Robert H. Serry, the UN special co-ordinator for the Middle East peace process, issued a statement last Friday expressing the UN's sadness over the tragic events in Israel.

"This is a terrible tragedy. I convey my deepest sympathy to the bereaved families and have extended my condolences to the government of Israel. The United Nations is actively engaged in assisting to mobilize support from member states, some of which have already deployed assets to help those currently fighting the fires," Serry said.

Early Sunday at an emergency cabinet meeting, Netanyahu ordered a halt to the arrival of new foreign firefighting aircraft after apparently accepting an Israeli Air Force recommendation that the existing firefighting force was providing the best response to the bushfire.

Netanyahu said the government will launch a program to rehabilitate the areas in the Carmel region that were badly damaged. "This is a special type of battle. Unlike ordinary fires, it requires measures different than those usually employed," Netanyahu said.

The cabinet also announced it would provide NIS $140 million ($40 million Cdn) in emergency aid to those affected by the fire. "We must speed up the payment of the compensation. I don't want delays or bureaucracy," Netanyahu said.

Israeli police arrested two teenage brothers from the Druze village of Ussfiya on suspicion of negligence in starting the fire, and they were put under house arrest on Monday.

They are accused of lighting a bonfire near their home, which is said to have sparked the fire.

* * *

In related news, in Israel on Monday, thousands of mourners attended the funeral of Haifa Police Chief Ahuva Tomer, the highest-ranking female officer in the Israeli police force, who died earlier in the day after succumbing to critical injuries sustained in the fire.

Tomer, who headed the Haifa Police Department, was critically injured on Thursday driving behind the bus full of prison guards that burned up in the flames.

Tomer was one of the best-known and highest-ranking officers in the northern region. She made history in 1997 when she was appointed police commander in Nahariya, and again in 2009, when she was appointed commander of the Haifa station, the largest in Israel.

With files from Frances Kraft and Ha'aretz.

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Hansen, Hebrew U join for spinal cord research

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Rick Hansen, the "Man in Motion," was in Israel last week as part of a Middle East tour to announce a collaboration between his Rick Hansen Institute and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to increase research on spinal cord injuries.

He also visited with researchers in Jordan.

Speaking at a Chanukah candlelighting ceremony in Jerusalem at Hebrew U's Institute for Medical Research Israel Canada (IMRIC) last Thursday, Hansen said he had hope that more international collaboration on research in this area would help improve the lives of people affected by spinal cord injuries and eventually produce a cure.

"When I first began the Man In Motion World Tour 25 years ago, we set out to achieve two goals: find a cure for spinal cord injury and make the world more accessible and inclusive," Hansen said.

"This trip in Israel, and the initial stop in Jordan earlier this week, marks an important milestone for our 25th Anniversary: the opportunity to advance collaborative partnerships with the Rick Hansen Spinal Cord Registry and to recognize the achievements of those who are making a difference in the areas of finding a cure for spinal cord injuries and creating accessible communities."

Rick Hansen takes part in the lighting of a chanukiyah at a reception hosted by Hebrew University last week.
[Rick Hansen Institute photo]

Last week, Hansen's institute and Hebrew U signed a memorandum of understanding to create an international registry to collect and analyze valuable data on spinal cord injuries and clinical treatments.

After the signing, Hansen paid a visit to a Canadian landmark in Israel, the Terry Fox Memorial, located in the centre of Jerusalem at Liberty Bell Park. It was nearly 25 years to the day of his original visit to the memorial for his close friend Fox.

While in Israel, Hansen also presented two Rick Hansen Difference Maker Awards, one to Dr. Aharon Lev Tov, chairman of Medical Neurobiology at IMRIC, and one to Yuval Wagner, chairman and founder of Access Israel, a non-profit organization that seeks to help Israel become more accessible for citizens with "an array of disabilities."

Hansen's tour of Israel was scheduled to conclude Dec. 7 after a meeting with Israeli President Shimon Peres.

בס"ד

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German president visits Schalit family

JTA

BERLIN — German President Christian Wulff's unprecedented visit to the family of captured Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit sends an important signal to the International Red Cross, Jewish activists in Germany said.

Peter Diedrich, head of the German branch of the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists, said he hoped Wulff's visit last week in Jerusalem would boost his group's efforts to press for the soldier's release. The organization has a rally calling for Schalit's release from captivity in Gaza planned for Dec. 10 outside the offices of the German Red Cross.

The rally, to mark the 62nd anniversary of the passage of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is part of an international effort co-ordinated by the Israel-based parent association of Jewish lawyers and jurists to draw attention to the case of Schalit, who was captured by Hamas in a cross-border raid from Gaza in June 2006.

Schalit has not been permitted to receive any Red Cross visits in contravention of the international body's mandate to "visit prisoners of war and civilian internees to verify whether they are being treated according to relevant international standards."

During his Nov. 29 meeting with the soldier's family, Wulff pressed for a Red Cross visit to the soldier and for his release. The German president's visit included meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Shimon Peres and Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman.

Wulff is the first head of a state to visit the family and address the issue of the Red Cross, Diedrich told JTA in a telephone interview from his Berlin office. The presidential visit underscored that this "is just a human rights issue, and everyone has not only the right but also the duty to go for it."

The Dec. 10 rally in Berlin is supported by several Jewish organizations in Germany.

Israel Briefs

PA removes Western Wall report

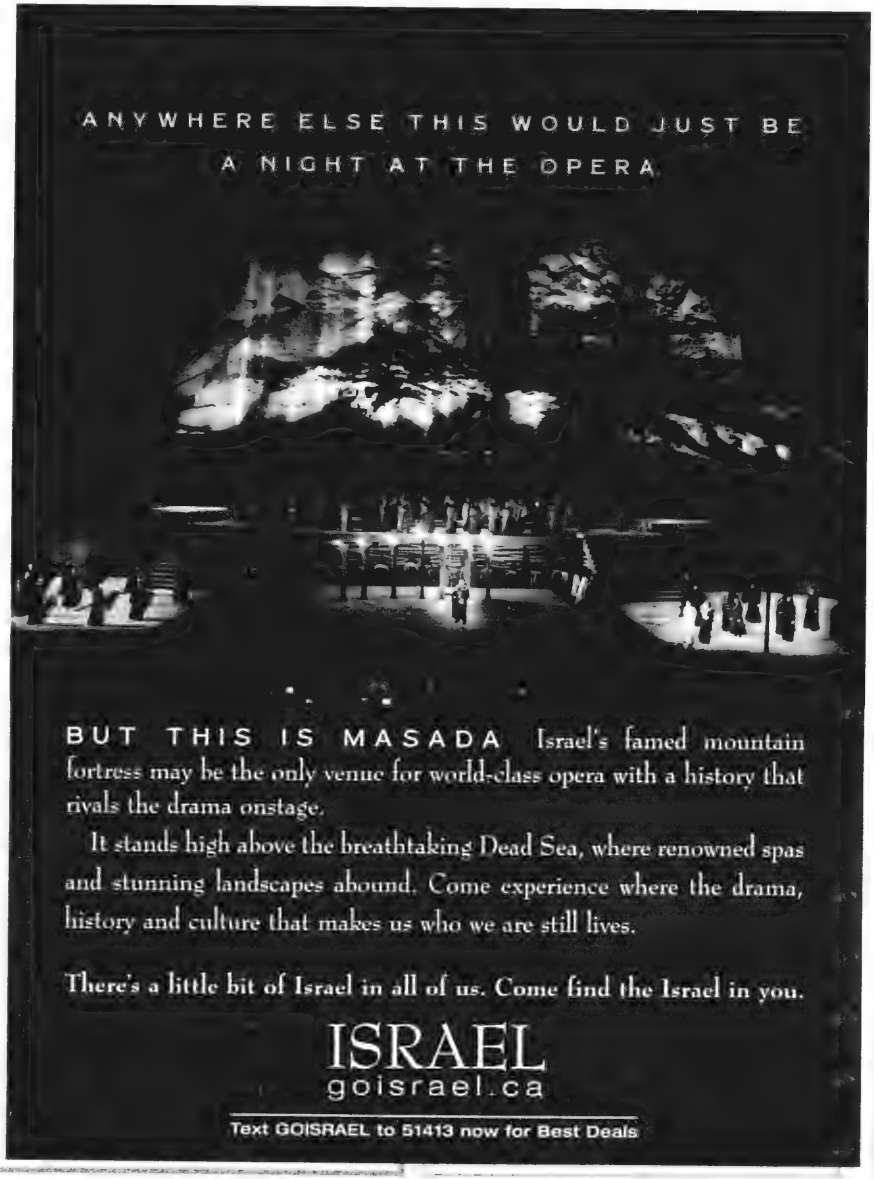
The Palestinian Authority reportedly removed from its website a paper that denies any Jewish connection to the Western Wall. The report was not on the PA's official website on Dec. 1, the Associated Press reported. Its author, Al-Mutawakil Taha, a civil servant in the Information Ministry, told the AP that he stands by his report, which says the Western Wall was never a part of the Temple Mount complex. "This wall was never part of the so-called Temple Mount, but Muslim tolerance allowed the Jews to stand in front of it and weep over its destruction," he wrote. Earlier in the week, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu denounced the claim. Condemnation of the Palestinian position also came from Washington. "Regarding a claim by a senior Palestinian official of the Western Wall is an Islamic Waqf, we strongly condemn these comments and fully reject them as factually incorrect, insensitive and highly provocative," State Department spokesperson P.J. Crowley said on Nov. 30. "We have repeatedly raised with the Palestinian Authority leadership the need to consistently combat all forms of de-legitimization of Israel, including denying historic Jewish connections to the land."

New Jerusalem neighbourhood

A Jerusalem municipal committee approved the establishment of a new neighbourhood in eastern Jerusalem. The Jerusalem District Planning and Construction Committee approved 625 housing units in Pisgat Ze'ev. The new neighbourhood reportedly will be called North Pisgat Ze'ev. The Obama administration strongly opposed the announcement, according to news reports. Palestinian Authority chief negotiator Saeb Erekat said that the approval showed that Israel had chosen "settlements and not peace." The Palestinians have said they will not return to peace negotiations with Israel unless Israel halts building in all West Bank settlements and eastern Jerusalem.

Conversions again in doubt

Israel's Chief Sephardi Rabbi Shlomo Amar said he will no longer be responsible for any state conversions if the Knesset passes a bill requiring the recognition of all military conversions. In a letter sent to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Rabbi Amar called on the prime minister to prevent the bill from passing. Rabbi Amar has created a committee to look into legal and halachic issues surrounding the military conversions. He asked Netanyahu to allow the committee to conclude its work before allowing the legislation to go forward. "This is to inform you that if this bill passes, I won't be able to take care of all matters of conversion, and will no longer bear the responsibility for them," Rabbi Amar said. The Shas Party also called on Netanyahu to quash the bill, telling him that it is a breach of coalition agreements with Shas. The bill to protect Israeli soldiers who have converted to Judaism through military conversion courts from having their conversions annulled was approved on Nov. 28 by the Knesset's ministerial committee on legislative affairs. It would force all state agencies, including rabbinic courts, the chief rabbis of cities and other Orthodox marriage registrars to accept the converts as Jews.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Consider fostering as route to adoption: JF&CS

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Benita Friedlander of Jewish Family & Child urges prospective parents to look outside the box when it comes to adoption.

The agency has a number of children who are in its fostering program, she said, and although the agency's aim is to return them, when possible, to their parents, they do want some permanency for them.

"We don't like to see kids [in long-term] care going from foster family to foster family. There is always the chance that the birth family will regain control and parent again, but sometimes we seek adoptive parents for these kids. A long-term foster family is a good choice," said Friedlander, who is JF&CS' adoption co-ordinator.

"We desperately need foster families, and sometimes the option of adoption becomes available."

Those considering adoption have to be approved, she said, which includes a home study and 27 hours of mandatory training. "Once they're approved, they join the agency's list, and wait for a match.

"The more [open-minded the prospective] parents are, the better the chance is for a match. That is where long-term fostering comes in."

John and Lisa (not their real names) have been fostering a three-year-old boy since July who they're "pretty sure" will be up for adoption.

"We were on the list for adoption, and then this opportunity came up. We were [given the opportunity] to foster the child and were told it was probably long term. There was a small chance that he would not stay, but we were willing to take the chance," says Lisa, who stays at home to care for the boy.

They took this route because they didn't want to go through fertility treatments. "We had full intentions of adopting a child, and then he became available. We try not to think about the adoption until it actually happens," she said.

It has totally changed their lives, said John. "It's his house now. Most people have nine months to prepare for a baby. We had two hours. We came and met him, and took him home. We wouldn't change it for anything."

Another couple with two adopted children say they picked up one of their sons at his bris.

"He was with a foster family at the time, and the foster father held the baby at the bris. The baby was then passed from the foster father to the adoptive parents. It was very moving. There wasn't a dry eye in the place," the adoptive mother said.

She said they're still involved with the foster family. "Foster parents and adoptive parents need to work together for the transition period, because babies get attached to the foster families."

Friedlander said JF&CS runs an adoption support program for people who have recently adopted a child. "Adoption is a kind of invisible minority. It's not really spoken about."

Both the children who are adopted and their adoptive parents have suffered a loss, said Friedlander. "Kids going through foster homes experience loss when they're moved from their birth family and then from their foster family.

"The birth parents also suffer loss, because by and large, they couldn't conceive. They feel a loss when they realize they can't have children. Families in the support group are facing the same issues. They often forge a connection, especially families with kids of the same age," she said.

Adopted kids shouldn't feel ashamed, and they shouldn't feel proud, Friedlander said. "It's just life, and some lives are different from others."

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RESEARCH SUPPORT

The newly appointed president of the Israel Cancer Research Fund (ICRF), Bryna Goldberg, and her husband, Howard Harris, have pledged $350,000 over a seven-year period to fund Dr. Yosef Yarden's biological regulation department at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel. Yarden is conducting research on growth factors that contribute to tumour progression. His extensive research on the structure and function of growth factor receptors has led to their recognition as targets for cancer therapy, and over the last decade, several anti-cancer drugs have been developed based on this knowledge.

SUPPORT SICK KIDS: Nine-year old Zachary Winkler held his fourth annual "Do Something Sweet" fundraiser, Nov. 7, in support of the Hospital for Sick Children. More than 250 people turned out to take part in inflatable games donated by Hart Entertainment; balloon animals; face painting, and a silent auction. Items included a Toronto Maple Leafs signed hockey stick; theatre tickets from Mirvish Productions; and a Toronto Blue Jays signed baseball. Zachary also had an online campaign authorized by the hospital . Zachary surpassed last year with a total of $5,222.77. Pictured is Zachary and his sister Maya.They are handing over the cheque to Lonnie Griffin from the Sick Kids Foundation.

Business

Israeli exploration company listed on TSX

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When Alan Friedman makes his pitch on behalf of Adira Energy, he likes to recount a story that was told by Golda Meir, but with a 21st-century twist.

Meir used to say that in ancient times, Moses "took us 40 years through the desert in order to bring us to the one spot in the Middle East that has no oil," Friedman says.

The story, of course, reflected the late prime minister's frustration that Israel had no bounteous natural resources to exploit, unlike many of its neighbours.

It turns out, that story is so 20th century. In fact, Friedman explains, one of the world's largest discoveries of natural gas, measured in trillions of cubic feet, has been found in Israel's front yard. And Adira is well situated to exploit it.

Last week, Adira Energy became the first Israeli resource company to be listed on the TSX Venture Exchange (TSXV). It had also been listed on the OTCBB, a listing service for penny stocks.

The TSX listing gives the company the opportunity to entice investment funds whose internal governance requires a listing on a prominent exchange, with all the regulatory and capital requirement they entail. "Now we're getting to the bigger exchange and can attract bigger investors," he said.

"We are excited to bring the first Israeli venture to the Toronto Stock Exchange," said Friedman, co-founder and executive vice-president of Adira Energy (TSXV-ADL). "The TSX is host to over 35 per cent of all oil and gas companies listed globally and more than $60 billion [Cdn] has been raised for the sector since 2002."

"Adira's listing on TSX is positive evidence of the growing trade and investment ties between Canada and Israel, and the mutual benefits for the people of both countries," said Dennis Bennie, co-founder and chair of Adira.

"Adira will gain wisdom from Canada's tremendous expertise in natural resource exploration. But we are especially proud to be making history, and paving the way for even greater opportunities for both Canadians and Israelis into the future," he added.

Friedman said Adira's listing on the TSX provides an opportunity for the company to attract major-league investors with expertise in the oil and gas sector. Apparently, there is already some interest in the firm. The company recently raised $11 million US to qualify for TSX listing – it needed to raise only $5 million and in the end turned away potential investors – and on its first day of trading last Thursday, it closed at 55 cents Cdn on a volume of 59,500 shares. It raised the $11 million by offering 27.5 million units at 40 cents US. Last week the currencies were almost at par.

According to research by Jennings Capital, which sponsored Adira's financing, "The company holds three offshore exploration licences: the Gabriella, Yitzhak and Samuel licences, and two onshore licenses, the Eitan and Notera licences."

"Adira's offshore Israeli blocks hold significant potential, as the offshore areas have seen significant success of late, such as Noble Energy's Dalit, Mari and Tamar discoveries that hold 1.0 trillion cubic feet (tcf), 2.0 tcf and 8.4 tcf of reserves respectively.

"Tamar was the largest natural gas discovery in the world in 2009. Initial expectations target first production from Tamar by the end of 2012."

Friedman said Adira's licences run north from Gaza for 60 kilometres to the area around Netanya and are a few kilometres offshore in fairly shallow water. Funds that have been raised will go toward exploration and evaluation of seismic tests to determine the extent of the gas reserves below the surface.

Alan Friedman, left, and Dennis Bennie are co-founders, along with Ilan Diamond, of Adira Energy.

Once the extent of the reserves are determined, the company will have to raise further sums, since it costs $30 to $150 million to drill a single well, Friedman said.

Friedman, who has been in the "oil and gas space a long time," said some prestigious investors have already sunk their money into Adira, including BRM Group, an Israeli investment company led by Eli Barkat; Lapidoth Israel Oil Prospectors, Israel's only oil and gas drilling company, and the Halman Aldubi Group, a leading financial services company in Israel.

Prospectors strike oil in the Holy Land

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JERUSALEM — An Israeli oil prospecting and production firm announced it has struck a commercial amount of the black substance in central Israel, Army Radio reported recently.

Givot Olam Oil Ltd notified the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange of the find in its "Megev Five" drill near the town of Rosh Ha'ayin, saying it can produce 470 barrels of oil a day.

The Industry, Trade and Labor Ministry said in response that the ministry's head of oil affairs had not yet received the relevant test results, thus preventing it from declaring a commercial amount of oil.

The prospected find comes in the wake of an unprecedented amount of natural resources being discovered in Israel in recent months.

Last month, the U.S. firm Noble Energy, which together with its Israeli partners has been carrying out exploratory drilling at three sites off the Haifa coast, raised its reserve estimate at the Tamar field by 15 per cent, to 238 billion cubic metres.

The firm also announced it would start natural gas exploration at the Leviathan offshore prospect off Israel's coast in the fourth quarter of this year. The latter announcement came in the wake of estimates of 16 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the prospect.

Givot Olam Oil discovered the Meged oil field, which it touts as potentially the largest oil field in Israel, about 20 kilometres northeast of Tel Aviv.

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Arts & Travel

INFAMOUS LEO FRANK CASE IS THE FOCUS OF *PARADE*

Acting Up Stage Company and Studio 180 Theatre present *Parade*, the musical by **Alfred Uhry** (book) and **Jason Robert Brown** (music) about the infamous **Leo Frank** case. The director is **Joel Greenberg**.

Parade had its world première in New York in 1998 and won a Tony and other awards. It has since been staged in London and Los Angeles, but not in Toronto until this month.

The story recounts the experiences of Leo Frank, a Jewish factory manager in Atlanta in 1913 who is wrongly charged with a rape and murder. Considered one of the most sensational trials of the early 20th century, the Frank case pressed every hot-button issue of the time: North versus South, black versus white, Jewish versus Christian, industrial versus agrarian.

Uhry is also the playwright of *Driving Miss Daisy*.

Parade features a cast of 15 and runs at the Berkeley Street Theatre Upstairs, Dec. 30 to Jan. 22, 2011. Tickets are $32 to $40. 416-368-3110. www.paradethemusical.com

* * *

Film & TV

• Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents *Jaffa*, a *Romeo and Juliet*-type romance, Middle-Eastern style. A 2009 Israeli, German and French production directed by **Keren Yedaya**, the film is in Hebrew and Arabic with English subtitles. Chai Tea and A Movie, Cineplex Odeon Sheppard at Yonge St. $15. Sunday, Dec. 12, tea 4 p.m., film at 5. 416-599-8433, www.tjff.com.

• The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada and the Young Polish Canadian Professionals Association present the Toronto première of *In the Name of Their Mothers*, a new documentary film about the life and heroic deeds of **Irena Sendler**. Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Ave. Limited seating, come early. Sunday, Dec. 12, 8 p.m.

• *Ramzor*, an Israeli television sitcom about three friends and their romantic relationships, won the International Emmy Award for best comedy. The show was selected as a finalist by a panel of 700 judges from 50 countries and beat entries from Thailand, Mexico and Britain. An American version of the show, called *Mixed Signals*, is due to start airing on the Fox network in February.

* * *

Music & Live Theatre

• Active Seniors presents a Chanukah Musical Celebration with recording artist **Aviva Chernick** who will sing in Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino and English. Seasonal refreshments. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Thursday, Dec. 9, 1:30 p.m. RSVP, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

• Studio 5030 presents Sharron's Holiday Party with **Sharron Matthews** ("Canada's own **Bette Midler**") and the baritone trio **Bravura**. $25. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, Thursday, Dec. 16, doors open 7 p.m., show starts at 8. www.studio-5040cabarets.com

• **Bowfire**, a band featuring **Lenny Solomon**, performs Holiday Heart Strings, a CD release concert. $39.50 to $69.50. Roy Thomson Hall, Dec. 17, 8 p.m. www.bowfire.com

• **David Mirvish** presents *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, the Stratford Festival's musical production written by **Burt Shevelove** and **Larry Gelbart**, with music and lyrics by **Stephen Sondheim**, and originally produced on Broadway by **Harold Prince**. $40 to $120. Canon Theatre, Dec. 15 to Jan. 16. 416-872-1212, www.mirvish.com

• Puppetmongers presents *Tea at the Palace*, a retelling of two Russian folk tales for adults and children. $13 to $18. Tarragon Theatre Extra Space, Dec. 18 to Jan. 1. 416-531-1827. www.puppetmongers.com

Arts in Brief

• **Yehoshue Perle**, **Ruth Almog**, **Clive Sinclair**, **Nessa Rapoport**, **Alan Kaufman**, **Gail Hareven** and other authors are featured in the second issue of jewishfiction.net, the online magazine of Jewish fiction edited by **Nora Gold**.

• *Polar Visions*, photographs by **Mark Loren Freedman**, is on view in the Jacobs Lounge, Miles Nadal JCC, until Dec. 31.

Ronit Elkabetz and Moni Moshonov star in the Israeli movie *Jaffa*

Soprano picks up where she left off, 30 years later

By JORDANA DIVON
Special to The CJN

There's a good chance any woman under 40 who hears Renee Barda's story will react with some measure of anger. Or at the very least, a strong opinion.

But first picture the era in which stories like Barda's regularly occurred. It's the early 1970s. A naïve, sheltered, but gifted young soprano from Toronto has just stepped onto the Heathrow Airport tarmac sporting two bags and a Canada Council grant.

She's only 23, and her life to this point has been nothing but a series of triumphs. The eldest daughter of doting parents, they encouraged her talent from the outset.

"My parents would buy me a record every Sunday of a famous opera star, and put it on while I had my breakfast," Barda, who is performing at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre in Toronto on Dec.11, recalls, sitting in her sunny Willowdale kitchen.

"I started piano lessons when I was six, and would play concerts every week for my aunts and uncles. Then they realized I had a voice, and the voice took over."

That voice landed the teenager at the University of Toronto's faculty of music, where she studied opera. The title role in a summer Stratford production of Rossini's *La Cenerentola* followed.

"The performances were absolutely magnificent," she says. "I worked like a dog and the reviews were great. And after that, I felt like a really big star."

Her professors agreed. Barda graduated with the Eaton Award, and a referral to study in England with the Hungarian vocal coach, Vera Rozsa. With her scholarship in tow, the young singer arrived, alone, in the British capital.

"Until that point, I wasn't sent to camp, or even allowed to mix outside of the house. It was a different generation," she says of her inexperience in those early London days.

So while her vocal technique flourished, the singer sought the familiarity of her sheltered Jewish upbringing. And at a Friday night gathering at Hillel House, she met Dino Barda, the charming, sophisticated and much older man who would become her husband.

"There wasn't a long courtship. He was many years older and he was just ready to get married," she says. "He came from an aristocratic Jewish Italian background. I had never met anyone like that. He knew all the little particulars about table manners, how to dress, how to handle yourself. I was very taken with this."

Around the same time Dino Barda proposed, the singer received the opportunity of her life: an audition at London's Covent Garden.

"They all said I had a great voice – very gifted, an unusual quality," she says matter-of-factly. "For the big time people, it's not just the technique, but what they call golden voices of a certain quality. Pavarotti had it, for example. They told me I had that, too."

The night before the Covent Garden tryout, Dino called and asked to take her for a drive. "I said I didn't want to be out late because my audition was in the morning, but he told me it wouldn't take long."

It didn't. Dino's message was simple: it's either me or your career.

"He said, 'I just spoke to my father in Rome and we decided you can't really raise a family if you're going to be trotting all over the world,'" Barda recalls. "He said, 'If you don't go, call me. But you have to be sure what you tell me is true, and a year after we get married you won't get disappointed and start singing again.'

"I almost cried first, and then started thinking it over. I wasn't too rational about it," she says. "I was just so madly in love with this guy that the whole world was blinded."

Barda cancelled her audition.

"The agent who booked me was livid. He said, 'You'll never have an opportunity like this for the rest of your life. You're finished.'"

And until her husband's death 30 years later, so it seemed.

Renee Barda

Barda locked her music away in the basement and couldn't even bring herself to look at it. Several times, her husband caught her vocalizing in the shower and chided her for "getting ideas to go back to the opera." She stopped.

But it wasn't all bad. Barda adored being a mother to her three sons and took to her domestic tasks. Her husband's poor health also kept her busy. After their wedding, he revealed that he had a number of genetic disorders, including congenital kidney disease, Mediterranean Fever, and later in life, he had cirrhosis of the liver.

Barda remained his dedicated nurse until his death in 2000.

Two years later, her son startled her one night at the dinner table. "He said, 'You know, you never sang. We don't even know what you really sound like. Why don't you get back into it?'"

Barda realized there was no longer anything preventing her from singing again, except her own fear. But slowly, tentatively, she unlocked that basement door. Everything was still intact, just as she'd left it, including her voice.

"I picked up a big aria and thought, 'Nah. No way.' But I went through that aria and it was all there. I couldn't believe it. I was ecstatic, in tears."

Since recovering her voice, Barda has been busy. In 2004, she recorded a CD. From there, concert dates, media coverage and even a TV documentary have followed.

When asked by younger women if she feels any resentment for what she gave up, the diminutive grandmother of three doesn't waver.

"There's also a lot of positive that happened: I adore my grandchildren, children and daughters-in-law," she explains. "I'm the kind of person that moves on in life. You can't change the past, so I look on the positive side of everything."

Barda performs classics of George Gershwin, Cole Porter, art songs and more at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Al Green Theatre, Dec. 11 at 7:30 p.m. 416-924-6211.

Directed by **Ari Weisberg** January 5 - 16, 2011

Hannah and Zvi are reunited after divorcing twenty years earlier. Raised in Jerusalem's ultra-Orthodox Mea Shearim, the couple ended their marriage when Zvi turned his back on Judaism and Hannah did not. Now the teenage children from their second marriages have become romantically involved, forcing Hannah and Zvi back into each other's lives.

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Quebec tour for disabled travellers

BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

The tour bus enters the walled section of Old Quebec City, or Vieux-Quebec, and winds its way through narrow streets lined with stone buildings. Many of them date back to 18th-century New France.

One of the first stops is the 400-year-old site of the first fort, which had been strategically perched on a high cliff overlooking the narrowest point of the St. Lawrence River. The passengers take in this dramatic panorama from Dufferin Terrace, the walkway along the edge of the cliff near the iconic Chateau Frontenac, the city's most famous landmark.

The bus then follows a road that descends to the historic lower city or Basse Ville, which can also be reached by a steep staircase or by the historic Quebec funicular cable car, which is on a 210-foot vertical track. The bus slowly makes its way through the Basse Ville, a colourful area bustling with boutiques, restaurants and outdoor cafés.

We are on the last leg of a three-day whirlwind tour highlighting the accessibility of travel destinations in Montreal and the Quebec City vicinity. In fact, two people in the group are using wheelchairs. However, the person providing the most feedback to the tour organizers is Ray Cohen, CEO of the Canadian Abilities Foundation and founding editor-in-chief of *Abilities* magazine.

Ray Cohen

This national magazine – it's published four times a year – focuses on lifestyle issues for people with a realm of disabilities that includes mobility and sensory limitations, Cohen explains. "People with disabilities have the same lifestyle interests as anybody else. We cover a range of issues like fashion, travel, nutrition and relationships."

He says he was impressed with the accessibility of the sites on the tour, which he attributes to the advocacy work of Kéroul, a non-profit organization that promotes and develops accessible tourism and culture in Quebec for people with physical limitations.

"Kéroul points people in the direction of places with accessible features. The outcome has been a major step towards ending the marginalization of people with disabilities by excluding them from the major cultural and historic places in Quebec."

Panoramic view of Quebec City

Every province has an advocacy organization to expand accessibility, but they're not necessarily as influential as Kéroul, Cohen says.

He draws a distinction between venue accessibility and independent travel, pointing out that while many stops on the tour, which included Old Montreal and Canyon Sainte-Anne near Quebec City, can accommodate wheelchairs, a person with a disability would still require assistance to negotiate the physical terrain.

"Quebec is a beautiful city. It's rich in history and culture. However, people using wheelchairs would have difficulty manoeuvring through the city unassisted, because there are so many hills. It would be worth their while to have a companion to facilitate accessibility."

Cohen says he was particularly impressed with the accessibility and beauty of Montreal Botanical Gardens. The group also visited the nearby Chateau Dufresne Museum, a period home from the early 20th century.

He found Wendake, a rural First Nations village outside Quebec City, conducive to independent wheelchair travel, because it's flat. The First Nations Museum Hôtel in Wendake, where the group stayed, is also fully accessible, he notes, lauding the beauty of the modern glass and wood structure and its picturesque ravine setting.

"The number of accessible rural tourism destinations are few and far between," Cohen says. "Not many can claim the accessibility of Wendake."

He says the other hotels on the trip – the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal and the Chateau Bonne Entente in Quebec City –also met accommodation standards.

Among the amenities he looks for is emergency lighting for the deaf and the height of furniture and grab bars at the sink, shower and toilet.

This information is available on the Access Guide Canada, which can be through the Abilities website at www.abilities.ca/agc/. The guide provides information on a range of accessible Canadian resources that include lodging, theatres, restaurants and parks.

Cohen's work with children with disabilities at the Alberta Children's Hospital in Calgary led him into publishing. He says there was a "huge discrepancy in services" once the children turned 18 and had to leave the hospital school. "The real world was less accommodating."

In researching resources, Cohen realized he needed "a vehicle to spread the information" he was accumulating and so in 1986 he founded the Canadian Abilities Foundation – it has been based in Toronto for the past 21 years – to "provide a framework" for publishing *Abilities* magazine.

The foundation, a charitable institution, also publishes the *Abilities Bulletin*, an online monthly newsletter.

Cohen says there has been much improvement in quality of life issues, because today most disability matters are governed more by social than by medical policy.

"This is the first generation of people with disabilities living outside institutions," he adds. "In the past they rarely went out."

Abilities magazine's website is at www.abilities.ca.

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Collector's rare Jewish books on exhibit

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Some people collect comic books, while others seek out first-edition *Harry Potter* novels. One man looks for an entirely different type of rare book.

Ron Benson has been collecting rare Jewish books, some dating back as far as the 1400s, for 10 years. His collection to date consists of 100 books, and some of them are on exhibit at Adath Israel Congregation.

Benson's collection began when he wanted to buy a unique wedding gift and settled on a Haggadah. However, he didn't actually end up giving it away.

"It was a really good idea, so good that I decided to keep it for myself," Benson said, laughing.

From there, he went on a mission to find more Haggadahs. His contact in Israel who helped him find the first Haggadah said finding an original was very difficult because of the large number of counterfeits and reprints in circulation. Benson then started to look into collecting other rare Jewish books, with one specific qualification.

"The criteria for me was to get things that were of museum quality," he said. "Resource wise, I didn't want to buy things for the sake of buying it.

"I may be lucky and get 10 books in one year, or only get two books. Today my collection consists of 100 books. They're all incredible. I don't have one bad book that I've acquired."

Benson's favourites in his burgeoning collection include a 1695 Haggadah from Amsterdam – "one of the first Haggadahs to be illustrated by copperplates," he said – and a mini Bible that is currently featured in the Adath Israel exhibit.

Benson approached the synagogue with the idea to display the books. "I was keeping the books in boxes… [and] wanted to share them with people," he said.

The books will be displayed for a year, but Benson hopes to make the exhibit more permanent.

"I've had an incredible response," he said. "The enjoyment comes from sharing it with the Jewish community and the congregation. Close to 2,000 people have been through the exhibit.

"The printing process only started in the mid-1400s," he added. "Some of these books are the only editions… It would take maybe five or six months to print and put [the books] together, so there weren't that many done – [it was a] pretty crude process. The fact that they've survived all these years is pretty amazing."

From left, Ron Benson with Holocaust survivor Erwin Schild, rabbi emeritus at Adath Israel.

The Jewish cemetery of Calcutta

By ROBERT HIRSCHFIELD
Special to The CJN

Calcutta's three synagogues are empty. No Jews live on Ezra Street, named for the once prominent realtor David Joseph Ezra.

Less than 40 Jews live in Calcutta altogether. But behind the locked metal gate on Narkeldanga Main Road, there erupts a village of tombstones blazing in the diabolical heat. It is the Jewish cemetery of Calcutta – the only place in this city of 11 million where the Biblical injunction "be fruitful and multiply," applies to the Jews.

The cemetery land was bought by Shalom Cohen, the first Jew of Calcutta, who arrived in 1684 to become the court jeweller of the Nawab of Oudh.

Eighty-year-old Flower Silliman said that Cohen paid an Indian friend for the land with the ring on his finger. Silliman's late husband David, who ran a foreign exchange business in Calcutta, was related, down the line, to Cohen.

There was never antisemitism in Calcutta, the cemetery holds no blood graves. But there are many tiny headstones, the mute narratives of children's lost battles with diarrhea and malaria.

Every time a Jew dies here, the community loses an irreplaceable piece of itself. Sinking into the earth, the dead fade into its disappearing history.

It is hard for a community to acknowledge that the cemetery is soon to double as its collective destiny. References to it are always made with sighs that stop just short of long-tailed remorse.

"What can you do?" Silliman punctuated her sigh with a shrug. "Many communities have died throughout history. Of course, it's different when it's your own."

When visitors to Calcutta are taken around to the city's three synagogues: Neve Shalom, Beth El and Magen David, the sites are spoken of in the past tense as if they were already relics – as if the Jews who once gathered to pray in them no longer exist. They do exist, if fractionally, but their ailing bodies prevent them from coalescing as a minyan.

Shalom Israel, 37, is Calcutta's only living Jew to reside in the cemetery. The community built him a small house at the edge of the stone slabs so he can care for the graves. He is also the only Jew to pray in the three synagogues. Every Friday he lights candles in each of them and says prayers.

He has been chosen to function in places where functioning has ceased, a replacement community of one.

Cohen walks with a slight stoop among the graves, like a professor checking on students in a vast, hushed classroom whose silence often gets broken by car horns and shouts beyond the gate.

He knows some of the dead as no one else knows them.

Among his other services to the community, he performs the taharah (preparing the body for burial) on the men who have died.

Does it feel strange, he is asked, to be living in a cemetery, a man so young?

It doesn't feel strange at all, he says. "In this life, it's the living that will harm you, not the dead," he remarks like a thoughtful old man. "Besides, the cemetery is the one place in Calcutta where Jews are the majority."

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Novel's heroine struggles with her sexual orientation in delightful coming-of-age novel

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Girl Unwrapped by Canadian writer Gabriella Goliger is a compelling coming-of-age novel about a young girl growing up in 1950s and '60s Montreal.

The daughter of Holocaust survivors, Toni Goldblatt grows up struggling not just with her Jewish identity but also with her sexual orientation. As a young girl, eight at the start of the novel, Toni is labelled a tomboy. She'd much rather play with the neighbourhood boys than with the annoying Orthodox Nutkevitch twins next door, Ashie and Shevie. She hates the dresses her seamstress mother makes for her, preferring T-shirts and dungarees.

Girl Unwrapped (Arsenal Pulp Press) begins with Toni having Shabbat dinner at home with her mother, Lisa, and her father, Julian.

The spectre of ghosts haunts the entire book. Each parent deals with the ghosts of the past in their own way. Lisa invokes the memories of her dead relatives by lighting memorial candles, while Julian busies himself collecting books written by long-forgotten prewar Jewish writers.

The Holocaust is a mostly forbidden topic, and photographs of dead family members remain hidden in desk drawers. Toni learns that certain corners of her parents' lives must not be poked into, for the result will be hard, blank silence.

Her parents are proud and refined, and her mother is eager to move out of the immigrant Maplewood Avenue apartment to the more dignified Cote St. Luc neighbourhood, where they can be with "their own, but with a bit of lawn in between."

The novel follows Toni's growth into awkward adolescence and adulthood as she struggles with her increasing alienation and angst. Reading a health pamphlet for young teens on the tribulations of the monthly cycle that her mother left for her one day, Toni begins to think that maybe she's not a woman, but an "it." "You'd be sorrier if you never did menstruate, but she remained an 'it' without any of the normal manifestations of being a grown-up woman," the pamphlet preaches.

At one point she goes to the Jewish General Hospital to see if she could be "cured" of her lesbian inclinations through hypnotism. The doctor suggests she talk with her guidance counsellor at school.

One summer when she is 15, much to her horror, Toni's parents decide to send her to the Zionist Camp Tikvah for the summer. Goliger has a natural gift for capturing the emotional depth of her characters, and the best part of this novel deals with Toni's misadventures at summer camp. All readers who were ever bullied and ostracized by others will identify with Toni here.

At camp, Toni, her body maturing into a gangly, big-footed, ungraceful figure, is further alienated, especially when she is teased by the other girls, including the much-hated Nutkevitch twins, now adolescent beauty queens, who suspect her sexual inclinations. She hates the routine, the lack of privacy and communalism and the requirement to be smiling all the time. She begins to count down the seconds until her torment is over.

The only positive that summer is her crush on Janet, the leader of the singing group at camp. One night, drunk on an illicit bottle of wine, she publicly shouts out her love for Janet.

The next day, she gets kicked out of camp for being drunk and told the camp is not equipped to deal with girls like her.

On the drive home, she angrily tells her mother that she's a lesbian, but her mother will have none of it. Admiring an older girl is normal, but lesbians are "she-devils," her mother says, conjuring images of female Nazi sadists at concentration camps. "You have nothing in common with those monsters."

Feeling patriotic after attending a pro-Israel rally at the Sheraton Mount-Royal, Toni, now a young woman, runs off to Israel after the 1967 war, ostensibly to study at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, but also to track down Janet, whom she learns is now a folk singer in Jerusalem.

The novel's pace here begins to slow down somewhat with unnecessary digressions that include a fruitless trip to a recruitment office and a drunken tryst with an Arab boy. The reader understands at this point that Toni is lost, confused and hurt. But if we sympathized with the alienated girl at summer camp, we now want to slap the older Toni on the head and say, "It happens to all of us. Deal with it."

Girl Unwrapped's strength lies mostly in its first half, as the young girl and adolescent Toni fights her alienation and struggles to come out of the closet, at the same time dealing with being Jewish in an increasingly secular environment.

Readers, particularly those who are familiar with or grew up in Montreal, will enjoy all the references to Montreal, including the Snowdon branch of the Jewish Public Library, the Jewish General Hospital, Paperman's Funeral Chapel and Hadassah bazaars.

Although the novel begins to get weighted down toward the end, Goliger, winner of the 2001 Upper Canada Writers' Craft Award for her debut novel *Song of Ascent,* has written an enticing and delightful coming-of age novel.

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Judo fighter has sights set on Olympics

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Roman Abramovich has had the fighting bug in him ever since he was a young boy in Bishtek, Kyrgyzstan.

His dad, Yuri, was the head coach of the country's national sambo team and got him involved in the Russian martial art and in judo at a young age. As a junior representing his country at the judo world championships, he finished fifth.

After moving to Israel at age 17, he quickly dominated that country's judo scene, winning five national championships and representing the Jewish state in international tournaments, winning a gold medal at an event in Austria.

Since arriving in Canada last May, he hasn't had that level of success – yet – although only a few weeks ago, Abramovich, now 23, gave notice to judo aficionados across the country that he will be a force to be reckoned with. He easily won the Quebec Open, defeating two members of the Canadian national team to do it.

With judo in his blood, Abramovich, who fights in the under-73-kilogram "light-weight" group, has his sights set on a berth on the 2012 Canadian Olympic team. To do so, he must accumulate points at recognized high level international competitions. Last summer, he placed seventh at the World Cup in Miami, which attracted some of the best judo fighters in the world, so he's confident he can do it.

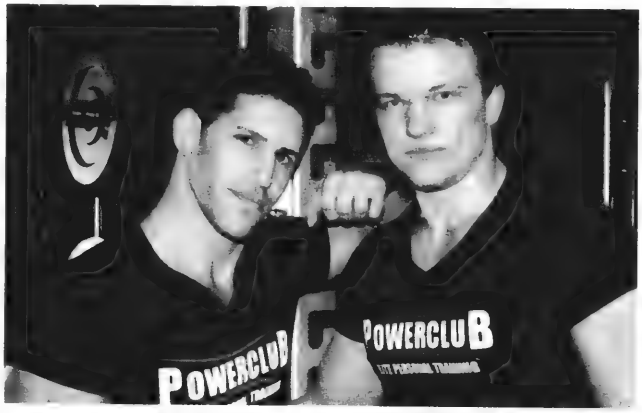
So are the people mentoring him in Canada.

Erez Cohen is an Israeli fighter who now lives in Toronto and who is a third-degree black belt in judo. He's also a partner with Rachelle Bronfman in Powerclub, a fitness club on Eglinton Avenue West, the scene of many of Abramovich's workouts.

"I knew him from the first day he came to Israel," Cohen said. "He trained at the Hapoel B'nei Brak [club], and I was one of his trainers there. He was the national champion in Israel at 13, 14 and up in judo and sambo."

Cohen, who won two gold medals for Israel at the Maccabiah Games and a bronze for Canada in 2009, said Abramovich could easily beat him in a contest today. In fact, he's so dominant that most of his matches in Canada end in about 12 seconds.

At the Quebec Open, he defeated the one-time Canadian champion in 20 seconds. "It was too easy," Cohen said.



Erez Cohen, left, is helping train Roman Abramovich with the goal of making the Canadian Olympic judo team.

"He works so hard. He gives 150 per cent at every workout, and the amount of blood at every workout is amazing."

Of course, it takes more than that to make a champion, and Cohen said Abramovich's technique "is perfect. He's been doing it since he was four."

In judo, also known as "the gentle way, technique is everything. He's got technique and power."

Bronfman said you'd never suspect Abramovich is a major league fighter by looking at him. "He looks strong, but he's so sweet, quiet and shy," she said.

Abramovich trains twice a day for a total of about three to four hours, and in January he'll join other elite international athletes at a training camp to prepare for the Olympic qualifying season.

That sort of regimen hardly deters Abramovich. On the contrary, he revels in it. In Israel, he points out, as an elite athlete, he regularly trained twice a day at the Wingate Institute.

During his army service, he was permitted to prepare for international events, and he gave instruction to young soldiers in hand-to-hand combat techniques.

Even before, he was a committed judoka. "I started young, and I love it. After you win, you feel very good. It's like drugs."

He shakes off the injuries that are common to the sport. He's broken the cartilage in his ears, and he's had other breaks, sprains and a rib injury, but so what?

The future he's planned for himself is one of plenty of blood and guts. After the Olympics, he foresees a career in professional mixed martial arts, specifically the UFC, the American made-for-TV spectacle.

Abramovich smiles when he's asked if he's really interested in that form of brawling, down and dirty martial art.

He plans to taking some boxing lessons before he joins the league, he said, and as Cohen explained, it's not the first time UFC fighters have been hit.

The two guys in the cage train together and know each other. Most fights end when one fighter has the other in a position where they can exert pressure on a joint and cause the vulnerable combatant to tap out. That gives judo guys an advantage over guys from other martial arts, Cohen asserted.

To illustrate his point, Cohen, a five-time Israeli judo champion, shows an Internet video in which a much smaller Russian fighter, a judo expert, took on a huge Japanese opponent. After exchanging a few punches, the Russian got in close, engaged the bigger fighter in what looked like a bear hug, took him to the mat and then defeated him in seconds with an arm lock.

"Judo and sambo [a Russian martial art that resembles judo] are used to striking and grappling, taking them down and make them submit quickly," Cohen said. Practitioners of these disciplines are getting into UFC matches and doing well.

"There's a lot of money in it, but for fighters, it's also prestige," he added.

The money part is clearly far off in the future. As of today, Abramovich is barely making do. Unlike his billionaire namesake, a Russian tycoon who owns the Chelsea Football Club, he lives a frugal lifestyle.

"He and his wife live in the basement of a house in a very basic existence. His wife is learning English," Bronfman said. There are a lot of expenses related to training at an elite level. She's helping out, but she'd like others in the Jewish community to pitch in.

"He's a nice Jewish boy who's a real champion," she said.

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Managing from a distance

By MICHAEL GORDON

I got a phone call from the day program that one of my long-standing patients was attending.

"We need your help," the social worker said. "Mrs. P's son just called and told us to cancel the occupational therapist's home assessment, which we had just arranged, to ensure Mrs. P's home environment is safe. She is showing some worrisome deficiencies.

"The son said he doesn't want anyone going into his mother's house without his meeting the staff and the therapist. But the son will be abroad for another month, and in the meantime, he does not want anything done. We are also concerned that she may not be taking her medications," the social worker said.

"There is a nursing agency involved, but they are not sure what their role is because they keep getting conflicting instructions. The agency director is unsure of whether she is putting her employees at risk for not carrying out what they believe is their professional duty."

Soon after the phone call, an e-mail from the son arrived, telling me he's losing confidence in the staff at the program and the agency because they are not following his directions. He asked my advice, but indicated he would prefer that they back off and wait until he returns to the city, adding that he would be going away again for another few weeks.

I knew from past experience that this only son was a senior executive and needed to feel he is in control. I also suspected from my experience with him and his mother that he was somewhat ambivalent about his relationship with his mother. He had postponed career advancement because of her needs, but then decided to take a good offer although it meant he would travel a good deal and would be available only long distance, as if a BlackBerry and laptop could replace constant filial presence.

The Senior Side of Life

He arranged his mother's financial affairs because he is a financial expert, but he did allow her access to some funds at her bank through an arrangement that limited the amount of money she could withdraw. At times, she forgot that she had been to the bank recently and tried to withdraw more money than her limit. Bills were paid automatically, and she could shop using a credit card, which the son was responsible for so he would know what she bought. She agreed to shop with someone hired to help her.

After hearing the input from those involved, I surmised that the son's desire for control was impeding the care of his mother and potentially putting her at risk. I diplomatically suggested that he had to decide what he wanted – to be in control, which would likely require that he change his career path so he could be in the city most of the time, or to defer to health and social-service professionals who are devoted to his mother. He acknowledged that they had her best interests as well as her wishes at heart. I emphasized that they needed the leeway to carry out their roles without his constant micro-management and excessive scrutiny and tendency to criticism.

It took some negotiating, but finally he agreed that he had to collaborate with and have faith in those in whose care he had left his mother. Managing at a distance can be an enormous challenge, and getting help that one can trust is crucial to fulfilling that goal.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bari Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents (Dundurn Press). His latest book, Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare, follows his previous book, Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey. All can be researched at his website: http://www.drmichaelgordon.com.

HORS D'OEUVRES MAC & CHEESE

1/2 lb. elbow macaroni
1/2 tbls butter, plus more for brushing
1/4 c grated Parmesan cheese
2 tbls flour
3/4 c milk
1 c cheddar cheese, shredded
4 oz mozzarella cheese, shredded
1 lg egg yolk
1/4 tsp paprika

Preheat oven to 425°. In large saucepan of boiling salted water, cook macaroni about 5 mins. Drain well. Spray mini muffin tins with cooking spray. Sprinkle ½ of the Parmesan into each muffin space, tap out excess.

In lg. saucepan, melt butter. Over moderate heat, whisk in flour for 2 min. then milk, whisking until boiling, about 5 min. Add cheddar & mozzarella cheeses, whisk until melted. Off the heat, whisk in egg yolk & paprika. Fold in macaroni. Spoon macaroni into prepared muffin cups, packing them gently. Sprinkle remaining Parmesan on top. Bake 10 min until golden. Cool 5 min. Using small spoon, carefully loosen mini-macs, transfer to platter & serve.

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Tips for using less fat

There are many tips you can utilize to cut back on unnecessary fat and calories when cooking at home.

Two places where we take in a ton of added and often unnecessary fat are in the fat that we put into the pan – for example, the butter we use when making an egg, or the oil used in sautéing vegetables or preparing stir-fries – and the fat we add to cooked vegetables and salads.

About Nutrition
By LISA WEINBERG

Many of these oils are heart healthy, but they are still 100 per cent fat and really add up in calories. One tablespoon of oil, any oil, contains about 14 grams of fat and about 125 calories.

So how can you cut back without compromising on flavour or cooking quality?

One tip most people are already of aware of is to use cooking spray in the pan when making an egg or sautéing. You can use the ones you buy in the store in the spray can or buy an oil spray bottle at a kitchen store and add any oil you like. If you use the spray bottle, this also works well for spraying a light mist on salads, cooked vegetables or raw vegetables before roasting or grilling.

Another way to get away with less oil is to put a drop of oil in the centre of the pan and spread it using a pastry brush, which also allows you to get away with much less.

Still another tip when sautéing vegetables is to use stock in the pan in place of fat. It adds both moisture and flavour.

A final important key to successful cooking with less oil is to use a good non-stick pan. Pans are available in all sizes and with many different surfaces and allow you to use much less fat.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. You can also follow Weinberg at http://www.lisaweinberg.ca. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

The year is almost over

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

We are living in the post-Holocaust mourning era.

Until a short while ago, the Holocaust and the murder of our six million beloved family members stuck in our minds like a stir stick in cement. The Toronto Jewish community built Holocaust memorials, as if there would never be enough plaster and building materials to remember all we needed to. We made major and minor decisions based on our terrible memories. The Holocaust cast a massive shadow over our lives.

We were in constant mourning. The shivah period had passed. The 30 days were over, but we were still in "the year."

But something has shifted in our spirit, and we are slowly allowing life to take precedence over death. And as we rebirth, young Jews are showing their cultural stuff, launching hip new publications with less looking back and more celebrating of the "now" and the future. Today, our events are more full of life, less crisis-oriented. We present internationally acclaimed stars, as opposed to the Israeli general who speaks of our terrible past and scary future.

While the general continues to be heard – as the Jewish people will never be out of danger – it became paramount that we mix things up so as to create a tapestry of anticipation, curiosity and wonderment.

The older guard is no longer totally in charge. Sadness is no longer our only fallback. Happiness has crept in. It feels like we are completing "the year."

New and compelling Jewish music is cropping up everywhere, as opposed to the perennial *Havah Nagilah* list of songs we held onto so dearly for decades. Listen to Aaron Lightstone and his band Jaffa Road to determine the difference.

While Jewish theatre in Toronto is a long way from Broadway, more attention is being paid to our talent and we, the Jewish people, the storytellers. The Al Green Theatre is described online as "a 288-seat state-of-the-art theatre in the heart of the Annex." Impressive!

We are singing on Bathurst Street. We are dancing in Thornhill. We are pounding the drums of life south of Bloor. We, the living.

This cultural change will likely impact on fundraising and has already on aliyah.

For years, our wealthiest community members contributed more to the arts than the community itself. They did it because art and culture was relegated to a second tier of importance in our community. Survival was the guest-of-honour. But a revolution is afoot. Donors will see that.

Aliyah is barely talked about now. We feel safe in our newer Jewish Toronto. The new generation sees Toronto as its home, and Israel as the homeland. One still hears of the occasional individual or family making aliyah. But when we do, we wonder why.

We will always mourn our six million who were savagely murdered. We will continue to build Holocaust memorials – the National Holocaust Memorial in Ottawa is one such example. We will forever and always be saddened about this point in history, as we are about the destruction of the Temples and having been thrown out of Arab lands.

It feels, though, as if the intense mourning period, the rawness of real suffering, is coming to an end. As it does, we must take care of the few survivors left and embrace our past, with the recognition that a rebirth is happening around us, and within. We must sing, and sing loudly.

To comment go to http://avrum.net.

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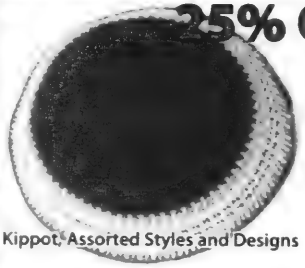

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The Canadian Jewish news

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This Week

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Andrea Eisen is a tutor to the stars. *Page 28*

Arts & Travel

Tamara Miller always looks on the bright side of life. *Page 38*

Sports & Leisure

Judaism runs deep in Dan Shulman's life. *Page 42*

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Canada, Israel co-operate on innovation

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Canada and Israel are stepping up efforts to create a framework that would make it possible for corporations from both countries to co-operate in money-making ventures in a number of high-tech sectors.

High-level meetings between the two sides have the potential of leading to historic and strategic alliances, said Henri Rothschild, president and CEO of International Science and Technology Partnerships Canada (ISTPCanada) and the Canada-Israel Industrial Research and Development Foundation (CIIRDF). "This is a major event in the life of Canada-Israel relations."

Canadian Industry Minister Tony Clement met recently with Israel's chief scientist Eli Opper as well as 50 officials from both countries at the Canada-Israel Technology Innovation Summit in Toronto. The event was hosted by National Research Council of Canada on behalf of the federal government. A follow-up conference is scheduled for Israel in 2011.

Tony Clement

The summit focused largely on collaborative efforts on water purification, renewable energy, and brain research. Rothschild believes that the great untapped potential for collaborative ventures between the two countries in these areas will benefit both.

"This is the first time Canada has ever engaged in this kind of discussion, and whatever emerges in terms of a robust collaborative process will be a model for other countries as well," he said.

CIIRDF "came up with the concept to begin with, and one of the models is a redefinition of a creative and expansive role to promote company to company relationships. We are creating a strong co-operative platform for company to company relationships... as well as a greater exchange of post-doctoral fellows and researchers," he said.

The ultimate goal is "to become business partners through commercialization of products that are developed."

Continued on page 12

Remembering during the rebuilding

A memorial for the victims was placed near Beit Oren, one week after the massive fire in the Carmel mountains. Thirty-eight cadets from the Prison Service officers' course were killed after their bus was caught in the fire as they headed to rescue prisoners from the Damon Prison. In all, 43 people died as a result of the fire, which was the worst in Israel's history. Restoration projects are now underway to reclaim the forest. *Please see related story on page 32.*

[Flash90 photo]

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Rabbinic ruling evokes wide condemnation – please see page 33

The News in Brief

Canada

Conference Call

OTTAWA — The Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture is accepting applications for its North American mini-Nahum Goldmann Fellowship, slated for March 27 to 29 in Ottawa. Organizers say it will offer an intensive experience in Jewish living, learning and leadership for men and women ages 25 to 40 who show serious interest in Jewish culture and a potential for individual growth and communal leadership. The foundation has organized 22 such meetings since 1987 in western and eastern Europe, as well as Australia, Southeast Asia, South Africa, South America and Israel. Titled "Redefining and Reconfiguring Our Normative Connections," the Ottawa event is the first in North America and will feature University of Ottawa history professor Irving Abella and Columbia University professor Saul Berman. For more information, call 212-425-6606, or e-mail office@mfjc.org.

Teen To Meet Jews

CALGARY — Calgary Jewish leaders will meet with a teen who admitted to spray-painting antisemitic slogans on two shuls and a Jewish community centre in November 2009. The boy, now 18, was 17 at the time of the attacks and can't be named under the Youth Criminal Justice Act. He pleaded guilty last July to wilfully promoting hatred and mischief causing damage to a place of worship. An official of the Calgary Jewish Community Council told reporters it's important for the teen, a known neo-Nazi, to learn about the Holocaust and that he hopes survivors will attend the meeting, slated for February. The teen will be sentenced March 4, after he turns 19. He's been free on bail since July and was to have been sentenced last week, after a meeting with Jewish leaders, but he couldn't be found because he had moved, the *Calgary Herald* reported.

World

Rain Destroys Shul

CARACAS — Heavy rains destroyed a piece of Venezuelan Jewish history dating from the colonial era, according to the Center for Sephardic Studies in Caracas. The roof of the 19th-century House of Prayer collapsed after nearly two weeks of unusually heavy rains. Located in Coro, five hours west of Caracas, the one-room building was used for prayer by Venezuela's first Jewish settlers, who came in the mid-1800s. A local Jewish preservation body had warned of the structure's decay and was seeking support for repairs.

Teens Charged

NEW YORK — Hate crimes charges were filed against two teens in an assault on at least one chassidic man in Brooklyn, N.Y. The teens were caught Dec. 6 by members of a Jewish volunteer patrol after the assault. Brian Pena, 15, and Pete Montanez, 14, allegedly attacked Moshe Guttman, 45, as he left a Chanukah party at Yeshiva Beer Hatorah. They were charged as minors with assault as a hate crime, but Jewish leaders want them charged as adults. Police are probing whether they're also responsible for a Nov. 25 attack on an employee leaving the same yeshiva.

Surkis Gets 45 Days In Jail For Child Porn

MONTREAL — Former Jewish community official Bill Surkis was sentenced last week to 45 days in prison for his conviction on child pornography charges.

Surkis, 71, must also perform 240 hours of community service and be on probation for three years, Judge Céline Lamontagne ruled.

Surkis, a onetime Quebec regional director of B'nai Brith Canada and, prior to that, executive director of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre, avoided the Crown's demand that he be put on the national sex-offender registry. He will also not have to provide a DNA sample for the criminal DNA bank, nor will he be subject to Criminal Code provisions that restrict such offenders from contact with minors, as the Crown had requested.

Crown prosecutor Cynthia Gyenizse and Surkis' lawyer, Steven Slimovitch, agreed in October on the 45-day jail term – to be served on weekends – as well as community service and probation. That's the minimum sentence for Surkis' conviction on one count each of accessing and possessing child porn, downloaded from the Internet.

Surkis pleaded guilty to the charges last May. He was arrested in July 2009.

Although Surkis has been repeatedly identified by his past employment with B'nai Brith, the organization has disassociated itself from him. In a statement last week, it said that the "charges stem from a period in which Mr. Surkis had no connection to B'nai Brith Canada."

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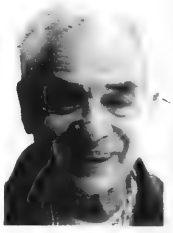
U of T's standards questioned in approving thesis

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Faculty at the University of Toronto should be "concerned" about the school's reputation for excellence after a master's thesis was approved that fell far short of acceptable academic standards, a retired sociology professor asserted last week.


Werner Cohn

Werner Cohn, who taught at the University of British Columbia, said "it's the university faculty who need to be concerned. It's their university that's under attack. [U of T's] Ontario Institute of Studies in Education [OISE] is becoming a huge liability to this truly great and famous institution."

Cohn has been at the forefront of those criticizing the university for granting a master's degree based on a thesis that focused on "Jewish racism" and denounced the March of the Living (MOL) and March of Remembrance and Hope (MRH) as promoting "Jewish victimhood."

The thesis, titled *The Victimhood of the Powerful: White Jews, Zionism and the Racism of Hegemonic Holocaust Education*, was submitted by Jennifer Peto as part of a master of arts degree in OISE's department of sociology and equity studies in education (SESE). OISE is a branch of U of T.

In a letter to U of T president David Naylor, Cohn argued the thesis is averse to empirical data and its author "makes wild… charges against her fellow Jews without a shred of evidence."

Last week, Cohn stepped up his critique, saying that "the Peto thesis is no aberration at OISE, and the public's attention should not be confined to it. On the contrary, the thesis is unfortunately rather typical of what is done at OISE, at least in [SESE]… OISE, or at least SESE, often resembles a political cult more than an institution of higher learning."

Cohn said he had looked at the abstracts (summaries) of 36 OISE theses and found 18 "were political without scholarly merit… I found a *prima facie* case that they're not scholarly."

Cohn went on to say the political approach in the theses all came from one particular side of the political spectrum. "Nobody said I'm a Christian, a conservative or a Zionist – God forbid."

"There's hypocrisy at the University of Toronto bureaucracy that says it defends freedom of speech. There is no freedom of speech for dissenters. It's a political cult without dissenters, and they've found a way for the public to finance it."

The university declined to take questions about the controversy. When first asked to comment about the thesis in late November, the university issued a statement by vice-president and provost Cheryl Misak that read in part:

"Due to our privacy obligations to students, I cannot discuss an individual student's academic work or his or her performance. What I can, say, however, is that freedom of expression issues are ever-present in our society, especially on a university campus. The University of Toronto's *Statement on Freedom of Speech* makes it clear that freedom of inquiry lies at the very heart of our institution.

"The university is committed to allowing and encouraging a full range of debate. The best way for controversy to unfold is for members of our community to engage with the perspectives and arguments they dispute. It is intelligent argument, not censorship, that lies at the heart of our democratic society and its institutions."

Last week, Misak issued a follow-up statement: "Nothing has happened in the last week to change our view. Please do remember that this is a piece of student work, submitted to be considered as part of the requirements for a master's degree, along with six courses. It was judged to be acceptable in that context."

Continued from page 12

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It's time they adjusted

From the editor's desk...

U.S. Special Mideast envoy George Mitchell is back in the Middle East on orders from Washington to shuttle between Israelis and Palestinians in his quixotic quest of a seemingly impossible dream: a peace agreement.

He probably hates the assignment. After all, he's been there before. Many times. He has been at it a long time.

He knows the parties. He knows the wariness of one, and the all-consuming, self-defining sense of grievance of the other. He knows the issues. And he knows the excuses.

He is returning because Washington has backed away from trying to squeeze a further three-month construction freeze from Israel on the West Bank and in east Jerusalem.

What was the substantive magic in three months, the administration correctly asked itself? That there may have been symbolic magic for the Americans in having Israel accede to the request is another matter. But would that have changed in the attitudes of the Palestinians when the three months had expired, yet still without an agreement in place?

The Americans knew and virtually admitted as much that the Palestinian Authority (PA) would resume pouting and complaining and then place new non-construction ultimatums in the path of bilateral negotiations. And then back to the same standoff as before.

In advance of Mitchell's arrival this week, PA leaders met in Ramallah to vent their wrath at what a key PA president Mahmoud Abbas' confidant, Yasser Abed Rabbo, bombastically referred to as "the first time since the Vietnam War that the U.S. declares its failure.

"We don't want to return to indirect talks to once again discuss agendas for the negotiations because we will then waste another year," Rabbo said.

Has Rabbo perhaps not noticed that neither does Israel wish to return to indirect talks. Indeed, Israel has been pleading with the PA for more than two years to set aside false postures, such as the construction freeze demand, and instead engage in direct, face-to-face bilateral negotiations on all aspects of a peace agreement.

The PA was as upset as it was surprised that the Americans finally gave up the chase for a futile construction freeze. How they respond to Mitchell's entreaties to continue with a peace process remains to be seen. As of this writing, the American envoy had not yet landed in Israel.

If the article written by chief PA negotiator Saeb Erekat last Friday in the *Guardian* is indicative of what the Americans and the Israelis can expect from the Palestinians now, then the discussions are in deep trouble and the possibility of a peace treaty between the contending neighbours is slight indeed.

Erekat placed the threshold issue of the right of return for Palestinian refugees squarely in the eye-catching middle of the negotiating table.

"Contrary to what Israeli political figures would like the world to believe," Erekat wrote, "the issue of Palestinian refugees is not an academic matter, the solution of which is somehow rendered moot by the passage of time and by the creation of Israeli 'facts on the ground.'"

The number of refugees today is "more than seven million people worldwide – 70 per cent of the entire Palestinian population" Erekat prevaricated.

And of course he blamed Israel for having created the problem.

"Israel bears responsibility for the creation of the refugees," Erekat casually wrote.

"Disregarding their legitimate legal rights enshrined in international law, their understandable grievances accrued over prolonged displacement, and their aspirations to return to their homeland, *would certainly make any peace deal signed with Israel completely untenable*... Any deal that does not respect the rights of refugees has been viewed as bearing the seed of its inevitable failure." (My emphasis)

Not surprisingly, Israeli officials threw up their hands in disbelief and encroaching despair. "Erekat says he wants peace, but by pursuing a hardline position on refugees, he is actually making peace more difficult," a Foreign Ministry official said.

Demanding of Israel that it author the script of its national suicide is simply not a reasonable negotiating stance.

Conferring a right of return for real or phony Palestinian refugees will spell the end of a Jewish majority in the Jewish state. Erekat and the entire PA leadership know this. But more to the point, they know that no Israeli government would ever or has ever agreed to it. And should the obvious not be stated at least here since it was not stated by Erekat in his *Guardian* essay?

The reason there were Palestinian refugees in 1948 – setting aside the question of their real number today or then – was because the Arab world refused to acknowledge the right of the Jews to a sovereign state. They attacked the nascent Jewish state hoping to destroy it at birth and to annihilate the Jewish people striving to live free in their own homeland. But the Arab states failed.

Israel was not destroyed, nor were its people thrown into the sea.

Sadly, the Palestinian leaders have not yet adjusted to that. For the sake of their people, it's time they did. –

MBD

SeeJN

STORM HITS ISRAEL

Israel's first real winter storm caused major damage throughout the country. The storm, which began Sunday and continued on Monday, included heavy rains and winds of up to 75 miles per hour that caused huge waves to wash up on Tel Aviv beaches, breaking windows and throwing café furniture. Ben-Gurion Airport closed to some flights on Sunday, and several planes were diverted to Cyprus, while thousands were without power due to downed electrical lines and damaged generators. Thirty-two weather-related injuries were reported. The storm also knocked out a sea wall protecting the Caesarea archeological site, exposing the walls of the ancient port and raising fears waves could cause irreparable damage.

Jewish War Vets seek to help needy members

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Jewish War Veterans of Canada, Toronto Post, is reaching out to members who are in financial need.

Treasurer Amek Adler said that a recent bequest has enabled the organization to distribute funds to veterans and family of veterans who are living near the poverty line.

Adler is a Holocaust survivor who lived in Italy after the war and worked with the Israeli Irgun Tzvai Leumi as part of a company that illegally shipped young men and women to pre-state Palestine. He's managing the fund with post commander Norm Gardner. Veterans or family of veterans who served in the Canadian Armed Forces – they must submit a regimental number – are eligible, Adler said. The money is being distributed through Jewish Family & Child.

Those eligible will receive a one-time gift of $500, he said. "This is the first time we're doing this, but we would like it to become annual. We're hoping to generate interest so that others will leave money as well."

Eric Kirsh, supervisor of the financial assistance and rehabilitation program at JF&CS, said prospective recipients will meet with a case worker who can determine what other services JF&CS can provide for them.

The $500 can come in very handy for someone who may need dental work, glasses or medication, or needs to repair an appliance, Kirsh said.

Adler said Jewish War Veterans has registered some 200 veterans, but only about 130 are paid up. "Maybe they don't pay because they can't afford the dues, but we don't turn anyone away."

Anyone interested in the one-time gift can call a JF&CS intake worker at 416-638-7800.

Alexis Wronzberg

Alexis showing results in Israel

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Alexis Wronzberg – the 27-year-old who received a potentially life-saving bone marrow and stem cell transplant from her mother last month at Tel Aviv's Ichilov Hospital – has started to show the hoped-for results.

Her blood work is moving toward normal and showing signs of engraftment, indicating that the new bone marrow and stem cells are starting to work, her father Rick told *The CJN*. As well, a recent bone marrow biopsy showed no signs of leukemia, he added.

In late September, Wronzberg suffered a recurrence of acute lymphoblastic leukemia. She travelled from Toronto to Israel for the $300,000 treatment, following an urgent fundraising campaign.

She no longer has to stay in the hospital, and her spirits are generally good, Rick said. Almost a dozen friends and family members have travelled to Israel to spend time with her.

However, she has been fighting infections and still has to be in the hospital as an outpatient five days a week.

"We're waiting for complete engraftment," Rick said, adding that her doctors are cautiously optimistic.

"One day at a time, but things are moving in the right direction."

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TRIDEL

Technion engineers lend a hand in Nepal

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Mark Talesnick is holding up a wooden base with three wooden blocks attached to it at varying heights.

"Which one of these buildings would you want to be in during an earthquake?" he asks. The answer? The one that doesn't fall down.

Talesnick is a University of Toronto geological engineering graduate, a senior lecturer in the faculty of civil and environmental engineering at Israel's Technion Institute of Technology and a member of Engineers without Borders. He spoke Dec. 2 at Beth David Synagogue on "Engineering with Soul: Achievements of Israeli Engineers without Borders (EWB)."

Much of Talesnick's talk focused on what he calls the "global engineer," a new type of engineer for "the other 90 per cent" of the world's population.

Engineering schools worldwide tend to emulate the teaching lessons of schools in North America, he said, which is a problem – because those engineers are mainly taught how to build "80-storey buildings and six-lane highways.

"[We are] trying to create a new type of engineer at Technion, and it's working," he said.

One such example of "engineering for the other 90 per cent" is a project Talesnick, along with some Technion students, undertook in Nepal in conjunction with EWB to come up with a sustainable way for residents in rural villages to cook and heat their houses.

Engineer Mark Talesnick, centre, and two Technion students, Alaalden Samara, left, and Elad Katriel, are inside their "biogas digester" model, made of bamboo and sushi mats. The digester allows rural villagers in Nepal to cook and heat their houses in a sustainable way.

Before Technion students got involved in the project, 90 per cent of the population cooked using wood, Talesnick said. This was problematic because it caused depletion of natural resources, and the smoke generated from using wood for cooking often led to respiratory disease.

Their solution was to build a "biogas digester" – which uses water and animal manure or human waste to bring power to buildings – for every house in Namsaling, a village in Nepal.

There were already 200,000 digesters in Nepal, but the building process was very time consuming. First a pit had to be filled with soil, then a dome was shaped over it and concrete was laid over the surface of the dome. After the concrete was laid, the soil under the dome had to be removed.

Returning to Israel, the students got to work on a way to make the process of building a biogas digester easier. Using aluminum and Styrofoam, they built a dome that reduced the time and effort required to build the digesters. However, aluminum and Styrofoam are not readily available in Nepal, so a model made with bamboo and sushi mats is now used to build the digesters.

The use of biogas digesters doesn't result in deforestation, they provide cleaner energy, and there are no health-related problems with them. As well, the waste that comes out of the digesters can be used as fertilizer, Talesnick said.

His goal for this type of engineering, what he calls "engineering with soul" is to get three per cent of civil engineering students involved, he said.

"If we don't change the way we teach engineering, the globe will collapse."

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Cemetery hopes new plots will finance upkeep

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Philip Covshoff, president of Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park, has a "simple" task ahead of him.

He has to convince 49 Jewish organizations to agree on a single issue.

Covshoff, an auditor originally from Montreal who has been president for about two years, said there's excess land in the cemetery that he'd like to use for community plots.

"The problem is that about 55 organizations have the right of way to this land, and our mission is to get 49 of these organizations to see the land's potential."

Three years ago, he said, the association built a new road in the 26-acre cemetery – located on Bathurst Street between Finch and Steeles avenues – and redeveloped some vacant land to create community plots. These plots are managed by Jewish Cemetery Management Inc. (JCMI), a Bathurst Lawn group that takes on the work of organizations that no longer want to operate their cemetery sections themselves.

"Bathurst Lawn is not an owner, so a separate entity was set up, and it is that entity that owns section 55," the section that was developed three years ago.

He wants to use the same formula to develop the excess land, he said. "The money earned from these plots – there would be about 1,100 and would be sold for about $4,300 each – would be split between Bathurst Lawn and JCMI. We would have a fund of money, and the interest could be used to continue the care and maintenance of the cemetery."

He said that under the Ontario Cemeteries Act, 40 per cent of the sale of cemetery plots must go into a fund for care and maintenance, "but many organizations did not put this money aside. As the cemetery ages and fewer organizations have money for maintenance, we will need a fund to keep it up."

About 50 per cent of the community does not belong to an organization and would benefit from a community section, he said. "People have already come to us and told us they're interested, but we have to get our right of way."

As an auditor, Covshoff said he's good at correcting problems, "and this is an opportunity to eliminate a problem. Once we get our approval, there's minimal work to get it processed."

In other news, Covshoff said Bathurst Lawn is in the process of rebuilding its office structure. "Our 55-year-old building needed a lot of work, and we realized that rebuilding – it should be ready in October 2011 – made more sense than renovating."

For information on the proposed new cemetery section, call 416-223-1373.

Jewish life returning to Kishinev

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

For those with a feel for Jewish history, the city of Kishinev is inevitably linked with pogroms and antisemitism.

In 1903 and then again in 1905, under the Russian czar, mobs enraged by stories of a blood libel murdered dozens of Jews and wounded hundreds more. The events were an international cause celebre at the time, and renowned poet Chaim Nahman Bialik penned his famous work *In the City of Slaughter* based on events there.

The pogroms prompted a substantial emigration from the Bessarabian capital.

Things only got worse during the Nazi occupation, when 100,000 Jews were killed. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, thousands jumped at the opportunity to depart for Israel and western nations.

Today there are only 7,000 to 10,000 Jews in Kishinev and in other centres of the independent state of Moldova, Yisrael Livshits believes.

Livshits, 39, is a native of Kishinev who made aliyah to Israel in 1991 but returned 3-1/2 years ago to help revitalize the Jewish community there.

During his sojourn in Israel, Livshits became observant and knowledgeable about Jewish culture, tradition and lifestyles. Working under the principle of "Torah v'avodah" (Torah and good works), he's attempting to transfer that knowledge to Jews who have chosen to remain in Moldova.

It's a daunting task, he said last week during a two-week visit to Toronto and Montreal. "After 70 years of the Soviet regime, they didn't give any opportunity to local Jews to develop Jewish traditions."

Since his return, Livshits has been a sort of Jewish jack-of-all-trades for the community there. He serves as schoichet and mohel, runs the chevra kadisha, makes sure the cemeteries are in good condition and officiates at one of the city's two synagogues. The other is under the supervision of a Chabad Lubavitch rabbi.

He also oversees production of a local kosher wine, which "is very good quality based on an old Moldovan village technique" and which he hopes to eventually export to raise funds for the community.

A secular Jew when he first moved to Israel, after serving in the army and studying business, he and other expats from the former Soviet Union began taking an interest in religious studies. They gathered and read the Talmud, becoming more observant. "Baruch Hashem, I started to keep Jewish traditions," he said.

Kishinev Jews, many still traumatized by an antisemitic tradition that was common to the Czarist and Communist eras, are reluctant to identify openly as Jews, he said. That may be why the Jewish Agency estimates there are 25,000 Jews in Moldova, a figure he disputes, though "nobody knows for sure," he said.

Today there is little open antisemitism – at least by earlier standards – and a few Jews sit in the Moldovan parliament. There are also a few-high profile successful Jewish businesspeople and "the Moldovan people respect the Jews, as they give a lot to the local economy," he said.

As Jewish life revives, the community supports two Jewish public schools, which, Livshits notes, also attract non-Jews because of their quality. There's also a Jewish kindergarten, a library, a cultural centre and the synagogues with two mikvahs.

Outside the capital, however, there are few Jewish facilities, he added.

It's all a far cry from the situation in the early part of the 20th century, when Jews were about one-third of the population and the region was home to 72 synagogues. More than half were destroyed by the Nazis, and the rest were confiscated by Soviet authorities and put to other uses. Since the disintegration of the Soviet state, one of the synagogues has been returned to the community.

Yisrael Livshits, seen here with a grape harvest, hopes to market kosher wine based on traditional Moldovan techniques.

Livshits officiates at the Sciusev Street synagogue, which attracts 50 worshippers to Shabbat services. On High Holidays, some 100 people attend services. The Chabad house of worship attracts similar numbers, he added.

"We have built a little religious community, but even some non-religious people come to Shabbat and holiday services," he said.

Needless to say, operating facilities costs money, and one of the reasons for his presence in Canada was to meet people with ties to Moldova to seek their support and to solicit investors in the kosher wine business.

"We want to build a working, fundraising community that doesn't need support from outside... and restore Jewish life as it was for thousands of years," he said.

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These are not the values of Israel

Some weeks ago the chief rabbi of Safed, Shmuel Eliahu, publicly offered that Jews should not rent or sell property to non-Jews. He was criticized for his abhorrent views. To his defence, alas, some 39 other local, municipally appointed rabbis signed a decree that sought to justify his execrable opinion in religious terms on the basis of Halachah.

That was too much for the rest of the country.

The statement of the signatory rabbis is now being investigated by Israel's attorney general, Yehuda Weinstein, to see whether it is legally offensive. That it was morally offensive is incontrovertible.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu severely condemned the rabbis' decree. "Such things cannot be said, not about Jews and not about Arabs. They cannot be said in any democratic country, and especially not in a Jewish and democratic one. The State of Israel rejects these sayings."

President Shimon Peres expressed what most Israelis felt. "The rabbis' letter creates a fundamental moral crisis in Israel which affects the definition of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. The State of Israel is composed of Jewish citizens and non-Jewish citizens, and we all have the same rights, which include the right to practice any religion. This fundamental right is engraved in our Declaration of Independence, as well as in legislation forged in the Knesset. I call on all of us to keep intact the true nature of the democratic, Jewish and egalitarian State of Israel."

Many rabbis also rejected the decree. The two chief rabbis of the state have condemned the statement. Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef, spiritual leader of the Shas party, refused to join his name to the decree. Rabbi Yosef Shlomo Elyashiv, head of the non-chassidic Ashkenazi haredi community, rejected the decree with the pointed message, "I've said for some time that there are rabbis who must have their pens taken away from them."

David Rosen, the Jerusalem-based international director of interreligious affairs of the American Jewish Committee, perhaps said it best when he wrote of Rabbi Eliahu and his colleagues that they "represent not only a halachic regression and a capitulation to scaremongering, but they are guilty of nothing less than *chilul hashem*, a desecration of the Divine Name, and an embarrassment to our Jewish heritage."

In effect, the entire secular and observant establishment in Israel rejected the reprehensible outlook and teaching espoused by Rabbi Eliahu of Safed and his supporters. Their values are not the values of the State of Israel, they have proclaimed loudly.

We cannot urge the "moderates" of other religions to reject the dreadful attitudes and the behaviour of their extremists if we ourselves do not do the same. We, therefore, join in rejecting and condemning these rabbis' detestable decree. They do not speak for Israel.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Herbert Marx was appointed Quebec justice minister by premier Robert Bourassa, making him the second Jewish cabinet minister in Quebec history. Marx, then 53, had been MNA for the Montreal riding of D'Arcy McGee since 1979. Victor Goldbloom was Quebec's first Jewish cabinet minister, having been named environment minister in 1970 during Bourassa's first stint as premier.

Dry Bones PSSST!
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Survivor objects to 'Jewish racism' thesis

I have read the thesis *The Victimhood of the Powerful. White Jews, Zionism and the Racism of Hegemonic Holocaust Education*, by Jennifer Peto ("Critics slam thesis that alleged 'Jewish racism,'" Nov. 25; also see page 3 in this issue). As a Holocaust survivor who has accompanied hundreds of students on 10 trips of the March of the Living, and once on the March of Remembrance and Hope, I take issue with the criticism of both in Peto's thesis. Both trips are committed to teaching universal lessons of tolerance and empathy, using the Holocaust as a terrible example of where intolerance, racism, antisemitism and denial of human rights can lead.

It's not true, as Peto states, that "human rights discourse is instrumental in deflecting criticism of Israel" or used "to further Zionist political goals and Zionist ideology." She herself says that she did not interview any March of the Living participants or Remembrance and Hope students, or anyone connected with these trips. As I understand, she herself had never been on either trip.

I know from experience how committed students are to learning the lessons of the Holocaust when they return from a march. They dedicate themselves to making the world a better place, and are more aware of and involved with social causes. Many of the students have kept in touch with me, and many of them have chosen helping professions – social work, medicine and teaching. One of them is even teaching law in Gambia.

Anita Ekstein
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Peace with neighbours

Is it possible the miracle of Chanukah has unfolded with Palestinians helping Israelis to fight the forest fire ("Netanyahu thanks international community for aid," Dec. 9)? May they continue to seek peace with their neighbours, and may the brave and compassionate souls of the Jewish prison guards who lost their lives saving Palestinian prisoners rest peacefully in the world to come.

Debbie Bauer
Toronto

* * *

90 years of history

I'm a retired detective of the Toronto Police Service and a professor in justice studies. I'm very disappointed to hear that there is a move to abolish the current divisions of community representation and create a "single Jewish public affairs organization encompassing the national and regional level" ("Congress wary of CIJA restructuring plan," Nov. 25).

As a former detective in the Toronto Police Hate Crime Unit, I was privileged to have known such a great group of advocates in the Canadian Jewish Congress. Police officers in Toronto are aware of the great work and advocacy services that are provided by the known entity, the "Canadian Jewish Congress." Mind you, this was not always the case. It has taken years for the CJC educational outreach process to take place within the police ranks and communities at large. Today, police officers are in a better position of knowing how to access advocates in human rights.

Removing the name "Canadian Jewish Congress" is not cost effective, nor is it an efficient move. In the ever-shifting trends of global unrest and antisemitism, we cannot afford to have ambiguity or confusion of where law enforcement can refer or access the services of Jewish advocates. As a law enforcement officer, I always felt that a timely and proactive response to injustices in the Jewish community of Toronto created good partnerships with the community. Much of this was possible thanks to the educational process that the Canadian Jewish Congress had undertaken for the Toronto Police Service. As a citizen of this great city and country, I would ask that the decision-makers in this amalgamation keep the name "Canadian Jewish Congress" so that 90 years of history won't be lost.

Dino Doria
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1636

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

* * *

Distressed by Claims Conference fraud

Triggered by the article "17 arrested in $42.5-million fraud at Claims Conference" (Nov 18), I strung together a few words that have been gathered from a pool of anguish. Imagine how many beds could have been installed at Baycrest to accommodate ailing survivors lingering on the waiting list and how many caregivers could have been retained for needy survivors had the $42.5 million been given to sustain survivors. My comment about this situation is called *Birds of Prey Any Day or Night*: "From Leningrad Stalingrad Shtetlgrad/ Forty two+1/2 million preying sorties/ Swooped down on six million dead/ To pick on filmy bones./ In broad daylight they picked/ Bon Appetit/ "Easy pick," Madoff said,/ In Memory of the Dead."

Eli Pfefferkorn
Toronto

For more letters, see cjnews.com.

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Perspectives

Recognition of a Palestinian state is premature

Legally invalid and undermines negotiation process

By ALAN BAKER

The reported declarations of formal recognition by Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and possibly other Latin American states of a "free and independent Palestinian state within the 1967 borders" raise several significant issues – both political and legal – in the bilateral political relationship between Israel and those states, and between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

Recognition of a political entity as a state does not, in and of itself, create a state, as such recognition carries no definitive or substantive significance in the creation of statehood. At most, it is indicative of the political viewpoints of the recognizing states.

Establishment of statehood, on the other hand, requires a series of internationally accepted and customary criteria, as set out in the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, relating to a capability of governance, permanent population, defined territory, and capacity to enter into relations with other states.

In fact, that convention specified specifically that "the political existence of the state is independent of recognition by the other states."

But in the Palestinian context, these criteria for statehood must be read in the context of the substantive, tailor-made requirements of the various United Nations resolutions dealing with the settlement of the Middle East issue, as well as the specific commitments by the Palestinians in several still-valid agreements signed with Israel over the years.

This factor was perhaps amplified following a Palestinian attempt to declare statehood in 1988, when more than 100 states gave their recognition. But clearly, this unilateral Palestinian attempt to dictate a solution to the Israel-Palestinian issue outside the internationally accepted and sponsored peace negotiation process established by the UN Security Council in resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) was never seen to be a serious factor in solving the issue.

Thus, any act of recognition of a Palestinian state, whether by Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay or anyone else, can have no validity whatsoever other than as some sort of political expression. To the contrary – such declarations of recognition run counter to the very resolutions to which those states are party, and to the agreements that they themselves have, over the years, endorsed and supported.

Interestingly, the present instance of the Brazilian declaration of recognition of a Palestinian state within "the 1967 borders" would appear to run counter to Brazil's own statement to the Security Council during the course of its acceptance of and support for Resolution 242, in November 1967, when Brazil's representative declared: "Its acceptance does not imply that borderlines

Alan Baker

cannot be rectified as a result of an agreement freely concluded among the interested states. We keep constantly in mind that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East has necessarily to be based on secure permanent boundaries freely agreed upon and negotiated by the neighbouring states."

In fact, a draft resolution submitted to the emergency session of the UN General Assembly by 18 Latin American states (including Brazil and Argentina) on June 30, 1967, included a call to the parties "to end the state of belligerency, to endeavor to establish conditions of coexistence based on good neighbourliness and to have recourse in all cases to the procedures for peaceful settlement indicated in the charter of the United Nations."

Thus, the vital and overriding principles advocated by Brazil, Argentina and other states in 1967 – endorsing boundaries being freely agreed upon, good neighbourliness and peaceful settlement procedures pursuant to the UN Charter – would appear to have been overlooked by the recent decision of the Brazilian and Argentine governments, at the behest of the Palestinian leaders, to favour unilateral Palestinian dictation of a boundary, without agreement, in violation of any notion of "good neighbourliness," and undermining the UN-sanctioned peaceful settlement procedures.

However, while Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay may well be undermining their own declared principles, the Palestinian Authority leadership – in actively lobbying for such recognition throughout the world as part of a declared and concerted aim to achieve recognition by the United Nations of a unilaterally declared Palestinian state, and acknowledgement of the 1967 lines as its border – is in fact undermining the whole peace negotiation process and abusing the bona fides of the international community.

Legally speaking, the actions by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, and his aide Saeb Erekat, in pushing to achieve this aim are in violation of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement of 1995, article IX, paragraph 5(a), according to which "the [Palestinian] Council will not have powers and responsibilities in the sphere of foreign relations, which sphere includes the establishment abroad of embassies, consulates or other types of foreign missions and posts or permitting their establishment in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip, the appointment of or admission of diplomatic and consular staff, and the exercise of diplomatic functions."

No less importantly, the Palestinian leadership is committed, in Article XXXI, paragraph 7, not to "initiate or take any step that will change the status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip pending the outcome of the permanent status negotiations."

Any activity by the Palestinian leadership, including lobbying foreign governments for individual recognition and initiating resolutions in United Nations organs to bring about the unilateral establishment a state outside the negotiation process, is a serious violation of their commitments vis-a-vis Israel. It is tantamount to bypassing the internationally accepted negotiating process, and undermining the very resolutions and agreements that serve as the basis and foundation for the peace-negotiation process.

Since the Palestinian commitments vis-a-vis Israel were witnessed and guaranteed by central elements of the international community, including the United States, the United Nations, the European Union, Russia, Egypt, and Jordan, and endorsed by most other states, including Brazil and Argentina, then clearly Palestinian lobbying activities must be condemned by those elements and should not be encouraged by them.

This problem becomes even more complex given the background of the ongoing and concerted efforts by the Palestinian leadership to block any progress in the negotiating process through their misleading demand that Israel freeze all settlement activity – a demand that has no basis whatsoever in the series of agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

In addition to the above, it would appear that the Palestinian leadership is, by its own hand, undermining and prejudicing any negotiating ambiance or good faith between the two sides through a series of offensive actions such as

- hostile statements by their chief negotiators, both vis-a-vis the internal Palestinian population and vis-a-vis the international community;
- open encouragement and initiation of legal proceedings in international as well as foreign national courts against Israeli leaders and officials, and other activities in foreign states aimed at undermining Israel's status;
- attempts to utilize and abuse the international community to question the national and historical heritage of the Jewish people, and
- daily official incitement in schools, universities and the Palestinian media.

Clearly this activity – openly, officially, and even proudly sponsored and supported by the head of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, and the head of the negotiation division of the Authority Saeb Erekat – in addition to its inherent and obvious bad taste, is utterly incompatible with any negotiating ambiance.

How, one might ask, can the Palestinian leadership expect to instil confidence in the Israeli government and public while at the same time engaging in a policy of maligning Israel and its leaders, seeking to delegitimize Israel, and undermining the agreed-upon negotiating process that is aimed at achieving peace between the two peoples?

Alan Baker is director of the Institute for Contemporary Affairs at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. He's also a former legal adviser to Israel's Foreign Ministry and Israel's former ambassador to Canada, and he participated in negotiating and drafting the Oslo accords.

File photo of Mahmoud Abbas speaking in Ramallah on the anniversary of Yasser Arafat's death. ***[Flash90 photo]***

Opinions

We've never had it so good

Harold Troper's new book, *The Defining Decade*, documents the transformation of Canadian Jewry in the 1960s into the respected and influential minority that it is today. Though we're barely one per cent of the population, our presence is felt far beyond our numbers. We're widely regarded as the most integrated minority in the country.

Rabbi Dovic Marmur in Toronto

But not all Jews experience it that way. Many continue to see themselves as victims of antisemitism, at best enjoying a respite from discrimination and often pointing to the pockets in society where they aren't welcome, usually the odd private club where the movers and shakers huddle together to keep out Jews. Even when the evidence is questionable, the sense of unease remains strong and painful.

Whenever I venture to suggest that Jews have never had it so good, I encounter opposition from the most unexpected quarters, sometimes even from those who have made it big in the country. Should my Jewish interlocutors occasionally concede that things are good in Canada nowadays, they'll hasten to recall blatant past antisemitism and its continued traces, often manifest in what they perceive as the persistently and perniciously negative image of Israel in the media.

Thus, for example, instead of celebrating the fact that almost all young Jews in Canada get a university education, we're told again and again about what's at times bombastically described as "the campus wars," because of the actions of some student groups led by Muslim and left-wing hotheads who maliciously castigate Israel and its defenders. Though the glass may not be full to the brim, many mislead us to believe that it's more than half-empty.

Some Jewish organizations appear to fuel this version of the story. For as Troper has shown, the danger to Israel around the 1967 Six Day War mobilized the Jewish community in ways thought impossible before. There has been a desire to retain the momentum in order to continue the mobilization in the laudable pursuit of building Jewish institutions here and supporting worthy causes in Israel. Some seem to fear that satisfaction will lead to complacency.

But whereas this negative attitude may still cut ice with the older generation that remembers what Canada was like before the 1960s, when many came here as Holocaust survivors, the reluctance to celebrate achievements and enjoy them is bound to have a negative effect on the young.

That's implied in Peter Beinart's widely publicized analysis of why many American Jews keep away from the community, especially in its relations with Israel. Canada may soon be in the same leaky boat.

To learn, to grow

This being my last regular op-ed contribution to *The CJN*, I'd like to comment, once again, on two connected notions about contemporary Jewish life: creativity and education. I haven't added my usual adjective, "Jewish," to these two nouns, because I don't believe these ideas are unique to Jews and Judaism. However, since my life's work has been primarily in the Jewish world, I can only speak intelligently and from experience of the particular nature of current Jewish existence.

Seymour Epstein in Toronto

First though, let me tell my readers of an exhilarating experience I just had at a conference near Baltimore. For some years now, a movement has been growing in Israel around the revival of piyutim, Jewish liturgical poetry from all ages and across the globe. This revival has attracted religious and secular, Ashkenazi and Sephardi, urban and rural, etc. You can visit the rich and inspiring fruit of their enthusiasm by clicking on www.piyut.org.il and spending many hours listening to our musical and spiritual heritage.

Some synagogue renewal folks, mostly cantors and rabbis, decided to bring "Invitation to Piyut" to North America for a four-day conference of lots of singing and praying. Of course, the major difference between such interest in Israel and its parallel in North America is that in Israel, much of the excitement is due to the ongoing revival of Mizrachi culture, a phenomenon that doesn't exist on this side of the water. Also, the folks who are interested in piyutim here are almost all from various religious camps, mostly of the liberal variety. No problem. If anything, that underscores the need for an honest bridge that both respects the differences and illustrates the potential for dialogue.

At the conference, I was asked to give a brief introduction to *Kel Adon*, an ancient piyut that has become a standard part of the Shabbat morning service. We learned a North African melody that haunts the soul, but not before I explained that this piyut is part of the service that speaks of God as creator of light and many other things. My teaching was that the unknown author, in writing such an inspired and beautiful poem, was stating that we, too, can be creative in human imitation of God's transcendent creativity – indeed, that we are God's partners in creation, an authentic rabbinic notion.

Now, do you see why I told you about the conference? Over many years of writing *CJN* columns, I have often indicated my dislike for Jewish survival tactics, claiming that they under-value our mission. We must gear our efforts to creative growth, not mere survival.

The term I most despise is "Jewish continuity," since I believe we must constantly interface Jewish life with our current situation, both its freedoms and its limitations. And that involves growth and development, not a mere continuation of the past. Of course, it also requires deep knowledge of our past – laws, customs, history, literature, spirituality, and the constant dialogue between those values and where we found ourselves in time and space.

That kind of creativity demands Jewish education of the most profound variety. I have said it before and I'm happy to say it again: essential, pervasive, and strategic are the three best descriptors of Jewish education. It must be essential to all we are, since without it we are not uniquely Jewish. It must pervade every aspect of our community so that its values can guide us. And Jewish education is the only true strategic plan of the Jewish community. It provides our future.

I have come to believe that our goals should be those of pride and courage. We must educate our young to be proud of a rich past replete with meaningful teachings for us and the entire world, and we must train for courage to creatively apply those teachings to new situations that require fresh solutions. It can be anything from a new prayer to a new vaccine.

We have succeeded in the past and will do so in the future if our education is geared to creative growth, not mere survival.

Why the humanities crisis should concern you

Be worried about trends on university campuses.

No doubt, you've heard that alarm sounded. What happens on university campuses is of great interest to the public at large, and perhaps of particular interest to the Jewish community. Most of us are university graduates, and we look to send – or we have sent or will send – our children to earn university degrees. In our workplaces, many of us seek to hire people who have university degrees, and many of our neighbours benefited from higher education.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Canadian society acknowledges the importance of higher education by making high-quality university affordable, relative to burgeoning costs south of the border. As a culture, we look to universities not only to train the future work force, but to prepare the future citizenry to exercise its responsibilities to develop and maintain democratic values. Beyond the pragmatic values of the right degree in providing entry into a desired career, a university education teaches critical and analytic thinking, awareness of other cultures, and other things vital to understanding the implications of an increasingly globalized world.

As a university professor, I have a special interest in reading about higher education. I have become accustomed to hearing about my own university in alarmist terms, often by people who have not set foot in our campus and in ways that are not entirely accurate. Our community is right to focus concern about what takes place at the institutes of higher education that train our children and our fellow citizens. But, except for the pages of professional publications geared toward professors and administrators, I rarely come across discussion of what I believe should most concern us: the inexorable suffocation of the humanities and the liberal arts.

Have no doubt: the humanities are in crisis, not only at Canadian universities, but at American ones and Israeli ones, as well. Humanities departments – history, literature, languages – are shrinking, the victim of budgetary crises faced by universities and the families of students who enrol in their programs.

A major American university several hours away from Toronto, for example, recently announced as a budget-cutting measure that – with the exception of Spanish – there will be no language majors or minors, which is to say, no way to study most languages and their attendant literatures and cultures beyond the first few years of basic language instruction. In other words, as the executive director of the professional association representing North American literature and language professors has noted, there will be no courses beyond those that students might access in high school. Classics, too, was pulled off the university curriculum. And all this as universities promote the values of cross-cultural awareness and the demands of globalization in business and professions.

In Israel, I was part of a delegation of leaders in Jewish studies that met with President Shimon Peres to express our concern that Israeli institutions were losing ground rapidly as a result of budgetary cuts.

What does the humanities crisis mean for Jewish studies and Jewish life on Canadian campuses? Here, too, humanities departments must accommodate themselves to diminished funding. Across Canada, venerable programs have been faced with the threat of closure because, despite their reputations, they serve only a select group of students. Courses that are significant to certain academic or career pathways but don't attract vast numbers face a similar threat. Think about Hebrew- or Yiddish-language courses. Think about Jewish culture, history, literature – the place not only to enrich the intellectual lives of Jewish students, but the means to familiarize other students with (and to combat misconceptions about) Judaism, Jewish history and Jewish values.

The product of the intersection of economic pressure with utilitarian approaches to higher education, the crisis in the humanities threatens to remove from university curricula what has always been at the centre of the mission of higher education: fostering the intellectual models that help us to understand our place historically and culturally, to think about the future we wish to create, and to speak productively and sensitively across cultural, linguistic and geographic boundaries.

The Kirshner File

Defeat in 1945 transformed Germany

Writing in his diary on the last day of 1944, Joseph Goebbels, Nazi Germany's propaganda minister, predicted, "I believe that the year 1945 will be a very stormy one for us."

He was absolutely right

Less than two weeks later, the Red Army stormed into Germany in the greatest offensive in military history, causing massive casualties and immense property damage and destroying the murderous regime's last flimsy hope of forestalling defeat in World War II

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

"In January 1945, the roof caved in on the Third Reich," writes Richard Bessel in his excellent book, *Germany 1945: From War to Peace* (HarperCollins).

By the time the Nazis surrendered, 65 years ago, Germany lay prostrate, its sovereignty extinguished, its infrastructure smashed, its economy paralyzed, its cities devastated by Allied bombing raids, its population largely demoralized, hungry and homeless, its armed forces disbanded, its government nonexistent and its territory occupied by foreign armies.

The shock of it all, Bessel observes, ultimately had a positive effect, compelling Germans to abandon racist and imperialist fantasies and making it possible for Germany to re-embrace civilized values and transform itself into a lively democracy in the second half of the 20th century.

If it had been left up to Adolf Hitler, Germany would have continued fighting to the last German. In the Nazi leadership's vision, the war would end in a battle of attrition in which the fanatically committed German people would grind down Allied armies and break their will to fight. Cooler heads, however, prevailed and Germany, though having been thoroughly defeated, saved itself from a still worse fate.

Nonetheless, as Bessel points out, Germany in 1945 lay in utter ruins, politically, socially, economically and morally. Although the Wehrmacht, the German army, had not yet collapsed, its casualties were no longer sustainable. In January alone, more than 450,000 German soldiers were killed, compared to 185,000 in January 1943.

Meanwhile, nearly half a million German civilians were killed as the Allied bombing campaign reached its terrifying peak, while millions more fled westward as the Red Army inexorably advanced into the eastern part of the country.

Amid this gargantuan exodus, Germans scrambling to survive discovered that transportation and telecommunication systems had broken down, that gas and electricity supplies had been cut, that water and sewerage systems had been severely damaged and that food supplies were precarious.

Surveying the disaster that had befallen Germany, a regional German politician likened Germany's defeat in 1918 to a tempest in a teacup compared to the "typhoon" of 1945.

Clearly, the waning months of 1945 were by far the bloodiest of the war, which Germany had started with its brazen invasion of Poland in 1939. More Germans were killed during that period than in 1942 and 1943 combined.

The arrival of the Red Army ushered in an orgy of looting, violence and rape. "The horrors that the Nazi regime had perpetrated against others across Europe were now visited on Germans themselves," says Bessel.

For many Berliners, the postwar era began with rampant sexual brutality as Soviet troops raped or gang-raped German women in their homes, often in front of their children. The behaviour of some French soldiers, particularly Moroccans, was not much better.

The Soviet high command had ordered soldiers to avoid contact with the civilian population, but Moscow's vengeful anti-German propaganda swept away calls for restraint.

To Bessel, the forced removal of millions of Germans from their homes in eastern German provinces such as Silesia and West Prussia probably cast the darkest shadow.

By his estimate, 5.6 million Germans were expelled from these areas, while even a greater number were driven out of Poland, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic states, where ethnic Germans had lived for generations.

The expulsions changed the complexion of Europe and created "a sense of victimhood" among millions of Germans who would never see their homes and lands again.

"When the Second World War ended, Germany had become a land of the homeless, the dispossessed and the displaced," Bessel notes. "Never before in its history had the country contained so many people who had lost their homes, who had been evacuated, expelled, uprooted, imprisoned."

Of all the displacees, the predicament of Jews was the most difficult.

Though 15,000 German Jews had managed to survive, saved by their Christian spouses or their hiding places, the vast majority of Jews in Germany in 1945 were Polish and Hungarian nationals.

Having been pushed into Germany after suffering through the Nazi occupation or spending the war in the Soviet Union, they were usually the sole surviving members of their families.

German civilians surrender to American soldiers in April 1945.

Profoundly uprooted, they had no desire to return to their homelands.

All in all, 250,000 Jewish refugees, among whom were my parents, David and Genia, found temporary refuge in the U.S. and British zones. Originally, they were thrown together with other Europeans, some of whom had been Nazi collaborators. When the inevitable tensions flared, the Allies concluded that separate displaced persons camps would have to be built for Jews.

The first such facility was set up in Feldafing, south of Munich. This was not too long after Allied soldiers stumbled upon emaciated Jews in Bergen-Belsen and Dachau, recoiling in disgust and anger.

German Jews who decided to remain in Germany after the Nazi nightmare re-established prewar Jewish communities, first in Cologne, Munich and Hamburg and then in Mainz and Bonn, which would be the capital of the new West Germany after 1949.

Not surprisingly, there was friction between German and Yiddish-speaking Polish Jews, some of whom were accused of black market activity.

"Jewish DPs were probably no more involved in black market trading than the German population or occupation soldiers had been," Bessel writes. But their "conspicuous presence seemed to confirm the stereotype that Jews engaged in illicit trading and shied away from supposedly honest, constructive work," he adds.

Despite expectations by the American army that the Allied occupation might be disrupted by a German insurgency, no such thing ever happened. Germans were simply too busy rebuilding their lives and trying to forget the Nazi interregnum.

In reconstructing western Germany, the Allies chose German partners who had been prominent anti-Nazis and experienced civil servants as well. The Soviets, in the eastern zone, selected anti-fascists who had been members of the German Communist party prior to the war.

As for de-Nazification, the Americans generally viewed it as a moral crusade, while the Soviets used it to eliminate Germans who stood in the way of fundamental social and economic change.

Some American politicians, notably Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, a Jew, wanted to gut Germany of its industrial base and turn it into a pastoral nation that could never wage war again. But with the Cold War looming, his vision was still-born.

The Americans wanted to reform, stabilize and democratize Germany, and this is what they ultimately achieved in West Germany and a reunified Germany.

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Professor terms thesis a 'standards issue'

Continued from page 3

She added: "In terms of the OISE culture, OISE is a very diverse place where different views are expressed and brought to the table for academic discussion. No one point of view dominates others."

One U of T professor who requested anonymity said "I think this is essentially a standards issue and not an anti-semitism issue… I'm not saying it's not anti-Jewish. I think the core is a matter of standards."

The professor and Cohn pointed to a second master's thesis at OISE that Cohn called "incoherent" and the professor said was "unintelligible." The thesis, by student Griffin Epstein, is titled *Extension: Towards a Genealogical Accountability: (The Critical [E]Race[ing] of Mad Jewish Identity*. Its abstract suggests Ashkenazi Jews "have been deeply implicated in structural violence."

The U of T professor suggested that when such poor quality scholarship is considered for a master's degree, "the problem is less with the student. The question is what sort of supervision and oversight, checks and balances are in the department. These are the questions to ask."

An OISE alumnus also came down hard on her old school. Karen Mock, who served as executive director of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation from 2001 to 2005 and as national director of the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada for 12 years, was scathing in her critique.

"Having led the Holocaust and Hope Educators' Study Tour to Germany, Poland and Israel for 12 years… and having published articles on the topic in textbooks and refereed journals, I was outraged by the lack of scholarship and also embarrassed that my alma mater would pass a thesis that cited none of the relevant literature on Holocaust education in the context of anti-racist education in Canada," said Mock, a Liberal candidate for the federal riding of Thornhill.

"The fact that the author did not speak to anyone who had designed or participated in either of the programs in her so-called case studies, citing only their websites, certainly does not meet the rigorous academic standard usually required for a successful thesis… She did not use empirical data, but simply opinion to support her ideology. To call what she did 'research' is a misnomer. And to call the MOL and the MRH of the Canadian Centre for Diversity 'racist' is unfounded and completely false. Such rhetoric and shoddy work have no place in the University of Toronto," she said.

Concerns about the thesis were also raised in the provincial legislature last week. Ontario Citizenship and Immigration Minister Eric Hoskins said he was "disgusted" by it, while Thornhill Progressive Conservative MPP Peter Shurman said he found the thesis "a piece of garbage.

"If I'm a privileged white person and if I'm guilty of something, it's working hard, supporting my family, having a good life and not thinking ill of other people," Shurman said.

His father, he continued, was a Holocaust survivor who lost everything. How could his family be considered privileged, he asked.

Responding to suggestions that the legislature's interest in the issue could be construed as inhibiting free speech, Shurman said "we're not interfering with anything. The legislature is the house of the people. There is nothing that happens in the province of Ontario that is off limits."

The government's response was "appropriate," he continued, and to the extent "that this kind of thing is accepted as a learned thesis, it is questionable. It needs a look, but not necessarily under the aegis of government.

"We're pointing a spotlight at the University of Toronto. Let it get its house in order," he said.

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Israel a natural innovation partner

Continued from page 1

In his keynote address to the summit, Clement said an essential part of his role as minister is "to make sure that our businesses have access to the opportunities they need not only to succeed at home, but also to lead on the world stage. This means making connections with the right knowledge, know-how, expertise and experience wherever on the globe it may be found.

"One such place of concentrated ingenuity and enterprise is Israel. In the very short time since it was founded, Israel has seen millions of people from all over the earth come together to build a modern, prosperous, vibrant, democratic country. Israel truly is a 'miracle in the desert.'"

Clement said that as the global economy recovers, "it is essential to keep our borders open to ideas and innovations that may come from elsewhere – and to share our expertise with the world."

Opper, chief scientist of Israel's Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, said, "By leveraging Israeli and Canadian strengths in the fields of water, renewable energy, and neuroscience, our countries will create new opportunities for technological innovation. Through co-operation and collaboration, we can utilize the advantages both countries have in these fields, paving the way to technological breakthroughs that will improve not only our economies, but our societies as well."

Rothschild said Israel is a natural partner in these fields. It devotes 4.5 per cent of its GDP to research and development, while Canada spends less than two per cent.

Israel's value as a leader in innovation was recognized earlier in the year when it was named chair of Eureka, a pan-European network of 40 countries dedicated to market-oriented, industrial research and development, he said.

Addressing the summit, Clement said, "talks focused on expanding collaboration in the areas of water, renewable energy and neuroscience research, with a particular emphasis on improving commercialization.

"Indeed, in these areas, I see significant opportunity for Canadian and Israeli business, including through increased collaboration in irrigation technologies (something our prairie provinces know plenty about), water purification innovations, biofuel production, geothermal technologies and training, wind energy projects, and research on diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, autism and schizophrenia – crippling neurological afflictions that know no geographic, cultural or religious boundaries.

"Our two countries have penned agreements on space co-operation, double taxation, and a science and technology innovation partnership whose watershed was the creation of the Canada-Israel Industrial Research and Development Foundation to promote collaboration between Canadian and Israeli companies. There have been more than 70 full-scale industrial research and development projects involving some 120 Canadian and Israeli companies in everything from satellite imagery and medical research to environmental technology. Indeed, our two countries have a significant foundation upon which to build."

The proposed partnership is a result of a meeting in Ottawa last May between Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

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Short of national suicide, Israel can't offer more

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The disclosure, via WikiLeaks, that several Arab leaders have urged U.S. action against Iran has provided additional ammunition to Mideast analysts who have long argued against linking a resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (or indeed the larger Arab-Israeli conflict) to a resolution of the region's broader problems.

They have correctly pointed out, contrary to much conventional wisdom, that achieving a Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement (as important a goal as this is itself) is not the key to unlocking the problems and threats elsewhere in the Mideast, such as Iran's nuclear program.

David Frum has been one of the most articulate voices in this debunking exercise, as demonstrated in his Dec. 4 *National Post* column on the "unintended lesson" of WikiLeaks.

Nevertheless, on the subject he mentioned in passing – why the peace process involving the Palestinians and Israelis has broken down – Frum might consider an important modification to his view that it's because the Palestinians "hope that if only they hold out a little longer, they will be offered even more [by Israel]."

As with the linkage argument, this belief also requires debunking. It's not a matter of the Palestinians waiting for more than, say, what then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert offered Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas during the Annapolis talks in late 2008 (which was even more than what Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak offered former PA president Yasser Arafat at Camp David eight years before).

In both cases, the Palestinians spurned offers for a contiguous, viable state with control of Arab areas of eastern Jerusalem. Compromises were offered even on the Holy Basin. These unprecedented Israeli concessions took many by surprise – including Israel's Peace Now.

The harsh reality is that short of committing national suicide, there's nothing more Israel can offer the Palestinians that would lead to a deal. It's not about politics – that is, additional political and territorial concessions. Rather, it's a conceptual blockage: the Palestinian (and Arab) ideological refusal to accept the very legitimacy of Jewish sovereignty (as we have seen, once again, in the PA's denial of the Jewish historical attachment to the Western Wall).

In "Bleak House" (*Tablet* Magazine, Dec. 2), Israeli historian Benny Morris argued that "insurmountable" obstacles exist in the peace process: "Palestinian political elites, of both the so-called 'secular' and Islamist varieties, are dead set against partitioning the Land of Israel/Palestine with the Jews. They regard all of Palestine as their patrimony and believe that it will eventually be theirs…

"This basic Palestinian rejectionism, amounting to a weltanschauung, is routinely ignored or denied by most western commentators and officials. To grant it means admitting that the Israeli-Arab conflict has no resolution apart from the complete victory of one side or the other (with the corollary of expulsion, or annihilation, by one side of the other) – which leaves leaders like [U.S.] President Barack Obama with nowhere realistic to go with regard to the conflict."

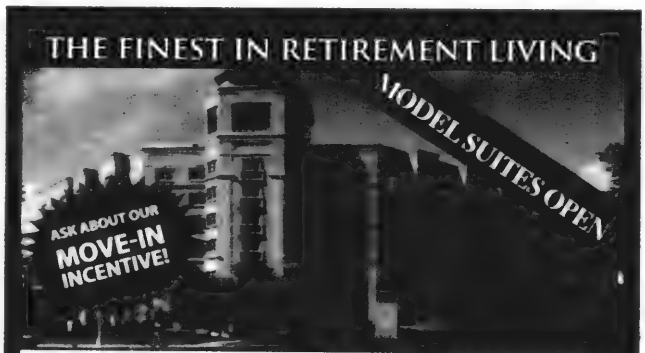
Morris is equally blunt about the Palestinian insistence on the "right of return" of Palestinian refugees to Israel: "Contrary to what many western commentators and analysts have chosen to believe, the Palestinian stress on the importance of the refugees is not a tactical matter – a way to gain further leverage in negotiations… The idea that the refugees must return to their homes [in Israel] has been the ethos, the be-all and end-all of Palestinian politics and policy, since 1948. No Palestinian leader can or will ever abandon this principle, on pain of assassination, and none has."

Benny Morris

This being the case, in order to preserve Israel as both a Jewish and democratic state, could Israel unilaterally withdraw from much of the West Bank as it did from Gaza in 2005? Not unless it's willing to incur rockets launched from the West Bank onto Israel's major cities, including Tel Aviv. This of course is out of the question, Morris says. The security imperative must trump any other consideration.

The bleak conclusion is that Israel remains trapped on the proverbial horns of a dilemma.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.



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Ex-gambling addict welcomes online move

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Ori Goldstein, 28, a recovering gambling addict, welcomes the news that the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) will have an online gambling program set up by 2012, because it will offer more controls than are currently available on for-profit websites.

He was responding to last summer's announcement by Finance Minister Dwight Duncan that the ministry has asked the OLG to explore how it can best extend its brand online through a socially responsible and secure Internet gaming program.

Goldstein, who started gambling online when he was in high school, said it's a huge market. "It's about time the government got in on the action."

OLG chair Paul Godfrey said at the news conference that the Crown corporation's gambling program "will offer Ontarians a safe, regulated and fun option for playing games of skill and chance online."

The OLG estimates that Ontarians spend approximately $400 million each year in unregulated online gambling – with none of that money entering government coffers through taxation or fees.

"In its current form, Internet gaming in Ontario does not return proceeds to this province," Godfrey said at the summer announcement. "It does not create jobs here. It does not offer ways to protect minors or ensure they're not gambling online. It doesn't offer tools to support players to control and limit their play."

Potential players will have to register on the site before playing, and it will offer age and identity verification software to protect players.

Goldstein said that online gambling currently has no age protection. "They take your credit card number, and that's it. The government will have a better security system. They could make it safer and knock out all the smaller fish."

The government is not going to turn people into gamblers, he said. "They could find a way to regulate it."

A graduate of Jewish day schools, Goldstein said that he had, in the past, gambled for three days straight.

"I maxed out my first credit card gambling online. I had always played cards for fun with my friends, but then I began setting the alarm to get up and gamble. My whole day revolved around it. My parents only became aware when they had to bail me out on my credit card. Then I began playing again."

He played online, he said, because when he started, he wasn't old enough for the casinos.

"When I gambled, I felt a rush. I became a slave to it. I skipped work, I skipped class, and it was convenient online, because there was always a game. I spent more than I was making, but yesterday's losses didn't matter. I just kept going. In the end I was in the hole for tens of thousands of dollars. I had no choice, though. I had to play. Gamblers live in a fairy tale. They're always waiting for the next big win."

Finally, he said, someone offered to help him financially on the condition that he get help. "I had finally had enough. I was tired of being a slave to gambling."

He went to a counsellor affiliated with JACS Toronto, an organization that provides education and support to those suffering from or affected by addiction, and then to a treatment centre in Florida.

Now, he said, he has graduated as an addictions counsellor from Centennial College and runs a business delivering promotional material.

Being an addictions counsellor is his priority, however. "When I see someone struggling with an addiction, I tell them 'I've been there and done that.' I can't think of anything else I'd rather do. Maybe I had to go through it to help others."

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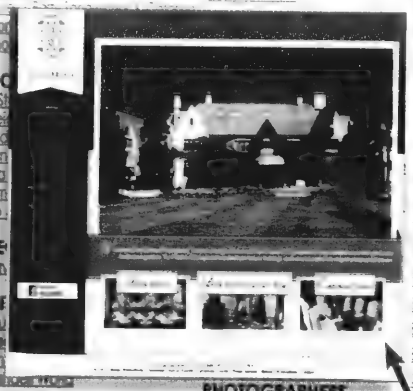

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Greater Toronto Area

Helen, left, and Sonia Kafka

Woman donates 61-year-old braids

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Recently, Sonia Kafka and her daughter, Helen, were cleaning out Sonia's basement when they came across an old chocolate box.

Inside it were two carefully preserved light-brown braids, each 14 inches long.

For years, Sonia, 74, couldn't bring herself to part with the hair she'd had cut as a young teenager shortly after immigrating to Canada.

But now – having seen pictures in *The CJN* of youngsters who donated their hair to provide wigs for cancer patients – she wondered if her braids could be used as well.

"I said, finally, 'It's time,'" Sonia told *The CJN*.

Helen – who used to play with the braids as a child, holding them up to her own hair in front of a mirror – inquired about donating them, and was told the braids could be used, even 61 years after the hair was cut.

Mike Suba, president of Continental Hair, which makes wigs for children who have lost hair to cancer treatment or because of other medical issues, said that Kafka's braids are lovely. They're "really thick at the base, and the hair is in really good condition. It's not faded."

Donated hair needs to be 10 inches or longer, unbleached and not permed, and secured by elastics at both ends, he said. The age of the hair "isn't a problem," if it's been stored properly in a clean, dry place, he added.

For Sonia, a stylish haircut was a symbolic part of beginning a new life in Toronto.

"You tried to fit in as much as you could," she recalled.

The long braids went, and she began wearing long skirts and saddle shoes instead of the sailor blouse and "little pleated skirt" that she wore when she arrived here at age 13 with her mother, stepfather and stepbrother.

An older brother, who had arrived three years earlier with his wife, sponsored the family.

"That's when my life began," recalled Sonia, who was only three years old when World War II broke out.

She spent her early years in the Polish port city of Gdynia, and survived the war in an orphanage, reuniting with her mother when it was over.

They arrived in Canada not knowing any English, having spent the postwar years in a DP camp in Germany.

"It wasn't easy," Sonia recalls. The family rented a flat in a downtown home until her parents were able to buy a house on Euclid Street.

Sonia left school as a teenager to work in sales and was married shortly before her 18th birthday.

In fact, she said, she grew up with her three children, learning how to skate and swim when they did.

HAIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

Alexis Friedman, left, and Jacki Satok of Leo Baeck Day School's south campus, in Holy Blossom Temple, donated more than eight inches of their hair to the Pantene Beautiful Lengths Program, which creates wigs for cancer patients that are distributed through the Canadian Cancer Society.

Seniors Scene

Independent 97-year-old leads a fulfilling life

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

At 97, Anne Gitterman could be the poster model for successful aging.

Gitterman is legally blind, travels in Toronto with Wheel Trans, and has an oxygen tank for when she needs it. Yet she participates in a weekly pottery sculpting workshop at Bernard Betel Centre.

"Whenever one of my students or someone new to pottery says that they can't do something, I inspire them with the story of Anne Gitterman," the workshop's instructor, Anisoara Kirschner-Kozai, told *The CJN*.

Nothing stops Gitterman from attending her pottery workshop or from remaining positive and leading a fulfilling life.

Gitterman's daughter, Gail Donner, who visited her mother at the Betel Centre during the interview, says, "My mother is amazing. She is very determined and just gets on with things. All of us forget that she is 97. She has good genes and you need that in life. She just moves forward."

Recently, Gitterman fell and bruised herself. However, she got up as if nothing had happened and continued what she was doing.

Petite, weighing only 85 pounds, and living independently, Gitterman has been described as the wind-up pink Energizer bunny. She loves to tell stories and jokes and has a good memory.

She was born in Mizerich, Poland (now Ukraine). When she was one month old, her father, Jacob Mindess, and some other men from their small town were allowed to leave Poland, expecting to bring their families with them. But World War I broke out and the women had to stay and work to support their children.

When she was six years old, she, her nine-year-old brother and her mother came to Canada to join her father, who had settled in Winnipeg, where the Naiman family had sponsored many immigrants.

Anne Gitterman at the pottery workshop at Bernard Betel Centre

"I met my father for the first time when I was six years old. We moved to French-speaking St. Boniface where my father opened a grocery store," Gitterman says.

"We moved back to Winnipeg when I was 10, because my brother was going to have his bar mitzvah."

After she finished Grade 12, her parents, who then had two more children, couldn't afford to send her to university.

Employment was hard to find in the 1930s, so she went to work in her cousin's variety store.

Speaking of how she met her husband she said, "My mother had saved up money, and she sent me to Boston for a family simchah."

Her parents also asked her to go to New York to meet her father's older brother and some cousins. When she was returning, on a double-decker bus, from a cousin's house, a young man, Sydney Gitterman, approached her and said that he knew her from Winnipeg.

"He was taking a fur design course in New York. He invited me out. I asked him to show me some identification," Anne Gitterman says.

He called her when they returned to Winnipeg. They were married in 1940, and they worked side by side at their successful fur business, Gitterman Furs. They were married for 48 years.

Gitterman moved to Toronto 12 years ago, following her four children.

"I have great naches from my children, and they let me do what I want." With pride she adds, "They are all very successful, and I have six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren."

Optimistically she says, "Every morning when I get up, I pinch myself. And every day, I go for a walk outside. Sometimes in the winter, I take a walker."

Reflecting on her life, she says she regrets that all of her friends are gone and that, with bad vision, she can no longer play cards or games.

"When you are older, it's difficult to make new friends, but I invite people to come in for tea and I always have baked stuff. I also bring my baking to my pottery group."

Kirschner-Kozai said that "Anne is always caring and willing to listen and she offers her wisdom. I have sought her advice many times. She is truly inspiring for young and old.

"Everyone can learn from her positive attitude. If everyone, any age, will have her tenacity, it is a sure recipe for success."

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Jewish Life

Israel's water shortage

On Shmini Atzeret, Jews around the world recited the *Tefillat Geshem*, the prayer for rain: "For blessing and not for curse. For life and not for death. For plenty and not for scarcity." **[http://bit.ly/isrwat1]** But scarce it is. Israel's perennial water shortage made headlines last month as the country's chief rabbis urged worshippers to pray and fast on behalf of rain. **[http://bit.ly/isrwat2]** And then came the worst forest fire in the country's history.

After years of below-average precipitation, the Sea of Galilee is more than three metres below the "red line," the optimum water level of the lake. Sinkholes have appeared on the shores of the Dead Sea, and there has been talk of a ban on watering gardens in Israel. **[http://bit.ly/isrwat3]**

Why has the situation been allowed to deteriorate so seriously? As reporter Herb Keinon says in a detailed and depressing article in the *Jerusalem Post*, there have been warnings for years but no one seemed to be listening. He quotes Haim Gvirtzman, a Hebrew University hydrologist: "No one cares. Everyone cares about politics, about peace, about making money. Who cares about things like health, the environment or water?" **[http://bit.ly/isrwat4]**

Jewish & Digital
By Mark Mietkiewicz

In the 1950s, future prime minister Levi Eshkol helped develop plans for a network to link most of the regional water projects throughout Israel. **[http://bit.ly/isrwat5]** The huge civil-engineering project joined the Sea of Galilee with Israel's other aquifers and is credited with pumping water and bringing life to the Negev, a dream of prime minister David Ben-Gurion. **[http://bit.ly/isrwat6]**

The Sea of Galilee isn't the only Israeli lake with problems. The Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth, is also experiencing a serious decline in sea level. Water diversion projects and industry on the Israeli and Jordanian sides have reduced the Dead Sea to record lows. The water level drops by one metre every year, and Dead Sea resorts are finding themselves farther and farther from the water's edge. **[http://bit.ly/isrwat7]**

Despite the gravity of the issue, Israelis can be fickle about the water situation. All it takes is a couple of rainy winters and the crisis is forgotten. Journalist Zafrir Rinat points a finger at the media for letting the issue fade from the headlines. **[http://bit.ly/isrwat8]**

Israel's water crisis extends well beyond its borders and could result in regional conflict, or worse. The World Bank's Ismail Serageldin said in 1995: "If the wars of this century were fought over oil, the wars of the next century will be fought over water unless we change our approach to managing this... resource." **[http://bit.ly/isrwat9]** And prime minister Ariel Sharon said, "People generally regard June 5, 1967, as the day the Six Day War began... in reality, it started 2-1/2 years earlier, on the day Israel decided to act against the diversion of the Jordan." **[http://bit.ly/isrwat13]**

Israel is blamed by its neighbours for abusing its control of water resources. You can read about the conflicting views **[http://bit.ly/isrwat10]** followed by a backgrounder by the pro-Israel group CAMERA. **[http://bit.ly/isrwat11]**

Many suggestions for easing Israel's water shortage have been made. We'll look at some of those initiatives next time. Until then, you can keep an eye on the Sea of Galilee's changing water level. **[http://bit.ly/isrwat12]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

Doors need to be open to women

A co-educational Orthodox school in Toronto recently began the search for a new vice-principal. Working alongside administrators, department heads and teachers, the vice-principal will be responsible for curriculum development, extra curricular activities and student discipline, and will serve as a religious role model supervising daily tfillah. The job description is in line with many in Jewish day schools where staff serve as both content instructors and religious models.

What struck me about the advertisement was the list of qualifications. In addition to a degree in education and several years of successful teaching experience, the ad requires applicants to have smichah, rabbinic ordination.

In an Orthodox school, smichah precludes female applicants.

The Judaic skills and knowledge acquired in rabbinical school are prerequisites for day school leaders. The title, however, is not. The vice-principal needs to be a leader in education: a successful pedagogue and supervisor, an expert in curriculum, and a guide to students, teachers and parents. As well, the vice principal must be a religious role model who imbues the vision and values of the school, who is steeped in Jewish knowledge, and who can model and motivate Jewish learning and living. While these expectations may describe someone who holds smichah, the ideal candidate may have gained the skills through alternate paths.

CLASS ACT
By Daniel Held

Contemporary Orthodoxy offers women a variety of advanced training programs. Women can study Tanach, Talmud and Halachah at institutions such as Yeshiva University's Graduate Program for Women in Advanced Talmud or Drisha's Scholars Circle. The newly founded Yeshivat Maharat complements a curriculum in Jewish studies that parallels rabbinical school with training in pastoral care, pedagogy and communal leadership.

In a co-ed Orthodox school, we need strong role models on both sides of the mechitzah.

I don't believe the job description was written with the intention of excluding women. Vice-principals rarely act as a decisor of complex halachic issues, witnesses in a beit din or chazzanim – roles that some Orthodox communities limit to men. Rather, the selection committee likely copied a job description used in the past, unintentionally perpetuating a historical gender bias.

Three things must take place to propel the paradigm shift compelled by contemporary co-educational schools.

First, selection committees must carefully match required qualifications with job descriptions. Rather than filtering candidates by title, the committee must consider what knowledge, skills and abilities most closely match the intended roles.

Second, we need trailblazers. When a highly qualified female colleague asked me if she should apply, my answer was an enthusiastic yes. By applying, she will put herself on the line. She will need to advocate strongly and convincingly for her skills and ability. We need trailblazers who are willing to take risks, apply and pave the way for others.

Finally, as a community we must advocate. As more and more qualified women graduate from professional training programs, we must ensure that there are jobs waiting for them. Our community must be ready to accept these professional women into leadership roles as a way of offering role models for both boys and girls.

Strong female educational and spiritual leaders working alongside male colleagues will strengthen our schools, provide role models for young boys and girls, and serve to further expand the scope of professional career paths available to committed women.

Jewish Life

Hillel keeps students involved

Last year, Alana Kayfetz was the director of Hillel in Ottawa. She did a fantastic job, but she's moved on. Hillel chose Penn State graduate Ross Diamond as her replacement.

Diamond, who has a degree in information science and technology, took over from Kayfetz this past August. He praised his predecessor, saying that "Alana got students on board with community leadership." He believes that her good work has made his job for this year easier.

On Campus
By Justin Dahan

The first distinction Diamond likes to make about Hillel is that it's not your average club. "Hillel Ottawa is more than a club. It's a place for students to build their community," he said.

The general goal of Hillel Ottawa, according to its current director, is to be a facilitator. As Diamond told me, "Students run the show. We are a resource for them."

That means that Hillel doesn't force students to do anything, nor does it create programs for them. Rather, it lets them create events for themselves.

Diamond gave an example of this philosophy: "If you're interested in cooking and a handful of friends are, too, Hillel would facilitate a cooking event. We'd encourage a cooking club amongst the students and produce resources to help – kosher ingredients, recipes, etc."

Of course, not all events are planned around food, but events such as this allow Jewish students who have things in common to bond and help to build a stronger Jewish community.

The belief in building a strong Jewish community is why Hillel Ottawa likes to work with other Jewish groups on campus. A lot of Hillel members belong to other Jewish organizations, such as the Jewish fraternity Alpha Epsilon Pi or J.E.T. on Campus (a group that aims to bring Jewish life to campus), as well as the Chabad Student Network. In addition to having members that belong to multiple organizations, Diamond believes in continuing to partner with a plethora of groups, including non-Jewish ones, such as the Faiths Acts Fellows.

It's through this style of programming that students benefit the most, Diamond believes, because they not only get programming completely catered to them, but they also get to develop their leadership skills.

Speaking of leadership, earlier in the semester, Hillel Ottawa held a leadership retreat in a cottage just outside Maniwaki, Que. Focusing on building leaders helps to ensure that Hillel continues to run smoothly for this year and beyond.

Diamond described the retreat as a "forum for students to brainstorm their vision and learn to achieve."

He believes the skills Hillel is teaching its members are transferable and will benefit them during and beyond their academic careers. He believes that these students will soon be recognized for "standing out as the future of the Jewish community.

"[Hillel's] student leaders will be running [Jewish community centres] and other Jewish organizations" one day, he said.

Finding the light of holiness

In February 2008, I had the great honour to host the former chief rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, in Vancouver. It was one of the most cherished moments in my rabbinate.

As I was waiting for him to emerge from the plane into the airport, I was nervous. After all, it isn't every day that one has the opportunity to meet such a personality. When Rabbi Lau saw me, he was smiling from ear to ear and, giving me a hug as if he had known me for many years, made feel at ease.

Sephardi Window
By Rabbi Ilan Acoca

In honour of Rabbi Lau, my wife, Dina, suggested bringing the children of a Jewish day school to greet Rabbi Lau at the airport. When Rabbi Lau saw them, he went to each child and greeted him or her personally. One of the children had a question for the rabbi, who gave the child his full attention for a few moments, rubbing both cheeks and making him feel like his own.

Rabbi Lau's visit gave me a new perspective on life. Here was a man who had lost most of his family during the Holocaust, yet finds meaning in life. He has successfully maintained the traditions and teachings that his forebears left him and continues to transmit them to succeeding generations, thus bringing light and hope to people around the world.

In my own congregation, there are people from the four corners of the earth who were forced, in many cases, to flee their generations-old homes, leaving behind all of their material possessions. In new lands, many of these people have succeeded in recasting their lives anew, resurrecting hope, not only for themselves and their families, but for the entire world.

One of these people in my community was Nazem Aboody, born in Iraq. Aboody had a great impact on my life. One of the founders of my synagogue, Aboody quietly took me under his wing from the day of my arrival in Vancouver and became an important mentor and teacher. Aboody was a remarkable presence. He was a discreet man of few words, each one of which had depth and meaning. His mere attendance brought decorum, respect, and grace to any venue.

The Talmud teaches us that God created the world with a unique, holy light that He hid after the sin of Adam and that He will restore in Messianic times. I believe there are individuals who possess a particle of this hidden light, thereby continuing to illuminate us with holiness and hope.

These re-settled individuals did not lose hope, even though it would have been understandable at times to do so. Rather, through their faith and perseverance, we have become the beneficiaries of the holiness they bestow in this world.

Sometimes, when I ponder how I could achieve this, I believe that each of us can be worthy of a particle of this light, and that our discovering and using it, though presently hidden, is a matter of choice and determination.

God gave us free will and our Torah. Why then should we not reach for this light even in the darkest of times?

Rabbi Ilan Acoca is spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Hamidrash in Vancouver.

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Jewish Life

Shoddy, racist 'scholarship' at University of Toronto

By LEN RUDNER

Up until now, I've been proud of the bachelor of education degree I earned from the University of Toronto in 1978 and have retained pleasant memories of time spent in the both the faculty of education and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education buildings on Bloor Street. But a recent decision by the university to accept a thesis submission by Jennifer Peto may require me to change my views.

Guest Voice

Peto's master's thesis, lyrically titled *The Victimhood of the Powerful: White Jews, Zionism, and the Racism of Hegemonic Holocaust Education*, advances the position that Jews are persons of privilege who present themselves as victims of persecution and who make use of the Holocaust to "obscure Jewish privilege, deny Jewish racism and promote the interests of the Israeli nation-state."

A lot of people have sent me copies of Peto's thesis, asking me if I think it is antisemitic. Of course it is, because it constantly refers to "Jewish racism" as an observation about Jews collectively. It makes Jews complicit in racist acts whether or not we actually participated in them. We – Jews – weren't involved in initial colonial violence in Australia, but we are said to benefit from it today and are said to be "involved in contemporary violence" against Aborigines. We – Jews – are also showered with inane generalizations such as that "many Jews" fought for the Confederate army in the American Civil War; that Jews were "fully involved" in military actions in South Africa, and that the Jewish community was "complicit" in apartheid and in "American and Israeli racism."

Perhaps we aren't so much guilty of being Jewish as we are of being white. Or a combination of both. And that's why the title pinpoints white Jews. Small consolation.

But what really captured my attention was the fatal weakness of the core arguments. A central pillar of Peto's thesis is that Israel is a racist, apartheid state and that Jews show their racism through their support for Israel, sometimes going so far as to mischievously deploy human rights discourses in order to defend a racist, apartheid regime. But here's the funny thing: in 107 pages, Peto devotes less than four of them to "proving" that Israel is an apartheid state. Indeed, her proof amounts to agreeing with Ronnie Kasrils, John Dugard and Desmond Tutu.

But Peto has more to say on the matter.

"Citizenship rights [in Israel] are tied to ethnic and religious identity," she says. Perhaps she hopes readers will be ignorant of the Arab Israelis who are citizens, who vote and who elect fellow Arabs to the Knesset, etc.

Most revealing, though, is her description of a purported 2008 Knesset vote to "ban Arab parties from running in the federal elections." We are told that "this decision was later overturned by the Supreme Court, but that it was passed by legislators and had public support is quite telling."

Let's dwell on the blindingly obvious: that the overturning of a committee decision by the Supreme Court of Israel completely undercuts the notion of Israel as a racist state. Peto also got the year wrong. It was 2009. And she omitted mentioning that it was a committee of the Knesset rather than the Knesset itself that proposed the ban. Nor did she consider it relevant to mention that the only political party that has ever been banned in Israel is a Jewish one: Kach. And it was banned for racism.

A second important pillar of Peto's thesis is that Jewish claims to victimhood are "no longer based in a reality of oppression." Peto is careful to qualify her claim by limiting it to North America. Her footnote explains why: "I have chosen to focus on North America partly because it is my context, but also because it can be argued that antisemitism is more systemic in Europe, particularly in France, where there are more frequent violent attacks against Jewish people and institutions." So it's not so much that there's no evidence of antisemitism in the world. It's just that Peto isn't interested in it.

Let's recap.

Peto needed to prove that Israel is an apartheid state and that Jewish victimhood is not a reality. She failed on both counts.

Peto could have contacted the organizations she has defamed – the Canadian Centre for Diversity and the March of the Living – but she chose not to. Is basic research no longer an academic requirement?

The antisemitism of Peto's thesis is her problem. The lack of academic standards by the University of Toronto, however, should be a problem for all of its students.

It's certainly a disappointment for this graduate.

Len Rudner is Ontario regional director of Canadian Jewish Congress.

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The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

• ***La Rafle***, a film about the Nazis removing the Jews of Paris to the Vélodrome d'hiver, then to a holding camp and finally to Auschwitz, will begin its Montreal run Dec. 17 as part of the Cinémania Festival.

• The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue recently honoured its cantor, Rabbi Yehuda Abittan, for his 26 years of service to the congregation.

שיאר ג'ינג

גידי קורן וחברים

נאוות יחידה- אהובה תומר ז"ל
ישראל היא אחת המדינות היחידות בעולם שבהן המפקד נמצא בחוד החזית. יש על זה הרבה ביקורת- יש אומרים שהתימצאות בחזית איננה מאפשרת למפקד לראות את כל התמונה, ועל כן עליו להיות מאחור ולקבל דוחות מהשטח שמאפשרים לו לקבל החלטות מאוזנות. מנגד- התיאוריה הישראלית אומרת שלהתימצאותו של המפקד בשטח יש כוח מוראלי עצום, ואיתו גם יכולת אינטימית לדעת מה עובר על החיילים שלו. על כן המילה "אחרי" היא אולי המושג הישראלי רב העוצמה יותר מכל מושג וסמל אחר.

למפקדת משטרת חיפה, אהובה תומר ז"ל, האשה שהגיעה לדרגה הגבוהה ביותר בתולדות משטרת ישראל, לא היה שום ספק היכן היא צריכה להימצא- היא ניסתה לחלץ את אוטובוס הצעירים, ואיתו גם נספתה. אמרו שמצבה אנוש, ואחר כך גם שהלה הטבה מסויימת- אבל רק אחרי שנפטרה דווחו שסבלה מכוויות ב 90% משטח גופה. בכלל- אין אדם יכול להישרד בשיותר מ-60% מגופו נפגע מכוויות.

זוכרים את המאנטרה של משחקי המתבוארם של ילדותנו הרחוקה?
"מי שעומד מלפני ומאחורי ובצדי –הוא העומד".
אז הינה שיר קטן שכתבתי לאהובה תומר ז"ל, גיבורת חטכה, שאת גבורתה יחגגו שנים רבות אחרי שהכרמל יכוסה שוב בעצים:

"מי שעומד מאחרי- אמרת כמו כולנו
במשחק המחבואים של ילדותך,
אבל בבוקר חנוכה אחד, במורד הכרמל
לא אמרת "אחרי",
פשוט הלכת ראשונה,
לפניך נלכד באש אוטובוס מלא ילדים בני עשרים
ואת חשבת רק עליהם ולא על האש.

אומרים שטרומפלדור לא ממש אמר
"טוב למות בעד ארצנו",
את צעקת במכשיר הקשר
"אנחנו נשרפים"
ואנחנו נשמע את המלים האלה כל יום בחיינו,
את היית אמיתית, בשר דם
ונגעת בחיים גם במותך,
היית גיבורה כי לא רצית להיות גיבורה.
נוחי בשלום, אהובה,
את עלית לשמים בלהבה,
ואישך תהיה לרבבה.

ואנחנו
ואנחנו היינו שם, על הכרמל, נעולים בעיניים דומעות
לטלביזיה, למה שקורה עשרת אלפים קילומטרים מכאן. וכאן,
כל קיץ עולים באש יערות עד בבריטיש קולומביה ששטחם פי
עשר מגודל מדינת ישראל, ועשרות רבות של משפחות מאבדות
את בתיהן, ואנחנו מעולם לא ראינו אותם. אנחנו חיים כאן אבל
רואים את לונדון וקיר שנבאום ואת אברי גלעד ואת השריפה
בכרמל, כאילו אנחנו גרים בפתח תקווה. למה לא! כמו שיש
בריטיש קולומביה, למה שלא תהיה קנדיאן פתח תקווה.
ואולי בעצם הגיע הזמן לחזור הביתה!

FAIR GAME
סרט רב עוצמה שמבוסס על סיפור אמיתי,שיש בו את תמצית האירוע החמור ביותר של עשר השנים האחרונות. ממשל בוש מנסה להוכיח בכל צורה שלסאדם חוסיין יש אחריות במה של הכנת פצצה, למרות שה CIA לא מצליח למצוא אפילו שמץ של הוכחה לכך. הוכחה כזאת היא קריטית כדי למלוש לעיראק.
שגריר האמריקאי לשעבר נשוי לסוכנת סמויה של ה CIA. לבקשת אשתו הוא נסע לאפריקה ומגלה שהשמועה שהמדינה האמריקאית מכרה לסאדם חוסיין אורנים היא שקרית. הוא מדווח על כך לשלחיו, למרות זאת הוא שומע את הנשיא בוש מדווח לקונגרס שאכן כן נמכר אורניום. הוא יוצא בהצהרה ציבורית שמכחישה את הדברים וגורם לרעידת אדמה פוליטית, כי הוא מוכיח שהממשל משקר בגלוי. כנקמה מדליפים אנשיו של בוש לעיתונות שאשתו היא סוכנת CIA, מה ששודף אותה כסוכנת וגורם למותם של אנשים שאיתם עבדה בעיראק.
בסוף יוצאת האמת לאור ואשמים נענשים פלילית רק כדי לקבל הנינה מהנשיא.
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Sharing the light of the menorah across the GTA

Thriving Centres of Jewish Life host simultaneous Chanukah celebrations

By Daniel Horowitz

It was truly a Chanukah to remember across the Greater Toronto Area recently, as more than 1,400 participants enjoyed a unique holiday celebration, sponsored by UJA Federation.

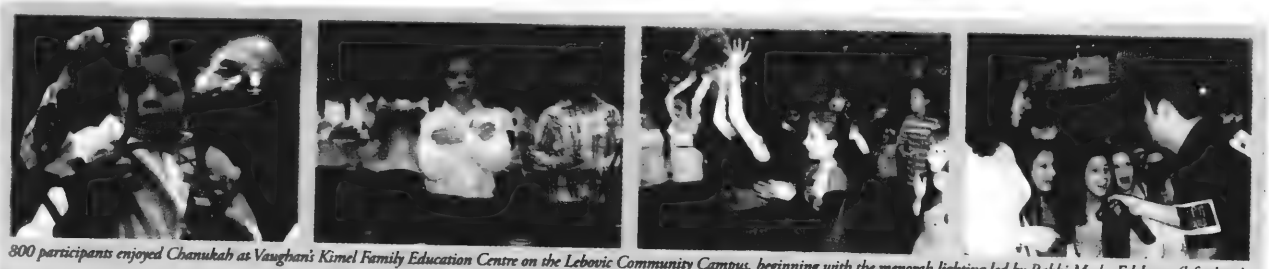
Uniting men, women and children of all ages and backgrounds to celebrate Chanukah were the three new centres of Jewish life in the GTA – Vaughan's Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus; The Prosserman JCC and The Lipa Green Centre on Sherman Campus at Bathurst and Sheppard, and downtown at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, which included a Chanukah swim - made possible through UJA Federation's Tomorrow Campaign.

A fourth location, the LOL Lounge, downtown, hosted over 400 participants between the ages of 20 and 30, who celebrated Chanukah with great music and dancing.

The event marked the first time that all three new community campuses offered a simultaneous program for the entire community.

"It was great seeing this amazing Jewish community come together in so many locations simultaneously across the GTA," said UJA Federation President and CEO, Ted Sokolsky. "These kinds of events point to the great depth of diversity and passion each of our neighbourhoods have to add in building a great community. We've always said that our new community campuses will be judged much more by what actually takes place inside the new buildings we are creating as opposed to buildings themselves. Nights like these prove just how true that is."

The photos on this page show the Chanukah festivities which took place at all four locations.



800 participants enjoyed Chanukah at Vaughan's Kimel Family Education Centre on the Lebovic Community Campus, beginning with the menorah lighting led by Rabbi Moshe Edelman (left photo).

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, with the help of a young volunteer, (second photo from left) lit the menorah at the Prosserman JCC on Sherman Campus while a good time was had by all who attended.

Chanukah celebrations at downtown's Miles Nadal JCC included, among other things, a family Chanukah swim.

Two exciting bands, One Fell Swoop (pictured at left) and The Apollo Effect, entertained an enthusiastic crowd at the LOL Lounge downtown.

On Campus

Former Spanish PM addresses York crowd

By MICHAEL ISENBERG
Special to The CJN

Israel's right to exist will become obvious to anyone who considers it a western country, said former Spanish prime minister José Maria Aznar.

"I believe in the West. I believe in the values, the principles that we call the West," he said. "Freedom. Democracy. Real love. Tolerance. Equality between men and women... These are western values.

"I consider Israel part of the West. It is not part of the Middle East. It is a West country in the Middle East."

Addressing an audience of about 250 students and non-students recently at York University, Aznar said that Israel's principles and views are on par with those of other prominent countries, including the United States, and that Israel should be recognized for its positive contributions to the world in addition to its ways of governance.

Aznar said that Israel, which is continually growing and trying to improve itself, needs to be respected like other developed countries and that it should be given a voice on a global stage. This, he said, is what democratic societies do – enabling other countries to succeed instead of trying to disable them.

"There is a reason to try to convince other [countries] of our beliefs and values that a democracy is better than a theocracy," he said.

"What to do, in the world, to defend our ideas? To defend our principles?... We need to speak up, talk to people. Israel has the right to live peacefully. It is a democracy. It is a land of opportunity. Israel needs to be heard."

This comment led to a standing ovation with no opposition. On a campus known for its protests against Israel, there were no protesters at Aznar's talk.

Answering a question on whether the United States feels the same urgency to defend and support Israel, Aznar replied that it's only now starting to get the message.

"The big temptation at the beginning of the Obama administration was to establish a relationship with the Muslim world [and] to change the position of Israel," he said.

"We can maintain our traditional support for our allies. We first need to strengthen our support and alliance with Israel. Never can you put its existence in doubt. Then we can work forward."

Aznar's talk was hosted by the Canadian Network for Israel Affairs, the Christians United for Israel at York, Hasbara at York, Hasbara Fellowships, Hillel of Greater Toronto and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Aznar helped found the Friends of Israel Initiative, whose aim is get prominent individuals and political leaders to join together to defend Israel's right to exist. The friends include Nobel Peace Prize laureate David Trimble; Peru's former president, Alejandro Toledo; Italian philosopher Marcello Pera; former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, John Bolton, and British historian Andrew Roberts.

"Israel is undermined," Aznar said, explaining the need for the Friends of Israel Initiative. "We must not allow it to be undermined."

José María Aznar, the former prime minister of Spain, visits Abir Yaacob Congregation. From left are Max Benaim, president of the Sephardic Kehila Centre; Aznar; Meyer Keslassy, vice-president of Sephardic Kehila Centre, and Rabbi Haham Amram Assayag.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

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Elena & Peter Mitnik, Marla & Wille Rozen are delighted to announce the engagement of Elizabeth to Justin. Proud grandparents Sam & Ella Rozencwajg.

Mazel tov to Reuben & Dorothy Farberman on their 65th wedding anniversary on Nov. 25 with much love from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov to Sybil & Gerald Berley on their 66th anniversary, from children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren. Breslow, Ratner and Kaplan families, and the Berley family in Australia.

Whitney & Stuart are overjoyed with the birth of their daughter Ryla Lauren Sherman Detsky. Grandparents, Jeannie Berg & Kevie Sherman and Mirah & Howard Detsky.

Happy first birthday to our special little man Aidan Shane! Love, Mommy, Daddy, big sister Skylar, Bubbie Diane, Auntie Lori and the whole family!

Introducing Hannah Claire, darling daughter of Shauna & Jeremy Bornstein. Bubbies & zaidies are overjoyed: Gilda & Barry Waltman and Brenda & Rick Bornstein.

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By LAURA STRICKER

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Thursday, Dec. 16

SATELLITE AT SINAI

"Miriam's Mosaic: Diverse Women of the Rabbinate." Panel discussion with women who have entered the clergy. Moderated by **Rabbi Diana Gerson**. Doors 7:30 p.m., program 8 p.m. Members $10, guests $15 at the door. 416-487-3281, education@templesinai.net.

Saturday, Dec. 18

RABBI'S TISH

Special study session and kiddush with **Rabbi Martin Berman** in the social hall of Shaar Shalom Synagogue following morning services. Topic is "The Messiah." 905-889-4975.

TORAH CLASS

Beth Tikvah class: **Rabbi Grover** on parshah Vayechi. 9:45 a.m.

Sunday, Dec. 19

SINGLES GAMES NIGHT

"Games Jewish Singles Play." 7:30 p.m. Beth Torah Synagogue, 47 Glenbrook Ave. Ages 21-39 and 40-69. $8. Info: **Mollie**, 416-733-3634 or mollie_rothman@yahoo.ca.

Other News

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Bernard Betel Centre needs volunteers for Meals on Wheels, to help seniors with basic computer skills, Healthy@Home program and visiting seniors, in person or over the phone. 416-225-2112 ext. 127.

BILLY ELLIOT

Beth Sholom is going to *Billy Elliot*. Jan. 30, 2011. $130 and $150. 416-783-6103 ext. 228.

BAYCREST VOLUNTEERS

Baycrest needs volunteers to assist their clients. Every Friday from 3-4 p.m. Baycrest has Kabalat Shabbat services. Volunteers are needed to escort clients to the program and help the women light the candles. 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

FAMILY FUN DAY

Join Beth Tzedec for an afternoon of family fun with sports, havdalah crafts, ceramics, havdalah drum circle, cookie decorating and more. Dec. 25, 4-8 p.m. $10 each, advance registration only. Dinner $5 extra. 416-781-3511.

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Bingo, karaoke and games with Pride of Israel. Dec. 26. Pizza and salad dinner. $10 for adult members, $12 for adult guests. $6 for ages 12-17, $4 for ages 6-12. Children 5 and under free. Purchase tickets in advance: 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

EREV SHABBAT

Erev Shabbat service at Temple Har Zion. After the service **Rabbi Cory Weiss** discusses "The Jewish View of the Messiah." Dec. 24. 905-889-2252.

MISHPACHAH MINYAN

Families with young children are invited to attend services in the Cayne Family Chapel, Shaar Shalom Synagogue, 10:15 a.m. Jan. 8. Service ends to coincide with the main service so the participants can join the other members of the congregation for kiddush.

45+ SINGLES DANCE

Shaar Shalom Synagogue Singles presents "Let's Dance Again." Jan. 9, 7:30 p.m. with DJ **Dave Jones. David**, 416-224-9494.

ECHO SCULPTURE

Echo Sculpture Studio, the only public studio with pneumatic, electric and hand tools for carving stone and wood. Visit echosculpture.com, come by Jan. 4 between 12 and 4 p.m. for a tour or call 416-444-8955. Calls will be returned as soon as possible over the holiday season.

Continued on page 25

Continued from page 24

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Computers: Beyond the Basics. Four Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m. Six students.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. **Pearl**, 416-635-6317, or **Sheila**, 416-665-3333.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Jan. 19, 10 a.m. Line dancing Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Doll making Thursdays, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Art classes start Jan. 18. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Seniors woodworking – skilled craftsmen. 416-630-6487.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Lecture: "Great Italian composers – Gaetano Donizetti." Dec. 21, 10-11:30 a.m. $3 members, $6 guests

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. www.prossermanjcc.com, 416-638-1881.

Registration for morning programs and full-day daycare is now open.

Buy tickets for Stage West, Mississauga – *Joseph and the Amazing Dreamcoat* Jan 26, *Casino Rama* Feb 15, *Billy Elliot* at Canon Theatre March 2 and *Tuesdays with Morrie* May 11.

Registration for courses starting January now open, with more Ryerson/Chang programs for 50+.

Register now for winter family programs: Shabbat Party, Drama Tots, Preschool Dance, Lego Brand Brick Club, Baby and Me Sign and more. Visit the website for a full list.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel services Sundays, 8 a.m. and Thursdays, 7:15 a.m. Kosher breakfast after services. **Coleman**, 416-968-0200.

2011 Toronto Jewish Film Society subscriptions are selling out. Eight great films from January to December on selected Sundays at Al Green Theatre. Noted speakers introduce and discuss each film. 2011 paid-up members can buy 7:30 p.m. memberships for their kids (18+) for $60 if they've never been TJFS members. **Joelle**, ext. 139 or joellem@mnjcc.org to register.

Registration open for all winter programs. Aquafit, Zumba, Baby and Me, Yiddish History, etc. Register at ext. 0.

Winter session of Shabbat Club for three- to six-year-olds with **Sarah Brodbar-Nemzer**. Games, songs, candles, crafts and more. Fridays, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. starting Jan. 21.

Register at ext. 0. Info: ext. 277.

What's New is now online, for subscribers only. You can find it at cjnews.com

DINNER OF MIRACLES

The annual Dinner of Miracles, an evening of dialogue between Holocaust survivors and young adults, was held Dec. 6 at Petah Tikvah Congregation. At left are survivors George and Fanny Fox. At right, survivor and keynote speaker Agnes Tomasov reads from her memoir, published by the Azrieli Foundation, as her granddaughter, at the podium, looks on. *[David Collin photos]*

SOCALLED RAPS AT BIALIK

Josh Dolgin, a.k.a. Socalled, performed in Yiddish for Bialik Hebrew Day School students recently. The klezmer/hip-hop maestro reinterprets Yiddish classics. With Dolgin, from left in the back, are Abigail Landau, Gabriele Roitman, Matthew Mamelak, Jacob Schaffer, Julian Schecter and David Yuffa. In the front are Ethan Black and Abby Shore.

NEW CHAIR, MEMBERS ELECTED

Elizabeth Wolfe has been elected the new chair of the board of directors of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. The announcement was made, along with the names of other newly elected members of the board, at federation's recent annual general meeting. Current chair of the board, Alan Winer, beside her, was given a fond farewell at the meeting.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 20

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Mayer, Anne	Nov. 4/10	Private
Lemchuk, Michael	Nov. 22/10	Private
Cohen, Harriett	Nov. 22/10	
Gawza, Michael	Nov. 24/10	Private
Sebselons, Samarijs	Nov. 24/10	Private
York, Louis	Nov. 24/10	850 Steeles Ave W
Malkin, Efim	Nov. 24/10	Private
Swimmer, Irene	Nov. 25/10	101 Maques Lane
Thaler, Riva	Nov. 26/10	784 Centre St
Iosefovici, Florentina	Nov. 25/10	Private
Greenstein, Sydney	Nov. 27/10	8 Covington Rd
Mandelbaum, Henry	Nov. 27/10	
Mons, Fira	Nov. 26/10	Private
Khayut, Inna	Nov. 27/10	
Rubinstein, Dora	Nov. 29/10	3000 Bathurst St
Richards, Robert (aka Benjamin Zukauf)	Nov. 30/10	8501 Bayview Av
Urman, Allen	Nov. 29/10	
James, Helene	Nov. 30/10	8 Elkpath Ave
Baker, Evelyn	Nov. 30/10	300 Antibes Dr
Pearl, Jack Harold	Nov. 28/10	28 Tavistock Rd
Koenigberg, Ida	Nov. 28/10	3560 Bathurst St

With profound sadness we mourn the passing of

Rabbi Louis I. Schechter ז"ל

Rabbi Schechter was buried in Israel as was his wish.
Well loved and well respected in all communities he served; he will be sorely missed.
Donations can be made to the JNF in his honor.

The Schechter family, the Silberbachs and the Lazers.

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Abraham Ginsberg ז"ל

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Coast to Coast

More than 500 attend Chabad opening

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — It was a festive atmosphere Dec. 5 as more than 500 people came to Winnipeg Chabad's new Jewish Learning Centre to celebrate both Chanukah and the centre's grand opening.

"This was the most ambitious project that we have ever undertaken," said Rabbi Avrohom Altein, Winnipeg's Chabad rabbi for the past 40 years, of the $3- to $4-million project.

Rabbi Altein's son, Rabbi Shmuly Altein, director of the new centre, spoke of energizing and engaging a young and vibrant Jewish community.

The event began with music by Brooklyn-based singer and guitarist Chaim Fogelman after which, Adina Altein, wife of Rabbi Shmuly Altein, welcomed the guests.

Mezuzahs were attached to doorposts by the individual donors who funded each room. Rabbi Avrohom Altein and Abe Anhang, who co-ordinated the campaign to build the new facility, attached the last mezuzah as confetti floated down from the ceiling.

Following a concert by Fogelman, a chanukiyah was lit by former Winnipegger Koppel Goldberg, who came in from Toronto for the centre's grand opening.

Following greetings and congratulatory remarks by Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger and Ben Cohen, the president of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, several participants jumped into their cars for a menorah parade through south Winnipeg. Some 25 cars, including a stretch limousine, were equipped with electric menorahs on their roofs.

The building of the new facility was kick-started in September 2009 when the province and the federal government announced infrastructure grants of $320,000 each for the project. That encouraged others to take out their chequebooks..

"We have been working on this since 2005," when Chabad purchased the former railroad land in south Winnipeg, said architect Lanny Silver. "There were a lot of obstacles to overcome. There were different options to consider."

The new building will house a multi-purpose social hall/lecture hall/synagogue, along with classrooms, a library, a small gym for Chabad's preschool program and summer and winter camp, and separate mikvahs for men and women. The centre can accommodate 350 to 400 people.

"There is a tremendous amount of enthusiasm in Winnipeg's Jewish community for this project," said David Rich, co-chair of the fundraising committee, in an interview before the event. "Almost everyone in the community has been touched in one way or another by Chabad's numerous services and programs."

David Salita, a member of the fundraising committee, added that the current construction project is just phase I of a more ambitious vision. The ultimate goal, he said, is to incorporate a yeshiva and student residence that would attract students from all over the world.

MASTERPIECE RETURNED

Concordia University president Judith Woodsworth unveils the 17th-century painting by Flemish artist Jan Brueghel the Younger titled *Allegory of Earth and Water* at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, where it is now on exhibit. The Nazi-looted masterpiece was returned to the estate of the late Montreal gallery owner Max Stern in November by the government of the Netherlands, where it had hung in a museum. Concordia, along with McGill University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, are the beneficiaries of the Stern estate.

National Holocaust Monument closer to reality

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Canada may soon have a National Holocaust Monument.

Last week, Conservative MP Tim Uppal's private member Bill C-442, An Act To Establish a National Holocaust Monument, passed its third and final reading in the House of Commons, moving it one step closer to becoming law.

Bernie Farber

The bill, which Uppal introduced in the House in September 2009 at the behest of Peter Kent, minister of state for foreign affairs (Americas) and MP for Thornhill, is really the culmination of years of work by Laura Grossman, a public administration student at the University of Ottawa who is minoring in Canadian Jewish studies.

Kent was unable to sponsor the private members bill himself because he's a cabinet minister.

Born and raised in Thornhill, Ont., Grossman, 22, is also the executive director of the Canadian Memorial Holocaust Project.

She told *The CJN* she first approached Kent with her idea in 2008 – a family friend with a connection to Kent helped broker the meeting, she said – after a discussion with one of her professors about Canadian contributions during World War II and the Holocaust.

"I was shocked to realize there was no Holocaust memorial [in Ottawa]. I always thought there would be something," she told *The CJN* in an interview late last year. The realization prompted her to take up the cause of a monument in Canada.

Now that the bill has passed, Grossman, with the help of Canadian Jewish Congress, will be negotiating with the National Capital Commission (NCC) – the Crown corporation that acts as the steward of federal lands and buildings in the National Capital Region – to determine where the monument should be erected.

Speaking to *The CJN* last week, Congress CEO Bernie Farber said since the bill passed with all-party support, it "should not be difficult" to finalize the monument's location and should go through the Senate without much delay.

Though there is no deadline for it to be built, Farber said he wanted to see a monument placed sooner rather than later to capitalize on the momentum from the bill's passage.

"Ideally, we'd like the monument to be erected as close to the Parliament buildings as possible, but there are many possibilities," he said. "We're just thrilled this actually came to fruition."

Farber credited Uppal's "tenacity" in pushing the bill, but said Grossman is the one who deserves "full credit" for the bill's success.

Grossman could not be reached for interview by deadline.

"She came to us, and we were a support. We walked the walk with her on this from day one," he said.

Asked what type of monument it would be or who the artist would be, Farber said he didn't know, but remarked that the last monument created to commemorate the Canadian Jewish community is the *Wheel of Conscience*, done by renowned architect and artist Daniel Libeskind in memory of the S.S. St. Louis.

Bill C-442 now goes to the Senate for approval and the royal assent.

Uppal said once royal assent is granted, the monument will have to be established within three years. During that time, a monument fundraising and planning committee will be struck.

It will be made up of interested parties derived from public applicants who "possess a strong interest in, connection to, or familiarity with the Holocaust," Uppal said.

However, according to a report in the *National Post*, the Liberals are saying that the government should be paying the cost of the memorial. Uppal said the government has only promised to donate the land. The money to design and build the monument will have to come from a committee set up to collect private donations.

Immigrants must learn to speak French: Landry

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Former Quebec premier Bernard Landry said the province's efforts to integrate immigrants is being hindered by federal policies of multiculturalism and bilingualism.

Landry, who made the remarks during a talk at Federation CJA's Gelber Conference Centre, said newcomers here, too, often are not learning French because they feel that as Canadians, they have the right to make English their first language.

The fact that they take an oath to Queen Elizabeth II at their swearing-in helps to reinforce this attitude, said Landry, who was Parti Québécois leader from 2001 to 2005.

Landry was the sixth and final guest speaker in a series called "Apprendre et comprendre le Québec," presented by the Institut québécois du judaïsme laïque, in collaboration with the federation's Gen J program.

Landry emphasized that Quebec is a nation, but that the Quebec identity is not an ethnic one. Rather, it's characterized by the sharing of "a common dream, a common project." He remains confident Quebec's independence is inevitable.

"Those who insist that being a Quebecer is based on race are liars and imposters. Period," he said. Almost half of Quebecers, he noted, have First Nations ancestry and a quarter can trace an Irish forebear.

He emphasized Quebec society's historic tolerance, arguing that the 1832 law extending full political rights to Jews likely paved the way for the election of Benjamin Disraeli, who was of Jewish descent, as prime minister of Britain. According to Landry, this may also have been the reason Montreal received the third-largest number of Holocaust survivors, after Tel Aviv and New York, and it may account for the fact that there are more Moroccan Jews here than in Morocco.

Landry, who was Quebec's premier from 2001 to 2003, is now a professor at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

He deplored the "Quebec bashing" that says the province's economy is lagging behind. It is flourishing, he said, led by companies founded here such as Bombardier, SNC Lavalin and the information technology firm CGI. At the same time, Quebec has remained true to its social democratic ideals, and the gap between rich and poor is the narrowest in North America, he said.

By contrast, he continued, Ontario's is a "branch-plant economy" dominated by Ford, GM, Chrysler and Toyota. And, he added, the province doesn't have Céline Dion or Cirque du Soleil, either.

The biggest threat to Quebec's growth is the aging of the population, he said. If the birthrate doesn't increase, immigration will have to be the main source of renewal. But, of course, he reiterated, those who arrive here must speak French.

Beth Tikvah Synagogue

Presents

Tuesdays with Larry Winter 2011

Shows begin at 2:00 p.m. **$5. at the door**

Jan. 4 A Serious Man (2009) ***Comedy*** 106 min.
(Written and directed by the Coen brothers)
Jewish Professor Lawrence 'Larry' Gopnik is facing many problems. His daughter is stealing from him; his wife has asked for a divorce; a student has tried to bribe him; he crashed his car; his next door neighbor has trespassed on his lawn; and his sick brother has moved into his house.

Jan. 11 Revolt – The Story of the Irgun ***Documentary*** 100 min.
This dramatic video examines the role played by the Irgun in the establishment of the State of Israel. Interviews with former Irgun fighters, British Intelligence officers, historians from Israel and England and with the late Prime Minister Begin are interspersed with historic archival footage

Jan. 18 Black Book (2006) ***Rated "R"*** 145 min.
(English subtitles)
In the Nazi-occupied Netherlands during World War II, a Jewish singer infiltrates the regional Gestapo headquarters for the Resistance. To fight the enemy, she must become one of them

Jan. 25 Broken Wings (2002) ***From Israel*** 87 min.
(Hebrew with English Subtitles)
Daphne and her four children try to cope with the abrupt death of husband/father. As the family seems to fall apart, a sudden incident gives them a chance to heal their 'broken wings'

Feb. 1 Holy Rollers (2010) 89 min.
In 1998, 1 million ecstasy pills were smuggled into the USA by a group of Hasidic Jews. In Brooklyn, a youth from an Orthodox Jewish community is lured into becoming an Ecstasy dealer by his pal who has ties to an Israel drug cartel

Feb. 8 Hill 24 Doesn't Answer (1955) ***From Israel*** 101 min.
(Hebrew and English, with Subtitles)
Hill 24 is one of the foothills dominating the approach to Jerusalem. The night before a cease-fire four Israeli volunteers set out to hold the hill until morning, in order to be able to claim it for Israel.

Feb. 15 A Cantor's Tale (2005) ***Documentary*** 95 min.
The story of one man's journey to becoming a chazzan, as well as the history of the chazzan in America. The narrator hails from Boro Park. He grew up loving chazzanut and the Dodgers

Feb. 22 Hey Hey It's Esther Blueberger (2008) 103 min.
A coming-of-age story about a 13-year-old girl trying to fit into both a posh private school and an ordinary public school. Sometimes to fit in you need to stand out.

Mar. 1 Walk on Water (2004) ***From Israel*** 103 min.
(English subtitles)
A Mossad agent is given the mission to track down and kill a very old ex-Nazi officer who might still be alive. Pretending to be a tourist guide, he befriends his grandson Axel, in Israel to visit his sister Pia. The two men set out on a tour of the country, during which Axel challenges his values

Mar. 8 I Have Never Forgotten You (2007) ***Documentary*** 105 min.
(Narrated by Nicole Kidman)
The documentary explores the life and legacy of Simon Wiesenthal, the concentration camp survivor who became known as the "Conscience of the Holocaust" for his efforts at tracking down Nazi war criminals and for making sure that the memory of that event would never be forgotten

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Larry Ankiewicz, Programming Coordinator, Toronto Jewish Film

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

On-set tutor's first student was Lindsay Lohan

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Andrea Eisen has worked with an emotionally disturbed orphan, a girl from South Africa and a few young superheroes.

Since 2003, she's been an on-set tutor for movies and TV shows. Her first job was as Lindsay Lohan's tutor while she was filming the movie *Mean Girls*.

Before becoming an on-set tutor, Eisen taught at the United Synagogue Day School (now Robbins Hebrew Academy), and worked briefly as a supply teacher for the Toronto District School Board. However, she didn't love supply teaching and, after running into a friend from high school, started on the path to becoming a tutor.

"I happened to bump into a friend of mine from high school who's a trainer for the stars... He told me about tutoring on set and hooked me up to the right people to get in touch with. So I went from there and developed really good relationships with production managers," she said.

Some of the movies and TV shows she's worked on include *Orphan*, *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, *Kick-Ass*, *Flash of Genius* and *Dan for Mayor*. She also spent two months in Japan for *The Grudge 2*.

"The production manager [for *The Grudge 2*] was also someone I knew from high school that had moved to New York, and he called me to see if I wanted to come because they were going to have a kid on set from Toronto... We got to travel around Japan and experience that culture."

Eisen, left, tutored actor Sophia Ewaniuk, on the set of the TV show Happy Town.

When asked about personal highlights, without hesitating Eisen mentions meeting director Steven Spielberg in 2009.

"I was working on a pilot for a TV show and he was the producer. He walked on set when we weren't expecting him to come... He was so nice and so down to earth.

"This past summer I met Julia Roberts. I was working on this really great movie that she was producing. She was also really nice," she added.

What Eisen likes most about being a tutor, she said, is getting to know the kids on set and meeting all different kinds of people.

"I like getting to know the kids one-on-one. Usually there's not more than five kids at a time.

"It's nice to get to know people... out of the box that I'm used to."

Initially, tutoring on set was not the most stable of jobs, but Eisen said she's recently become so busy that she hired someone to work for her under the new company she formed, called Lights! Camera! Study!

Aside from being a tutor, Eisen is also a published author. Her first book, *StarSitter*, came out in 2007, and she just released the sequel *StarSitter: Thank God for You!* last month. A third book, *StarSitter Goes to Japan*, is in the works.

StarSitter is a novel based loosely on Eisen's experiences travelling with Lohan to Los Angeles when Lohan was doing publicity for *Mean Girls*.

"When I was in L.A. with Lindsey, I was writing e-mails home about what was going on and the fun I was having... I was friends with [writer Rebecca Eckler] and she called me when I was home and [said I] had to write a book about this.

"I had always been a good writer, but I never pursued anything with it. It was always been a dream of mine to write a book, so now I had the perfect thing to write about," she said.

In addition to writing books, Eisen loves reading them as well. Her goal for 2010 is to read 100 books. She is currently on book number 98 and plans to do it again in 2011 while raising money for charity.

"People are always talking to me about books now. It's a nice change from TV shows and movies and video games and the latest technology. It's nice to go back to the medieval talks of books."

The books she's read so far this year are listed on her website, andreadanasilverlining.blogspot.com.

Andrea Eisen *[Megan Vincent photo]*

Eisen started the blog "because of all these horrible things that were happening in my life [including losing several family members]... I was writing about incidents that were happening and trying to figure out how to find that silver lining within that."

One particular experience that sticks out in her mind was trying to find a psychiatrist.

"I wrote about this incident where I was trying to find the right psychiatrist to help me through grief. I went to one, and she yelled at me the whole time about being single.

"I had gone to talk about my grief – my dad – it was only three months since he'd died, and she couldn't get off the fact that I was still single. She was just yelling at me and she didn't get it."

Eisen, who's in her mid-30s, said writing the blog has helped her to heal, as well as encouraged people she knows to open up about their problems.

"It's helped people share a lot about themselves. It's helped people open up, and they probably wouldn't have had I not come out first about what was going on with me.

"That's been really effective in the healing process."

And now for something completely different: **HEEBONICS**

Entrepreneur's website is a hit with young professionals

NotableTV founder and CEO Julian Brass

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Julian Brass knows what he's talking about when it comes to what young professionals want – he is one.

As the founder and CEO of NotableTV, the charismatic Brass lives and breathes the young professional lifestyle.

Notable was established by Brass as "a source [for young professionals] that cuts through the clutter, that tells them only what's relevant and actually worth knowing about," he said.

The website, NotableTV.com, features exclusive events for Notable members, advice from travel, business, relationship, tech and fitness, experts and interviews with Notable business people, including Brett Wilson and Arlene Dickinson from the CBC show *Dragons' Den*.

Notable, which has nearly 30,000 members, has partnered with brands and organizations including Samsung Galaxy, RW&Co, Mount Sinai Hospital and the Canadian Opera Company to run campaigns and host events. This past September, Brass worked with Cineplex.com for the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF).

"It was awesome," he said when asked about his TIFF experience. "I'm not one to really get starstruck... but hanging out with people like Martin Sheen, James Franco, Hayden Christensen [and] Emilio Estevez – first of all it's fun.

"It is work though. For me, it was about creating a great segment every time I did an interview.

"To get to the red carpet takes a ton of work that people don't see because it happens behind the scenes. It's also very worthwhile."

Before launching Notable in 2008, Brass worked in Silicon Valley in California for Engage.com, a combination social networking and online dating website. He was offered the position with Engage when he went to an Internet conference to get ideas for starting his own business.

"I went [to the conference] just to learn and network and be a fly on the wall and take in as much as I could, because I wanted to put that into starting my own business.

"By being there and not trying to close deals and not looking for a job, I ended up making some really good relationships over the conference. Next thing I knew, I had four different job offers by the end of the conference."

One of those job offers came from JDate, the online dating site for Jewish singles. In keeping with his entrepreneurial spirit, Brass turned down the offer because he didn't want to work at what was already a well-known company.

"While I thought [working at Jdate] would be a great time, obviously, I wanted to be one of the first at a company rather than an employee of an already very well-established brand. I think I made the right decision. Not a day goes by that I'm not very thankful for everything I learned down there."

After spending just over a year as Engage's marketing, public relations and advertising manager, Brass took what he learned and came back to Canada to start NotableTV.

He hasn't looked back since, and was recently recognized for his efforts by being named 2010 Entrepreneur of the Year at the IMPACT National Conference, a youth entrepreneurship conference.

"For the past two years, I have worked so incredibly hard, sometimes I'm kind of amazed when I look back at how much effort I've put into this business and how I still love what I do," Brass said.

"It's nice to get accolades for all the hard work... The truth is, it's great to win but at the same time I'm not doing this for an award.

"It's nice to be recognized, but really my work is far from over. So while it's nice to celebrate and put a trophy on my desk, that's really all it is. My job is far from over and I wouldn't change that for anything, because I love what I do," he said.

He added that every day when he gets out of bed, he thinks about how to give back to his peers "in a way that motivates them to do more in their professional or social life, inspires them to take their career to the next level and creates a seamless way to find out what's going on.

"That's what I love about running my business, that I'm able to give back to my peers on a daily basis in a meaningful way. I love being my own boss and being able to challenge myself to be more productive and strategic."

However, Brass was quick to point out that being an entrepreneur is not easy.

"It takes a ton of self-discipline. It takes a really thick skin. It requires believing in yourself and your abilities."

When asked what advice he would give to people considering starting their own business, he had plenty to say.

"You need to be realistic [and] you need to figure out where you are in your finances and your life," he said.

"Being passionate about your idea is awesome, however, you need to take an in-depth look at the market you're trying to get into and say, 'Is there a place for me to carve out my niche? Is there room for my idea?'

"Once you decide [there is], it's time. You have to go for it headfirst... just dive in. You can't be successful if you have one foot in and one foot out," he said.

"Build a network of people who've already done this," Brass added. "It doesn't have to be the exact same industry, but if it is, even better.

"It's okay to feel down. It's only natural and part of being human. The trick is to not stay down for long and to fight back... and get yourself out of whatever temporary rut you may be in."

Brass has many plans for the future of NotableTV, including an upcoming branding change to Notable.ca at the beginning of 2011.

"The goal is to truly be the online destination for young professionals across Canada," he said. "So every young professional, 25 to 39 years old, I want them to, when they think about a destination in terms of lifestyle, networking and the places, people and things they need to know about, I want them to think Notable."

Julian Brass with former Toronto mayor David Miller

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Bat mitzvah girl spreads the love

Wolfe makes sandwiches for victims of homelessness

By CARA EDELL
Special to The CJN

Talia Wolfe, 12, is spreading the love this winter by making sandwiches for victims of homelessness and hunger.

On Nov. 29, Wolfe organized Toronto's first Spread the Love project at Fieldstone Day School, where she is a Grade 6 student. Her second event will take place during a family brunch after her bat mitzvah on Jan. 23.

Spread the Love is a charitable initiative that encourages groups to feed the hungry. It offers relief to front-line organizations and provides leadership opportunities to youth. To date, volunteers across Canada have made more than 55,000 sandwiches for people struggling to find a meal.

Wolfe said she donated the sandwiches made at her event to Youth Without Shelter and the North York Women's Shelter. "It seems almost strange that hunger could be a problem in Canada, but unfortunately it is a sad reality.

"The youth shelter is for people ages 16 to 24. They're going to school or to job interviews so they can improve their lives. They need food to carry on during the day," she said.

In addition to sandwiches, Wolfe decided to include an apple, juice box and cookies in each lunch bag. "I remember, the shelter sent me a video that said each person there only has a dollar a day for meals, and that's not enough. They're teenagers, so they're going to be hungry."

To prepare for her events, Wolfe wrote donation letters to food suppliers asking for support. She said she thanks Costco, Loblaws and caterer Sonny Langer for their help.

Items in need include ingredients such as bread, cheese and meats, as well as cutlery, paper bags and plastic gloves. She estimated that about 150 to 200 sandwiches would be made on each date, ranging from egg to tuna to turkey.

Talia Wolfe holds up a sign at one of the sandwich stations at her first Spread the Love event. Spread the Love is a charitable initiative that encourages groups to feed the hungry.

"The kids in my class were pretty excited to help with the sandwiches, partially because we got to miss class and partially because they like to help," she said about her first event.

"Even the teachers came to help because they thought it looked like fun and wanted to be a part of such an important cause."

Since the students at her school are required to wear uniforms, Wolfe helped arrange a "paid grub day," which meant that students who wanted to wear other clothing had to contribute $2 to the cause. "We raised $188.24 just from that. It was lots of fun, she said, "and I'm looking forward to doing it again [prepare lunches] with my family in January."

Wolfe said she first heard about Spread the Love through her cousin, who is a student at McGill University. He and his friends organized their own event in Montreal after learning about the initiative that originated in Calgary.

Wolfe said that helping others is in her blood, as her family members are very charitable. "Lots of people don't have the things I take for granted. All people should have food and water and clothing. I want to raise money so that I can give the necessities to the less fortunate."

While many teenagers who celebrate bar and bat mitzvahs give portions of their monetary gifts to charities, Wolfe said she wanted to go one step further. Since she has always loved cooking and feeding people, making sandwiches for shelters seemed like the perfect mitzvah.

Prior to becoming involved with Spread the Love, Wolfe said she devoted herself to different causes. Last summer, she held a bake sale to raise money to sponsor a child in Africa. The two-year-old girl she sponsored lives with her family in a tiny mud house and her parents cannot read or write. "Now she's gotten all of her medical treatments and has money to go to school when she gets older. That is amazing."

After making sandwiches at her school and bringing them to the shelters, Wolfe said it was rewarding "to meet some of the staff and people who live there and understand how and why these shelters are so important to so many young people."

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International

Israel & the Jewish World

U.S. envoy returns to Israel

By BARAK RAVID
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JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed a U.S. decision to drop efforts to achieve a construction freeze on Israeli settlements and focus on resolving core issues of the Middle East conflict.

"To reach peace, we have to discuss the issues that are truly delaying peace... I welcome the fact that we will now begin discussing these issues and try to narrow gaps," Netanyahu said on Monday in a speech to an economic forum, hours before U.S. envoy George Mitchell was due to arrive in Israel.

In the speech, Netanyahu mentioned several issues to be resolved, including that Palestinians recognize Israel as a Jewish state, security arrangements, and the future of Palestinian refugees.

Mitchell was to meet with Netanyahu in Jerusalem on Monday evening to put forth U.S. ideas for moving the peace process forward.

Mitchell was expected to make clear to Netanyahu that the Obama administration wants the prime minister to take a position in the coming weeks on the core issues, with an emphasis on borders.

Mitchell was also scheduled to hold talks with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah. But the brunt of the work will be in Israel because the Palestinians have already submitted their opening positions on all the core issues – borders, security, Jerusalem, refugees, water and the settlements.

The Americans have heard little new from Netanyahu, with the exception of ideas on security and aspects considered secondary such as the environment and the economy.

Mitchell's visit to Israel will be his first in three months. On Sept. 15, he took part with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in a tripartite meeting with Netanyahu and Abbas.

Direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians stalled when Israel's 10-month freeze on settlement construction expired on Sept. 26.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomes the new American approach to peace making in a speech in Jerusalem last week. *[Israel Sun]*

Last week, the U.S. and Israel announced that talks on a deal for Israel to renew the settlement freeze in exchange for a set of U.S. guarantees had reached a dead end.

The U.S. now wants a return to indirect Israeli-Palestinian talks.

On Monday, Netanyahu hailed the U.S. decision to drop its efforts to get Israel to renew the settlement freeze.

"I welcome this American decision. It is good for Israel. It is good for peace," Netanyahu said.

Meanwhile Palestinian officials said that the U.S. administration should have blamed Israel for the failure of the latest Mideast efforts.

The officials reacted last weekend to a speech by Clinton before the Brookings Institution's Saban Center for Middle East Policy's seventh annual forum in Washington, in which she said Israelis and Palestinians both bear responsibility for the failure of the direct talks that took place in September.

In her speech on Friday, Clinton criticized the leadership of both Israel and the Palestinian Authority, saying they had "not yet made the difficult decisions that peace requires. Like many of you, I regret that we have not gotten farther, faster."

"Israeli and Palestinian leaders should stop trying to assign blame for the next failure and focus instead on what they need to do to make these efforts succeed," she said.

The Palestinians have said they won't resume negotiations without a full settlement construction freeze. Despite their disappointment with Washington's performance, the Palestinians are likely to participate in indirect talks. They said they'll make a final decision within a week.

In her speech, Clinton also said that a Palestinian state achieved through negotiation is inevitable.

Clinton said that the United States is serious about pushing forward a peace agreement and laying the foundations for a future Palestinian state.

"We will deepen our support of the Palestinians' state-building efforts, because we recognize that a Palestinian state, achieved through negotiations, is inevitable," Clinton said, adding that "the long-term population trends that result from the occupation are endangering the Zionist vision of a Jewish and democratic state in the historic homeland of the Jewish people."

Clinton said diplomacy would now concentrate on the core issues – all of which have proved difficult to resolve. One of the core issues is Jerusalem itself, which Israel says is its capital but which the Palestinians also hope will serve as the capital of their future independent state.

After she made the speech, Netanyahu said there were a number of positive elements for Israel in Clinton's speech, including her comment that the negotiations will be held on all core issues at the same time. He also considered positive the fact that the United States is opposed to unilateral steps by the Palestinians at the United Nations.

Kissinger: Gassing Jews wouldn't be a U.S. problem

JTA

WASHINGTON — Former U.S Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is heard saying on newly released Nixon tapes that the genocide of Soviet Jews would not be an American concern.

The tapes chronicle former U.S. president Richard Nixon's obsession with disparaging Jews and other minorities.

Kissinger's remarks come after a meeting he and Nixon had with then-Israeli prime minister Golda Meir on March 1, 1973, in which Meir pleads for the United States to put pressure on the Soviet Union to release its Jews. Nixon and Kissinger, then secretary of state, dismiss the plea after Meir leaves.

"The emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union is not an objective of American foreign policy," the *New York Times* quoted Kissinger, as saying on the tapes. "And if they put Jews into gas chambers in the Soviet Union, it is not an American concern. Maybe a humanitarian concern."

U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger speaks to prime minister of Israel Golda Meir in 1973 in Jerusalem. Israeli ambassador to the U.S. Simcha Dinitz looks on. *[IGPO file photo]*

Nixon replies: "I know. We can't blow up the world because of it."

Six months later, during the Yom Kippur War, Nixon rejected Kissinger's advice to delay an arms airlift to Israel as a means of setting the stage for an Egypt confident enough to pursue peace. Nixon, among other reasons, cited Israel's urgent need.

The American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors and their Descendants in a statement called for an apology from Kissinger, who is still consulted by Democratic and Republican administrations and by Congress on matters of state.

"Henry Kissinger's comments are morally grotesque and represent a disgraceful perversion of American values," the statement said. "He owes an apology to all victims of the Nazi Holocaust."

Nixon secretly recorded his White House conversations. After this was revealed during congressional investigations, the tapes became government property and have been released over the years in intervals.

Elsewhere on the batch of tapes recently released by the Nixon Library, the late president repeats many of the ethnic and racial slurs that had appeared on earlier such releases: Irish are "mean" drunks, he says; Italians "don't have their heads screwed on tight"; Jews are "aggressive, abrasive and obnoxious"; and it would take blacks "500 years" to catch up with whites.

'We will turn the Carmel from black to green'

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week thanked Diaspora communities for their support and donations in the aftermath of the Carmel forest fire.

Speaking Dec. 9 to more than 900 participants on a JNF USA-organized conference call, Netanyahu said that with the continued support of Jews worldwide, and under the stewardship of the Jewish National Fund (JNF), he believed Israel will be able to "turn the forest from black to green."

He said Israel must now focus on two tasks in the Carmel region: to restore the buildings, homes and "various communities hurt by the fire," and to restore the forest.

"We have to understand what we're facing – that is to renew about half of the Carmel forest. [JNF] is the main engine here," Netanyahu said.

As of late last week, Canadian donations through community organizations such as JNF Canada, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, Federation CJA in Montreal and Ve'ahavta totalled in excess of $550,000.

In addition to funds going toward the forest's renewal, donations are also being sent to help support the families of fire victims; provide trauma treatment and physiological support to members of families affected by the fire, and to provide meals to those left homeless or hungry as a result of the disaster.

The Montreal Jewish community has also set up a special fund for families affected in the south of the country.

Four residents of Federation CJA's sister city of Be'er Sheva in the Negev died fighting the fire. They were:

- Yaron Brami, 31, who had just celebrated his two-year-old child's birthday and whose wife is pregnant;
- Dmitri Kolozov, 41, a father of one, who died on his birthday;
- Rami Yisraeli, 33, also a father of one, and
- Vladislav Rahamimov, 30.

"These young men were wardens on the bus that was destroyed and were outstanding citizens of Be'er Sheva," said federation president Jack Hasen. "We honour them and pray for their families."

For information on donating, call 514-345-2600 in Montreal.

Canadian federations have been asked to raise $180,000 to help provide skin grafts to some of the critically injured now in hospital in Haifa. As well, assistance is being extended to thousands of families that were evacuated.

For its part, Ve'ahavta is splitting the donations it receives between three of its partner organizations in Israel. Some 60 per cent is being allocated to the Israel Trauma Coalition, 30 per cent to Rambam Hospital in the areas of trauma and its burn unit, and 10 per cent is going to Hazon Yeshaya Humanitarian Network.

JNF Canada is earmarking its donations to the renewal and protection of the forest.

Netanyahu said Israel will ensure that the forest's rehabilitation will be done in a way that's "compatible" with the country's economic and environmental concerns.

In this, he urged JNF to "bring assistance from across the Jewish world, and maybe from the non-Jewish world" as well.

A woman searches through the rubble from the fire that devastated her home in Beit Oren in the Carmel forest earlier this month. ***[Flash90 photo]***

"We may not have a fire burning now, but we want to act now with the same dispatch that we used to put out the fire," Netanyahu said, adding that he aims to equip Israel's firefighting forces with updated materiel so that if a similar "horror" breaks out again, the country will be ready.

Netanyahu said that within the next few weeks, he will present a "program" to cabinet to have all donations collected by JNF go toward a "systemic program to revitalize the Carmel."

As an aside, Netanyahu told a story about his August visit with Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou. While in Greece, he said, he had the opportunity to witness that country's firefighters extinguish a forest fire using Canadian-made water-bombers.

Netanyahu said Israel has since "researched the possibility of procuring" some of these aircraft for domestic use.

"We will have to build an aerial capability to ensure that the valuable work being done by [the JNF] now rehabilitating the forest is not consumed by future fires," Netanyahu said, adding that the type of fire Israel saw earlier this month was a "mega-fire" and that this type of blaze requires different logistical firefighting techniques than other, more generic fires, such as those in a residential block of buildings or in a home.

Netanyahu said that after he returned from Greece, he "understood that [Israel] had to organize" itself to be better able to fight a large forest fire, adding that he realized the country's firefighting forces were not adequately equipped to handle a blaze of the magnitude it saw this month.

According to the JNF, approximately five million trees were destroyed in the Carmel forest fire, the worst in Israel's history.

Also on the conference call was Shimon Romach, Israel's fire commissioner, who said that "the firefighters of Israel, and emergency services all fought bravely."

Romach lamented the 43 lives lost in the fire, and specifically the death of one of Israel's "fire scouts," 16-year-old Elad Riven, a volunteer firefighter who he said "fought to the last minute" trying to save the lives of 40 prison wardens trapped on a bus in the middle of the forest on the first day of the fire.

He also strongly urged both Israel and Diaspora communities to help his force restock itself, as his department lost close to $2 million worth of firefighting equipment to the blaze. Also urgently needed, he said, are updated fire engines.

"One of our main problems is we're using fire trucks that are older than many of our firefighters," he said.

As reported in *The CJN* last week, JNF Canada announced it had received a $100,000 donation from a donor to be used exclusively toward the purchase of a new fire truck for JNF's firefighting unit in Israel. The cost of a new forest firefighting truck is approximately $250,000, according to JNF.

Fire death toll rises to 43

JTA

JERUSALEM — The death of another prison guard bus passenger raised the toll from the Carmel Forest fire to 43.

Jalal Bisan, 29, died Saturday in a Haifa hospital.

Bisan, a father of two, was on board a bus racing to evacuate a prison in the path of last week's historic blaze that was engulfed in flames.

Thirty-eight of the passengers on board were burned to death.

The other victims of the fire, which is being called Israel's worst civilian disaster, were three police officers – including Haifa police chief Ahuva Tomer – a firefighter and a 16-year-old volunteer.

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Madoff's son dead of apparent suicide

JTA

NEW YORK — Mark Madoff, son of disgraced Jewish financier Bernard Madoff, was found dead in what is believed to have been a suicide.

The Associated Press quoted New York police as saying that Madoff, 46, was found hanging Saturday in his Manhattan apartment.

Bernard Madoff is serving 150 years in prison for what is believed to be history's largest Ponzi scheme, in which investors see returns only when new investors are lured in.

A number of major Jewish organizations profited from and were victims of the scheme. Hadassah last week said it would repay $45 million to the court-appointed trustee of Madoff's estate, who is seeking to distribute equitably what is left of the scheme's funds.

Madoff's sons, who reportedly turned in their father, have not been charged in the scheme, and the elder Madoff said it occurred without their knowledge.

However, Mark and Andrew Madoff were under investigation, and the trustee had sued them for profiting from the business without adequately investigating how it was making money.

Israel & the Jewish World

Rabbinic ruling evokes protests, condemnation

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

JERUSALEM — Protesters rallied in Jerusalem last week against a rabbis' ban on renting apartments to Arabs

About 150 demonstrators took up positions Dec. 8 across from the Great Synagogue to protest the ruling, which was issued the day before by dozens of Israel's municipal chief rabbis

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned the ruling. Israeli civil rights organizations and MKs also criticized it and called for the rabbis who signed it to be fired. Municipal chief rabbis' salaries are paid by the state

"How would we feel if we were told not to sell an apartment to Jews?" asked Netanyahu. "We would protest, and we protest now when it is said of our neighbours."

Speaking at the National Bible Contest for adults, Netanyahu emphasized that such declarations aren't acceptable in Israel.

"Such things cannot be said – not about Jews and not about Arabs. They cannot be said in any democratic country, and especially not in a Jewish and democratic one. The State of Israel rejects these sayings."

The attorney general's office stated Dec. 9 that it would look into criminal aspects of the ruling signed by a number of leading rabbis that purports to forbid renting homes to gentiles

Dozens of Israel's municipal chief rabbis signed on to the ruling, which came just months after the chief rabbi of Safed initiated a call urging Jews to refrain from renting or selling apartments to non-Jews.

An assistant to attorney general Yehuda Weinstein said Weinstein would order the examination of the apparent criminal and disciplinary aspects of the rabbis' letter.

"The attorney general thinks that it appears that the statements attributed to the rabbis are problematic in several aspects… and are inappropriate for public officials," the statement said.

The attorney general office's statement was the first official response by Israel's legal establishment to petitions calling for legal action against the signatories of the rabbis' letter.

Earlier on Dec. 9, the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial decried the letter, deeming it a "severe blow to the values of our lives as Jews and human beings in a democratic state."

"Past experience has taught us just how important, and at the same time how fragile, these basic values are to coexistence and honouring the other," the memorial said in response to the ruling

"We know that the Jewish people, that knew suffering and persecution and experience ostracism and the revocation of basic rights, has expressed its stance on matters such as these with voices different than those we have heard today with this [ruling]."

One of the country's leading non-haredi rabbis, Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, also denounced the religious ruling. "I've said for some time that there are rabbis who must have their pens taken away from them," he said.

"It's interesting that these same Zionist rabbis support symbolically selling their land to gentiles during the shmitah year," he added referring to the seven-year cycle when agricultural fields in Israel must lie fallow.

According to the Civil Service Commission, only chief rabbis are state employees and subject to the commission's rules, while municipal rabbis are subject to the religious councils.

The Chief Rabbinate is responsible for matters of Jewish law and professional issues pertaining to municipal rabbis. Theoretically, the two chief rabbis can summon a municipal rabbi for a disciplinary hearing if the attorney general concludes he has exceeded his authority or acted improperly. Such action has rarely been taken.

Oded Weiner, director general of the Chief Rabbinate, told *Ha'aretz* that the institution "does a great deal for interreligious dialogue, worldwide and with the Palestinian Authority." But Weiner added that "every rabbi in his city says what is in his heart."

Gilad Kariv, head of the Reform Judaism movement in Israel, said, "The fire of racism will completely destroy Israeli society. If there is a lesson to be learned… it is the danger of complacency. The rabbinical decree is abominable and desecrates the seal of God that lies within every human being."

In the ruling, the rabbis called on the religious community to voice support for Safed Chief Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu, who could face trial for incitement against Arabs for initiating the move against renting to gentiles.

Minority Affairs Minister Avishay Braverman has also asked Justice Minister Yaakov Neeman to begin the process of suspending Rabbi Eliyahu immediately from his post.

In a statement, the Canada-Israel Committee said that it "shares Prime Minister Netanyahu's outrage over this issue. This disturbing letter represents an extremely marginal position in Israeli society, as demonstrated by the thousands of Israeli protesters who have taken to the streets… to condemn it. It is also important to note that many learned rabbis in Israel, as well as leading institutions such as the Attorney General's office and the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, have publicly opposed the letter.

"As the only liberal democracy in the region, Israelis remain proud of their commitment to the full protection of minority rights and equality under the law. And that's why this letter has been so widely denounced and will do nothing to change Israel's liberal, pluralistic character."

Jews ask Pope to fight delegitimization of Israel

By SHLOMO SHAMIR

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JERUSALEM — A delegation of leaders of the World Jewish Congress met with Pope Benedict XVI in the Vatican on Dec. 10 and asked the Pontiff to speak out against the delegitimization of Israel.

"We discussed critical issues affecting world Jewry," said WJC President Ronald S. Lauder said in a statement. "[We] expressed to the Pope how much we value the close relationship we have enjoyed with the Vatican over many years in our quest for a secure Israel and a safer future for Jews everywhere."

Lauder requested that the Pope speak out against the delegitimization of Israel, particularly the denial of Jewish links to holy sites such as the Temple Mount and the Western Wall, as well as Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem, a site that's holy to both Jews and Christians.

According to the WJC statement, the Pope emphasized the need to continue to fight anti-Semitism in the Christian world, which he characterized as unacceptable. The Pope also talked about the importance of Jews and Catholics working together to fight antisemitism in all its forms, noting Judaism's patrimony to Christianity.

WJC secretary general-designate Dan Diker asked that the Catholic Church take a leading role in the fight against the delegitimization of Israel, which he called a new "politically correct" form of antisemitism.

Pope Benedict is said to have responded, saying that the Catholic Church recognizes the deep and historical connection of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel and expressed his commitment to help bolster better understanding of that connection among people throughout the world.

Israel Briefs

Rocket attack causes injury

Following a rocket strike from Gaza on the western Negev that injured one, Israel's air force struck three terror-linked sites in Gaza. The strikes early last Thursday morning hit a weapons manufacturing and storage site in central Gaza and two terrorism hubs in the northern part of the strip, according to the Israel Defence Forces. They followed a barrage of five rockets fired on southern Israel the previous evening, the IDF said. The wounded man was airlifted to a hospital in Be'er Sheva. A home in a kibbutz also was damaged. Residents of southern Israel were told to enter bomb shelters on the Wednesday night. "Escalation is only a matter of time. The threat in the area is constant and growing," read a statement issued Dec. 9 by several southern Israeli regional councils. "The government must realize that this will be an active line of conflict for the foreseeable future." About 200 rockets fired from Gaza have landed in Israel in 2010.

More Gaza exports approved

Israel's security cabinet approved a measure to allow an increase in the exports of goods from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank and abroad. The decision, approved Dec. 8, was made to help the coastal strip's economy and "ease the burden of the Gazan population under the repressive Hamas terrorist regime," according to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office. Gaza's economy expanded by 16 per cent with a decrease in unemployment in the first half of 2010, according to a report from the International Monetary Fund. Gaza has been under a blockade from Israel and Egypt since Hamas came to power in 2007.

Anne Pollard in Israel

The former wife of convicted spy Jonathan Pollard was brought to Israel for assistance. Anne Pollard and her elderly father arrived in Israel on Dec. 6 after being found living in a one-bedroom apartment in New York in dire financial and physical need. Pollard reportedly called the Israeli Consulate in New York requesting help and saying she had not eaten in six days. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, upon being apprised of the situation, ordered her to be taken care of. A special team set up to help Pollard will find her a permanent residence and a job in the coming weeks, according to reports.

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Recreational hockey tournament set for Metulla

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Danny Spodek knew he was on the right track when he received inquiries from South Africa and Finland about a hockey tournament he's been organizing for the last five years.

Till then, he'd managed to attract Canadians, Americans and Israelis to the Roger Neilson Memorial Hockey Tournament in Metulla, Israel. But the prospect of including skaters from other lands will only go toward normalizing Israel's image across the world, he believes.

The 2011 tournament will take place Feb. 21 to 25, and skaters will play six or seven games, depending on how well they do.

Last winter, more than 100 players, including 50 from outside Israel, participated in the event, a big jump from the first tournament five years ago, which brought together 45 players. Adding to the luster of the 2010 tournament was the participation of legendary stars Paul Henderson and Darryl Sittler. Although they didn't play, their presence fired the imagination of hockey-lovers everywhere, and Ron Maclean interviewed the pair from Israel as part of Hockey Day in Canada celebrations.

Both were coached by Neilson, a respected figure in NHL circles who died a few years ago after a battle with cancer. Neilson was a Christian Zionist who organized summer hockey camps at the Canada Centre rink in Metulla.

Last year's tournament featured two Canadian teams (one from Toronto, the other from Ottawa), as well as one American and three Israeli squads. Most of the Israeli players were ex-Canucks now living in the Holy Land. To make the tournament more competitive, Spodek divides players by skill level, so skaters play with and face others of similar ability.

It's a fun event that combines players' zest for hockey with their love of Israel. That and staging an event that brings people together, creates long-term personal and business relationships and gives guys an excuse to visit the Holy Land are the tangible benefits that motivate him to devote countless hours to make it happen. Plus it gives him an additional opportunity to play hockey.

For Spodek, a Toronto native who made aliyah 10 years ago, the tournament is something of a labour of love. He puts in many hours to make sure the event comes off without a hitch, while back in Canada and the United States, friends help recruit players and gather equipment for donation.

Players kick in $400 to $500 for ice rental, but they're asked to make their own arrangements to get to Israel and they pay for a hotel in nearby Kfar Giladi. El Al has come on board as a sponsor, offering group rates and allowing flexibility on return dates, he said.

"It's a unique individual who comes," Spodek acknowledged. Most players are in their 40s and combine the trip with a visit to children studying or living in Israel.

Last year, a 24-year-old from Florida made aliyah after the tournament, and the Ottawa team was bolstered by the presence of ex-NHLer Shawn Rivers.

Interest in the event is growing not only in Finland and South Africa. Spodek is hopeful that a Baptist church from Kenora, Ont., near the Manitoba border, will participate in the 2012 event as part of a mission to Israel.

Last year, about a dozen non-Jews took part in the hockey event.

A skater takes to the ice at the Canada Centre in Metulla

The tournament is "a feel-good story from Israel" that leaves a positive impression, he said. Following an innovation last year, participants will have the chance to make sandwiches for Leket Israel, the country's national food bank. "We add another component to give back to society and make it a more meaningful experience," Spodek said.

And in recognition of the late Gideon Lee, who coached Israel's first national hockey team in IIHF tournaments, the Gideon Lee Cup will be awarded the championship team.

• • •

Spodek's passion for hockey started at an early age and was not atypical for a kid from Toronto. Although he didn't play organized hockey, he was a "rink rat" who kept his equipment in an old "jalopy" and who played in pickup games around the city, he said.

Six years ago, Montreal businessman Alan Maislin came up with the idea for a tournament for players over 35. Spodek, who lives in Zichron Ya'akov, just south of Haifa, handled the arrangements in Israel and eventually took over full control of the tournament.

Of course, it's not his only hockey exposure in Israel. He plays in and organizes a Thursday-night league in Metulla for about 32 players. Forty-five want to play.

"I had to say, 'Sorry, I don't have room for you,'" he said on the phone from Israel.

From his home south of Haifa, it takes him two hours to make the drive to Metulla, but he doesn't come the farthest. There are guys who spend four hours on the road – one way – to play in the Thursday-night games, he said.

There's also a Friday-night league consisting largely of ex-Russians and local Metulla kids who play more competitively, but some are migrating to the Thursday-night game.

Spodek also organizes two children's skating programs and this year added a Chanukah skating program in which youngsters from as far as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv are bused in.

Equipment, especially for kids, is sorely needed. For more information or to register for the tournament, visit israelhockeyassociation.org or e-mail Spodek at israel_hockey@hotmail.com.

University drops Helen Thomas award after 'antisemitic remarks'

JTA

DETROIT — Helen Thomas made more anti-Zionist comments in a public forum, causing her alma mater to drop an award named for the longtime journalist.

"We are owned by the propagandists against the Arabs. There's no question about that," Thomas said Dec. 2 during a speech to an Arab-American group in Dearborn, Mich. "Congress, the White House and Hollywood, Wall Street, are owned by the Zionists. No question in my opinion. They put their money where their mouth is."

She added, "We're being pushed into a wrong direction in every way."

In response Wayne State University, from which Thomas graduated in 1942, announced the day after the address that it would no longer present the Helen Thomas Spirit of Diversity in the Media Award. The university released a statement reading in part that it "strongly condemns the anti-semitic remarks made by Helen Thomas."

Helen Thomas

The Anti-Defamation League issued a short statement saying Thomas "clearly, unequivocally revealed herself as a vulgar anti-Semite."

Thomas, 90, a Detroit native who is of Lebanese descent, also said during the speech that she stands by the controversial comments about Israel that led to her resignation as a correspondent for Hearst News Service earlier this year.

Thomas resigned in June after saying on the sidelines of the first Jewish American Heritage Month event at the White House that Jews should "get the hell out of Palestine," in an interview with Rabbi David Nesenoff, a blogger with RabbiLive.com. The exchange was captured on video. "Go home," Thomas said.

Asked to elaborate on where the Jews in Israel should go, Thomas said, "Poland, Germany and America, and everywhere else."

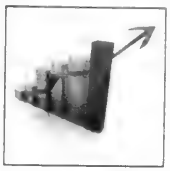
Thomas, often referred to as the dean of the White House press corps, had been a White House correspondent since the presidency of John F. Kennedy. Her place in the front row during White House news briefings was sacrosanct for years, complete with a plaque on it bearing her name – the only such reserved seat in the room.

After servings as a correspondent for United Press International since 1943, she joined Hearst about a decade ago and became a columnist.

Young entrepreneur markets folding shoe

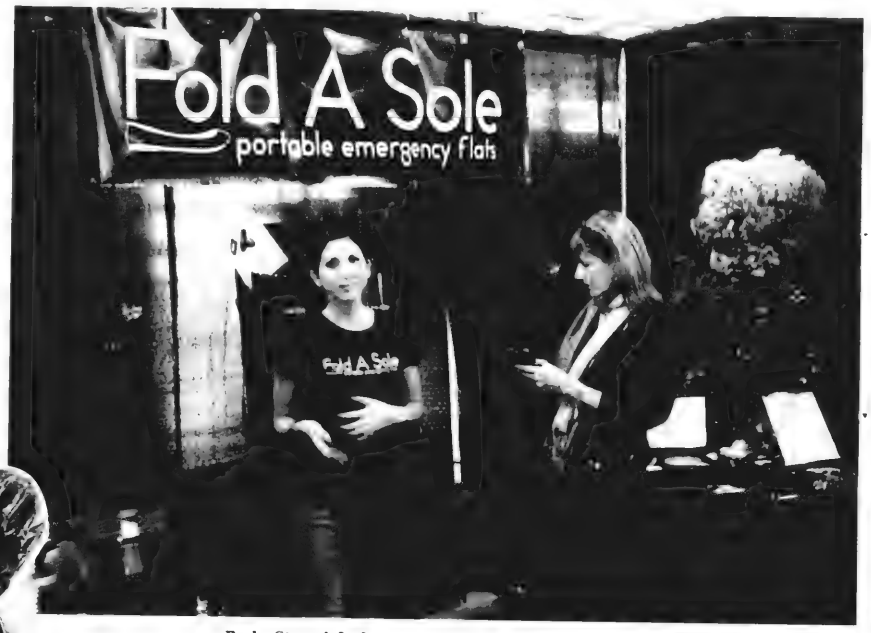
By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It's a mystery that has puzzled guys for generations. You arrive at a formal event – a wedding, bar mitzvah, party – and your wife or girlfriend is decked out from head to toe. She's looking great, not least because of those attractive high-heeled shoes she's wearing. But if you're inclined to notice such things, and which guy isn't, you see that somehow, magically, by the middle of the evening when the DJ cranks up the music, she's no longer wearing the blister-inducing footwear but instead has switched into some sort of "flat," resembling a ballet slipper.



Wha'happened?

It turns out women have been packing sensible shoes in their purses and making the switch when guys weren't watching. Now, a young entrepreneur is promoting a product that takes the shoe switch one step further. Becky Stern, 21, has started a business that offers elegant and comfortable ladies' flats that fold in half for even greater portability and convenience.



Becky Stern, left, demonstrating her product at a trade show.

Called Fold A Sole, the company started business less than a year ago with a simple product line: "Flats that fold in half with a split sole that goes into a women's purse. The case pops up [and turns into] a bag and you can put heels in them. They're portable emergency flats," Stern said.

Originally intended for the simchah scene, the shoe has also been put to other uses. "Realtors buy them, people buy them for the winter for something to wear when they remove their boots, and people use them for travel on airplanes," she said.

"Everyone loves the product and people are buying multiple gifts, sometimes for the whole bridal party," she added.

At a recent trade show at a private girls school, "we sold tons of shoes to mothers and daughters." They appeal to consumers from age 16 to 60.

Stern acknowledges that for many women going to a formal event, "fashion trumps comfort" – at least at the beginning. But when the footwear gets too uncomfortable, "a lot of girls are taking off their shoes at weddings and bar mitzvahs and putting on woolly socks."

Woolly socks?

"They're giveaways at bar mitzvahs," she explained. "Heels are uncomfortable. They really hurt your feet."

Stern contends that wearing a folding sole doesn't take anything away from a woman's fashion statement.

"They're styled after a very fashionable shoe, Tory Burch," she said.

The shoe sells for $30 at retail stores – they're currently available in about two dozen boutiques in Toronto, including boa apparel and living 2 – and $25 online (www.foldasole.com).

Fold A Sole offers two options – a champagne-coloured shoe and a black version – and they're selling.

"We'll keep expanding," she said. "We went through our first shipment really fast and now we're on our second shipment."

Stern, who studied business at McGill University, got the idea for the product after struggling at weddings with uncomfortable footwear. She learned of a similar shoe in Europe, where vending machines sell disposable flats. However, those items were far from the quality she was looking for and so, with the assistance of her mother, Karen Taylor, she started the business. Product development took two years during which they negotiated with a factory in China before they agreed on a final product that was up to her standards.

She and her mother share the workload, though mom handles most of the financial aspects of the business, while Stern likes to focus on sales and marketing.

She also promotes the product through social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

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Email your information to "contest@thecjn.ca" Re: **"Hard Love" Contest**, or mail to: The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4 or fax to: 416-391-0949.

Employees and family members of The CJN and Teatron Jewish Theatre are not eligible to enter.

Barney's Version is entertaining from start to finish

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Richard Lewis has finessed Mordecai Richler's autobiographical novel, *Barney's Version*, into a richly satisfying movie featuring outrageous characters, racy situations and crackling dialogue.

Screened at the Toronto International Film Festival and opening here on Dec. 24, this 132-minute picture is broadly faithful to the late Richler's comic sensibilities.

Spanning more than three decades and set in Montreal, Rome and New York, it revolves around the larger-than-life Barney Panofsy (Paul Giamatti), a philandering, cigar-smoking, whisky-swilling Montreal Jewish television producer who ruefully looks back at his checkered past.

The first scene, which unfolds in Montreal toward the end of his somewhat dissolute life, pretty much sets the tone. Pining for his third wife, Miriam, Panofsky, now in his mid-60s, calls her in the middle of the night through an alcohol-induced haze.

The timing of his call speaks volumes about his judgment. After Miriam's husband tells him to go fly a kite, Barney threatens to disseminate nude photographs of his beloved. That's what kind of a guy he is – rude, crude and vulgar.

After this coarse but lively sequence, *Barney's Version* flashes back to Rome, circa 1974, where Barney is holding court in a café.

Clara (Rachelle Lefevre), his red-headed first wife, is a handful. Pregnant with someone else's child, she is in a state of denial concerning her supposed Jewish background.

The film gathers momentum as it shifts to Montreal, a year down the road. Barney, now a producer for Totally Unnecessary Productions, a purveyor of pure, unadulterated shlock, is talking with his father, Israel (Dustin Hoffman), who claims that his career as a Montreal police detective was sidetracked by antisemitism. The truth is that his inappropriate conduct may have had more to do with his place in the pecking order.

Paul Giamatti, left, as Barney, with Dustin Hoffman as his father Israel in *Barney's Version*

The ensuing scenes focus on Barney's ill-advised marriage to his second wife, Mrs. P (Minnie Driver), a pampered, brassy Jewish princess who boasts ad nauseum about her McGill University MA degree.

At Barney's raucous wedding, during which Israel shocks the wife of a local rabbi with an obscene joke, his eye wanders yet again, first to an NHL hockey game on TV and then to a gorgeous-looking guest who turns out to be Miriam (Rosamund Pike).

Unabashedly smitten by Miriam, a creature with a shapely figure, silken hair, alabaster skin and luminous eyes, Barney makes a concerted play for her. For the first time in his life, he is truly and seriously in love.

"Run away with me," he says, glaringly oblivious to the fact that he has just gotten married.

Not unexpectedly, Barney's marriage to Mrs. P goes from bad to worse. Israel, offering "paternal wisdom" to his wayward son, fully comprehends Barney's marital woes: "You want to screw, she wants to talk."

Haven't we heard this before?

Fate intervenes on Barney's behalf. After he catches an old friend (Scott Speedman) in the act of making love to the adulterous Mrs. P, Barney's eyes light up and a smile creases his face in triumph. Finally, he has legal grounds to divorce Mrs. P.

The plot grows thick with suspense after Barney's friend dies in a quirky accident and an antisemitic cop blames Barney for his untimely death.

In the wake of his divorce from Mrs. P, Barney woos the elusive Miriam and captures her heart. Barney's success in achieving domestic bliss, capped by fatherhood, does not go unnoticed by his father. "You did good, boychik," says Israel.

Being a serial philanderer, Barney succumbs to the pleasures of the flesh, committing a carnal indiscretion that costs him his marriage. The onset of dementia adds to his travails.

Thanks in part to Michael Konyves' adept script, *Barney's Version* is a vivid fun fest.

Giamatti, playing Barney in all his phases as a St. Urbain Street bon vivant, provides the crowning touches. His measured performance climaxes in a scene in which he rages against his fate.

Hoffman, displaying a mix of cynicism and tenderness, in just right as Israel, while Pike is radiant as Miriam.

In cameo appearances, the Canadian movie directors Denys Arcand and David Cronenberg respectively portray a waiter and a director.

Robert Lantos, the producer of *Barney's Version*, also shows up in a cameo role. Evidently, he cannot resist the temptation to step into the film, which is easily one of his best.

Barney's Version, roaring with wit and overflowing with chutzpah, is entertaining from start to finish.

Richler, one suspects, would have approved of it.

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An intimate portrait of Richler

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

Was Mordecai Richler a courageous seeker of truth and justice in the Jewish tradition or a mean-spirited polemicist out of his depth when it came to Quebec?

A new documentary film on Mordecai Richler directed by veteran Montreal journalist Francine Pelletier offers an intimate and generous portrait of the man through interviews with a score or more of people, from childhood friends to other writers such as Margaret Atwood to sovereigntist Jean-François Lisée.

Most are friendly and all are thoughtful as they reflect on Richler almost 10 years after his death.

The one-hour *Mordecai Richler: The Last of the Wild Jews* will air on Bravo, Dec. 19 at 8 p.m., and will be repeated Dec. 25 at 7 p.m.

Pelletier positions Richler among the brash (mainly) second-generation American Jewish writers and comedians of his age (and somewhat older) whose frankness about being Jewish shook up their elders' historic fear of drawing attention to themselves.

The expression "wild Jews" was coined by early 20th-century Russian Jewish writer Isaak Babel who longed for a new bolder, more manly Jew.

Co-written with recent Richler biographer Charles Foran, the film, like Foran's book, is less about Richler's literary legacy than his complex, and in many ways unattractive, personality.

Why did he first rebel against and, some would charge, ridicule the Jewish community, then belittle the burgeoning Canadian cultural identity, and, in his last and fiercest crusade, skewer Quebec nationalism in the most wounding way possible?

Three comments stand out in the film.

His widow, the gracious and devoted Florence, says, without a trace of resentment, that it was "It was always understood that Mordecai and his work came first, and me second."

New York-based writer Adam Gopnik observes that Richler equated Quebec nationalism with the "folkloric fascism of Europe," of which Jews were a target, and he never wanted to understand francophone Quebecers' view of history.

Richler's good friend, Gazette cartoonist Terry Mosher (Aislin), comments that Richler's battle against the separatists and language laws began with an admirable "righteous indignation," but Richler "went too far and it backfired on him," and he thankfully returned to writing literature before his death at 70.

What's clear is that Richler had a very different private persona from the abrasive public one. Florence reveals that she grew used to his long silences even at home. Others describe him as a shy person, uncomfortable in social situations. To his friends and immediate family, he was loyal and loving.

Continued on page 38

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

HOLY BLOSSOM STAGECRAFT COMPANY PRESENTS ITS FIRST ORIGINAL PLAY

For the first time in its 16-year history, Holy Blossom Temple's Stagecraft Company is presenting an original play that has never before been staged.

The play is *The Last Days of Rachel Samuel*, written by longtime Stagecraft member and director **Michael Ryval**. Actors **Judy Kent**, **Anna Grosman** and **Harry Hochman** take on the principal roles.

The Last Days of Rachel Samuel examines the strained relationship between Rachel and her mother, Klara, a Holocaust survivor, as the former is dying in a hospital bed. As Rachel recounts her troubled relationship with her mother in flashback, her brother Joseph provides another perspective. In several other scenes, Klara attends a class for Holocaust survivors who are writing their memoirs.

"While the play explores a number of serious themes, it does have many lighter moments as Rachel, an incorrigible joke teller, is constantly telling off-colour jokes to cheer up her family, friends and herself," said Ryval, who is also directing the play. "The humour really shines through and speaks to Rachel's indomitable spirit."

Ryval, a freelance writer, decided to try his hand at playwriting after directing several Stagecraft productions. He based the play on his personal experience.

"It was very exciting and quite a challenge to present this story in a way that respected the family members who lived through the experience and was also meaningful for those who may, or may not, share the same circumstances," he said.

Tickets are $18 and $15. Holy Blossom Temple, 1950 Bathurst St. Jan. 20, 22 and 23. 416-789-3291, ext. 511.

* * *

Israeli Romantic Drama: Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre presents the Canadian première of *Hard Love*, a romantic drama by Israeli playwright **Motti Lerner**. Actors **Tara Nicodemo** and **Howard Rosenstein** play a couple in Jerusalem's haredi Mea Shearim who reunite after divorcing 20 years earlier. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Jan. 5 to 16, 2011. $19 to $48. 416-781-5527. www.teatrontheatre.com

* * *

Names in the News: Teen pop star **Justin Bieber**, whose hometown is Stratford, Ont., is reportedly scheduled to perform a concert in Tel Aviv in April. Israeli producer **Marcel Avraham**, who brought **Elton John**, **Rod Stewart**, **Metallica** and **Leonard Cohen** to Israel, has been chosen to handle the concert, which is part of Bieber's world tour. Some 60,000 fans are expected to attend.

Another celebrity to visit Israel in recent months is actor **Leonardo DiCaprio**, who is reportedly considering converting to Judaism. DiCaprio has already visited his longtime girlfriend, Israeli supermodel **Bar Refaeli**, several times; rumour has it the couple plan to marry.

No, it's not a dream. Leonardo DiCaprio is reportedly considering converting to Judaism.

* * *

At the Galleries: *Polar Visions*, a group of photographs by **Mark Loren Freedman** is on view until Dec. 31 in the Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space of the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. www.mnjcc.org

For 9-year-old actor, work is 'really just fun'

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

At nine years old, Carly Tamer is already a veteran actor, currently touring North America with the cast of *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical*.

Carly, who hails from Long Island, N.Y., plays Cindy Lou Who and gets to sing the solo number *Santa for a Day*.

"It's not even like work. It is really just fun," Carly says. She is enjoying making new friends in the cast and says what she loves about *The Grinch* is performing and the reaction of the audiences.

"When the show starts, it is like you are opening up a Dr. Seuss book. It is amazing. The costumes are crazy, fun and colourful… You feel like you are in a cartoon," she says.

"On my wig I have a big heart at the top, I have a huge bow on my butt and I have over-sized shoes that are pink. The costume is light, and you get used to wearing the shoes."

Carly Tamer plays Cindy Lou Who in *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical.*

Carly began acting when she was six years old. "I started three years ago because I love to sing, act and dance," she says. "I got a manager, an agent, and I went to lots of auditions, and finally I got my first show. It was *Team Umizoomi*, that is actually on Nickelodeon now."

While on tour with *The Grinch*, Carly, whose favourite school subjects are math and writing, has taken a leave from her regular school in Commack, near her Long Island home in East Northport. She's also missing her Hebrew classes at Temple Beth David, also in Commack, where she's currently studying toward her bat mitzvah.

"We have a tutor on tour with us, we do school four days a week for usually four hours each day, she says. "There are three other kids, because it is double-casted. There is one other girl [Brooke Boyd] in the show that plays Cindy Lou Who and two that play Annie Who.

"We're on tour for two months and we've already done a month, then I go back to my regular school. It is not really hard to go back, but sometimes I get ahead of work and sometimes I get a little behind, but I just spoke to my school friend and we are pretty much on target."

Carly plans to make a career out of acting and will continue to audition for new parts once she gets home. Her past credits include performing on *Sesame Street*, which she found fun. She especially enjoyed talking to the Muppets and thought it was cool to meet the puppeteers who are hidden from the public.

Carly says she loves acting, whether it is on stage or on television or in movies. She's also completed a few indie films, including a yet-to-be released movie starring Richard Chamberlain called *We Are the Hartmans*.

"The last show I did was *Fiddler on the Roof* – it was at a professional theatre on Long Island. I played Bielka, the youngest daughter. It was fun. It starred Eddie Mecca from *Laverne and Shirley*. From doing the show I learned a little bit about how my great-grandparents lived and about Jewish tradition," says Carly.

She likes to go on field trips with her school, she likes to jump rope, colour, create stories and write. She lives with her mom, her father, Albert, and her two hockey-playing brothers, Dillon, 17, and Daniel, 14, who are looking forward to seeing their sister perform during the Toronto leg of the show's tour, right after they visit the Hockey Hall of Fame.

The Grinch boasts a cast of 25, including Icelandic film and stage actor Stefán Karl – best known for playing Robbie Rotten on Nickelodeon's *LazyTown* – who stars as the Christmas-hating Grinch.

Max the Dog narrates the tale of the miserable Grinch, whose heart is "two sizes too small," and his attempt to wreak havoc on the tiny town of Whoville by trying to steal Christmas.

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical is at the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts from Dec. 17 until Jan. 2, 2011. For more information, visit www.sonycentre.ca. Tickets are available at ticketmaster.ca.

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New CD reflects singer/songwriter's outlook on life

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

"Always look on the bright side of life." That famous line from a Monty Python song describes Toronto singer songwriter Tamara Miller perfectly.

The songs on both her CDs, her debut *60 Seconds* and her new one, *Changing Lanes*, tend to be uplifting. Miller says her songs come from deep inside her and reflect her positive outlook.

"I always believe where I'm going on my journey and I try to show that encouragement to others. I write about my instincts and on what comes naturally. I have lots of songs of encouragement and on going after what you want."

Changing Lanes, released in October, contains seven original guitar and piano pop-oriented songs with such refreshingly upbeat titles as *Somethings Gotta Go Right* and *Everyday's A Better Tomorrow*.

Miller, 31, started playing the piano when she was six, and all the songs on her 2008 debut were written on the piano. This time around, she decided to write three songs on the guitar, which gives her a more textured sound.

"I found I wrote very differently on guitar versus the piano," the York University graduate says. "On the piano, I felt I was going in the same direction. With guitar, I find the style's a little bit different and I come out with different melodies than if I was to write the same song on piano. I find I have greater freedom on guitar."

No matter how they were written, her songs are melodic and radio friendly. "I am really excited about *Changing Lanes*. I worked with producer David Martin (singer of the Juno Award-winning band Hemingway Corner), and it was a great experience to see how my music's evolved."

The songs on *Changing Lanes* sound more mature than the ones on *60 Seconds* and deal mostly with love, life and relationships. "Musically, I think I've evolved a bit. I've moved beyond the boundaries of my first CD," she said. "I think I dug a little deeper in the lyrics and the music."

This is clearly evident on songs like the title track and on *A New Direction*. Her songs have a soft rock, Sarah McLachlan-like feel, with slow, building melodies and catchy choruses, and often evoke Tori Amos or Chantal Kreviazuk.

Miller said she learned a lot in the two years since *60 Seconds*, making things much easier this time around. "The first album was a stepping stone and opened new opportunities for me."

Among the opportunities she's actively pursuing these days are television and movie placements. The title track from her first album caught the attention of producers and was featured on the television show *Degrassi The Next Generation*. She has since signed with an agency in Los Angeles to help her in this endeavour.

"They're promoting my music to different shows and seeing where my songs could fit," she said. "It's the direction that I want to go."

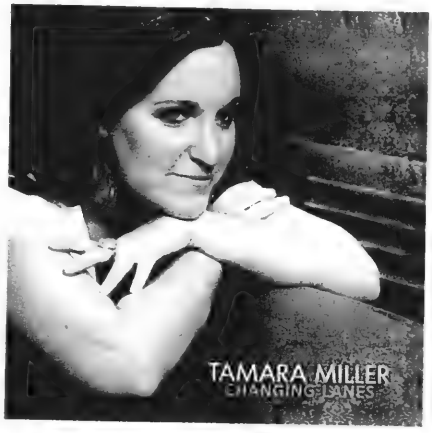
Miller has been spending a fair bit of time in the United States. In addition to signing with the L.A. firm, she also performed at the Temecula Valley International Film and Music Festival in California, an organization that nurtures and showcases independent film and music talent.

"It was so amazing in L.A., being where everything is happening and meeting so many different artists from around the world. It's been very inspiring."

Two songs from her first album were just released on an American compilation CD *Show Me Love*, produced by the website roses-lacure.com to raise funds to fight cancer. The album showcases Grammy Award winners and emerging talent. "It's really exciting. It's a nice thing to be a part of, with the proceeds going to fight cancer."

This year, Miller won top spot twice in a monthly online voting competition, makeastar.com, in the best female solo artist category.

You can sample several of her songs on her myspace page (myspace/tamaramiller.com). Miller's CDs can be purchased from Amazon or digitally from iTunes.



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Intimate portrayal of Richler

Continued from page 36

Much is made of the influence on the young Richler of his maternal grandfather, the revered chassidic Rabbi Yudel Rosenberg, who was an expert on the mythical Golem, a supernatural protector of disempowered Jews. Richler grew up when antisemitism was still commonplace.

Globe and Mail literary editor Martin Levin posits that, eventually, Canadian Jews came to embrace Richler as "a cultural icon," realizing that his often unflattering portrayals of Jews ultimately allowed them to be more comfortable with their identity.

Canadian nationalists also forgave him long ago, but no such reconciliation has taken place with francophone Quebecers, the target of his last and fiercest crusade.

In an interview, Pelletier doubted that will ever change much. Older people have made up their minds, and young Quebecers aren't very familiar with Richler. Pelletier isn't aware of any French school that includes his books in its curriculum.

She had difficulty even finding a narrator for the French version of the documentary. Well-known actor Guy Nadon initially hesitated before accepting the job, she said.

Pelletier, who works in both French and English, describes herself as "not a typical Québécois" in that she has read Richler's novels and "knew him a bit."

"I was relieved that some of the English [like Mosher, Gopnik and former *Globe and Mail* columnist Rick Salutin] say they think Richler didn't get it right [about Quebec]. I was afraid I'd have all the English saying how courageous he was, and all the French how terrible."

The graphic novel is a logical innovation

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

In 1859, British literary critic David Masson noted that something astounding was happening to English literature. Two novels were being published in London each week, Masson observed, making it impossible for readers to keep up with the entirety of modern fiction. Henceforth, each person would have to hack his own path through the tangled jungle of literature, he noted. No two people would have the same experience.

Today, the pace of literary production has vastly increased, and we seem to have far less time and inclination for the sort of books that the Victorians called "triple deckers" – *Vanity Fair*, *Anna Karenina*, *David Copperfield* and the like. Back then, reading was the primary form of entertainment. Today, we have movies, television, the Internet, iPods and many other distractions.

As a reader I admit I cut corners occasionally, but always with care: reading cannot be done in a hurry. "I took a speedreading course and read *War and Peace* in 20 minutes," Woody Allen once quipped. "It involves Russia."

Given the attention span of the modern reader, the graphic novel seems a logical innovation. Since a picture is worth 1,000 words, the format delivers narrative information in a much more concentrated form.

The term became popular after it appeared on the cover of Will Eisner's book *A Contract with God* in 1978, and gained more respectability after Art Spiegelman's 1986 book *Maus* won the Pulitzer Prize. A debate still rages, however, whether the term is just a fancy way of saying "comic book" but with a more expensive price tag.

By coincidence, three books in the "graphic-novel" style reached my desk in November. Upon further inspection, only one is a true graphic novel: the others are a glorified travelogue and a visual memoir. No matter: I'm pleased to review all three in this space.

Although I disagree ideologically with it, I must commend Sarah Glidden's book, *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* (Vertigo), as being sensitively written, elegantly drawn, and charming despite its author's primary impetus to determine the extent of Israel's guilt in the face of international condemnation.

Glidden is, after all, only 30 years old, and this is her first published work. She makes her first journey to Israel under the auspices of the Birthright program. She records her travels through Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, Galilee, Masada and other historic locales in a progression of pleasing, photography-influenced watercolours (presented in full colour). In so many ways, she captures the flavour and visual look of Israel.

Glidden, alas, carries a great many harsh criticisms of the Jewish nation in her baggage. She regards much of what she hears on the Birthright trip as "propaganda," but becomes increasingly disconcerted to find alternate opinions, and justifications for Israel, that make sense. Despite herself, she finds that she increasingly identifies with sympathy to Israel's existential conundrum. The trip forces her to challenge her beliefs and her own identity as a Jew.

• • •

Two Cents Plain: My Brooklyn Boyhood (Bloomsbury), by Martin Lemelman, is a black-and-white graphic memoir by a child of Holocaust survivors who

operate a candy store in Brooklyn. Lemelman is sensitive, poignant, nostalgic, funny, bitterly ironic and caustic as he recounts his childhood in a series of cleverly-drawn vignettes.

The comic-book format does not clash with the serious and complex subject matter – a fact that has already been well established through such master works as *Maus* and Toronto artist Bernice Eisenstein's 2007 graphic novel *I Was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*.

Lemelman conveys the sights, sounds, smells and impressions of his Brooklyn boyhood and his family history in a manner that seems just as vivid and immediate as anything by Marcel Proust.

• • •

For readers of the weekly *Forward* newspaper, Ben Katchor's cartoons are addictive. He presents an offbeat fantasy world that is based on the known world but that serves to demonstrate how bizarre the real world actually is. The author of two former graphic novels, Katchor has just produced *The Cardboard Valise* (Pantheon Press). His first new book in more than a decade, it is scheduled to be published in February. *The Cardboard Valise* seems more fantastical than his previous work. It involves an exotically far-flung place called Outer Canthus, which remains just as New York-centric as all other places he has drawn. Full of images of urban decay, his work remains as quirky, funny and surreal as a Roz Chast drawing in *The New Yorker*. The book is coming from the Pantheon Press in February 2011.

• • •

Those in search of a more objective, traditionally written and presented history of New York may enjoy Richard Goldstein's *Helluva Town: The Story of New York City During World War II* (Free Press). The cover shows a massive wartime rally in Times Square centred around a giant replica of the Statue of Liberty. The book is a compelling social history of the era and the city's contribution to the national war effort.

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ESPN's Shulman highlights participants at hoops classic

By BEN FISHER
Special to The CJN

The winners of the Jewish National Fund's (JNF) first annual Hoops Classic included teams known as "South Beach Talent," "Sub Please" and "The Basket Cases" – not that it really mattered.

While those teams may have earned themselves handsome trophies as well as bragging rights heading into next year, the day was all about a group of hoops lovers getting involved in the community while having some fun in support of Israel.

"The turnout we've received is phenomenal," says Ari Ditkovsky, a director and committee member for the event. "It's great to see so many people from the community raising money and contributing to a deserving cause."

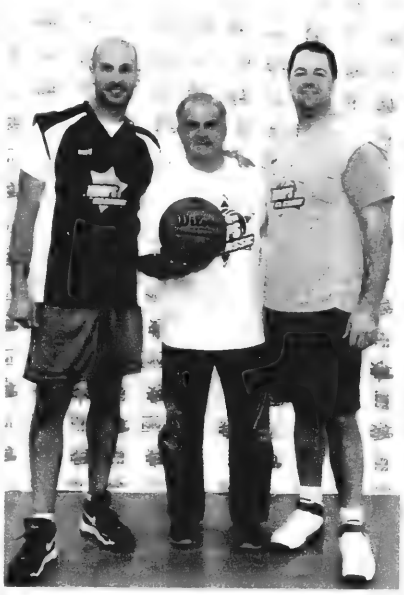
The event, billed as "100 per cent Israel," saw approximately 200 men and women selected to one of 19 teams in three separate categories take part in a five-on-five tournament. All competitors entered the tournament having raised funds for the JNF, with proceeds going to the building of a playground and recreational area for children in Moshav Rehov, a disadvantaged region in northern Israel.

Perhaps the best known of the 200 participants to take to the court for the Nov. 28 event at Hoopdome in Downsview Park was ESPN play-by-play man and Thornhill native Dan Shulman.

An actuarial science major at the University of Western Ontario, Shulman found his love for sports broadcasting through the university radio station and later caught his break at what is now the Fan 590. After stints with the Blue Jays and at TSN, he made the jump to ESPN, where he has since risen to prominence as a play-by-play voice for NCAA basketball, NBA basketball and Major League Baseball.

Even as a high-profile sports personality, Shulman was eager to take part in the Classic.

"When my neighbour, Josh Cooper [JNF Toronto's executive director and one of the event organizers], asked me to play, I jumped at the chance," says *Sports Illustrated*'s play-by-play voice of the decade for the 2000s. "I visited Israel with my family last year and am anxious to do my part in helping support it."



Getting ready for a tournament tip-off are, from left, broadcaster Dan Shulman, JNF Toronto president Nathan Disenhouse and JNF Toronto executive-director Josh Cooper.

Shulman's trip to Israel – his first visit since 1980 and his first with his wife and three sons – came in celebration of his son Alex's bar mitzvah.

Family is why Shulman continues to live in Thornhill despite having spent much of the last 15 years travelling throughout the United States and abroad as part of his broadcasting duties with ESPN.

"[Thornhill] is home," Shulman says. "My wife and I are happy here, my kids grew up here and there's no reason to uproot now."

The 43-year old's ties to the community run deep. Ask what Judaism means to him and he'll likely tell you that it's "deeply embedded" within him, and that he was named after a relative who died in the Holocaust.

It's why he was undoubtedly proud to be a member of the Chai Fives, a team in the 40+ category that didn't do much on court (they finished with a 1-2 record), but collectively raised $14,376 for Moshav Rehov to win a dinner personally catered by noted chef Rose Reisman. The team's contributions went a long way helping the event reach its total of more than $65,000 raised, well over the target goal of $50,000.

This is particularly encouraging for Ditkovsky and the event's organizers, who are already looking ahead to the future.

"We plan on making this the first of many to come," says Ditkovsky. "I'm blown away by the support everyone's showed and hopefully it'll only get bigger and better moving forward."

JNF Hoops Classic committee members get into the spirit. Seen here, from left, Danielle Rutenberg, Alex Hennick and Linoy Hazan.

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Int'l team knits tuques for IDF soldiers

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Shulamit Besser was on vacation in Florida when she noticed someone by the pool knitting what she thought were kippot. After speaking to the woman, she found out she was actually making hats for soldiers in the Israel Defence Forces.

From that came Besser's involvement in the Hats for Israeli Soldiers project, an initiative started by Channah Koppel in Israel.

Hats for Israeli Soldiers consists of women from all over the world knitting black wool tuques for soldiers serving in the IDF. To date, more than 12,000 tuques have been knitted and delivered to the soldiers.

Of the more than 12,000, Besser and her team of knitters – she has about 10 so far, she said – have knitted 113 hats.

"I would say I've done two-thirds of it, and the other people have done one-third of it. But we're not having a competition. I don't care how many they do as long as they do it," she said.

Hats for Israeli Soldiers started three years ago when Koppel's eldest son was serving a five-month winter term in Hermon, in northwest Israel, as a paratrooper. The first shipment of 10 hats went to the soldiers in her son's unit when he mentioned they were cold.

"Soon, other soldiers saw the hats and wanted to have them, too," Koppel told *The CJN* in September.

Besser, who was born in Israel but now lives in Toronto, saw the project as an opportunity to thank the soldiers.

"I got really excited because I'm an Israeli – Israeli born – myself. I don't live in Israel so I thought, well, this is something I can do. I love knitting.

"Every time I see somebody, I talk to them and recruit them. As long as we can do it, as long as people want to do this, I certainly want to continue with it – because I think it's very worthwhile. While I don't live [in Israel], I do it for them [the soldiers]. I feel like I'm doing something," she added.

Besser's first shipment of hats, which numbered 60, was sent out in the summer. More recently, another batch arrived in Israel on Oct. 31. They do their best to send the hats with people travelling to Israel in order to avoid duty charges.

The wool to make the hats comes from a company in New York that sells the material to the knitters at cost. Besser's contact in Chicago, who also knits the hats, set up the arrangement with the company.

The hats must be made from machine-washable plain black wool in order to comply with army regulations.

Once Koppel receives the hats, which come from places as far away as Australia and New Zealand, she attaches a Hebrew label to each one. Loosely translated into English, it says, "Knit for you with love and warmth."

"It has grown into this incredible network of kind and giving people," Koppel said, "and it really started from nothing. It just happened."

"Whatever [people] do it's a good effort," Besser added.

For more information on the Hats for Israeli Soldiers project, visit http://hatsforisraelisoldiers.blogspot.com. To join Besser's circle of knitters, e-mail roslyn@atlanticbb.net.

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3 tbsp. white or black sesame seeds, toasted

Combine first 6 ingredients in shallow bowl. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Pour into resealable plastic bag. Makes 3/4 c marinade. Add cream cheese. Seal bag. Turn to coat. Marinate in refrigerator for 3 days, turning occasionally. Remove cream cheese. Press sesame seeds into cheese block until completely coated. Place on serving plate. Serves 8 to 10.

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REMEMBERING OUR YESTERDAYS

By BILL GLADSTONE

TORONTO ZIONISTS, 1910

This wonderful historic photo of Toronto's leading Zionists of a century ago comes from the Ottawa Jewish Archives. The three at right on the porch are Ida Siegel, Dr. Louis J. Breslin and Moses Gelber. Among the others are Dr. John Shayne, the brothers Maurice and Isidore Goldstick, and possibly Dr. Samuel Levine. If you recognize anyone else, please e-mail me at billgladstone@sympatico.ca. This is my last photo in this space, so thanks to the many readers who shared their photos, stories and enthusiasm with me. Feel free to write at any time.

Christian envy?

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Christian envy. Does it exist?

When I was a child growing up in Kitchener, Ont., this time of year was particularly hard. While our family celebrated Chanukah with zeal and excitement, for some reason, it wasn't enough.

I wanted presents, and the big trees and the lights. Or did I?

URBAN WRITER

I spoke to my friend Bela Middleman, who grew up in a traditional Jewish home in Oak Park, Mich., to gauge my feelings and memories and determine if there are other Jews who felt the same envy.

"I couldn't understand why the Christian culture seemed so much more important to society than the Jewish one," the 20-year-old said. "Everything turned into Christmas. The stores, radio, TV – even the way people dressed and raised money for charity."

When I pressed her on why all of this remains so powerful in her memory, she replied quite honestly. "I guess it was the only time in my childhood when I felt I was a minority," she said. "It made me feel foreign, and displaced."

I understand Bela's feelings. Really, Christmas time wasn't dramatically different to me than Chanukah. There was just more of it. They're similarly festive holidays, children get presents on both, and, overall, the two can be fun and meaningful.

But what I really remember – what really bothered me – was when my classmates at Shepherd Public School sang *Silent Night* while I sat quietly on my own. I also recall Miss Darling giving me math equations to do while the other kids glued sparkles, sequins and pipe-cleaners on construction paper to create Christmas decorations.

I stood out, and I didn't like it.

I was different. I was the Jew, and I felt everyone's little eyes upon me, even when they weren't. (I'd felt that same feeling in kindergarten when I wore a kippah to school and was chased by bigger kids yelling anti-semitic epithets at me. That changed, however, when I told my father at the end of the year that I would no longer wear my kippah to school. I was too fearful.)

I wonder if any readers feel the same way.

Living in Toronto, Canada, in 2010 is not at all similar to living in an early 1900s shtetl in Poland. We're not frightened by sleigh bells ringing or carolers singing *O Tannenbaum*. We're not scared of midnight mass and its profound rituals. The empty streets, cul de sacs and avenues on Christmas Eve don't make us anxious.

Christmas is, however, a reminder of the dominant Christian culture we live in. I do recall clearly Ian Dunbar and his five siblings opening their presents and the Christian envy I had, particularly when he received an awesome bumper-pool game.

But what was most difficult was that I wasn't part of it all – the prevailing festivity – because I was the Jewish kid.

Like my friend Bela said, it was that time of year when Christians were Christians and Jews were Jews.

"Christmas makes me feel that the community I come from doesn't have a voice in popular culture," Bela concluded.

So what does a Jew do on Christmas to feel less "foreign"?

If you're a doctor, you'll likely take an extra shift so your Christian colleagues can celebrate the holiday with their loved ones.

Others will eat Chinese food, take in a movie and joke to the Jew standing in line next to them, "Maybe after the flick we can pop open a bottle of shmaltz herring."

Christian envy? Does it exist?

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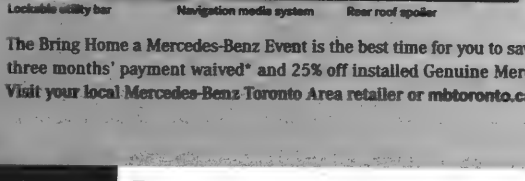
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This Week

National

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Federation seeks cash to start building new JCC. *Page 6*

Toronto doctor volunteers in Haiti. *Page 14*

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Writer conveys his unexplainable love for Russia. *Page 34*

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Let Gilad go home

Orna Shimoni, second from left, one of the founders of the movement that urged Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon a decade ago, joins Gilad Shalit's parents, Aviva and Noam, in Jerusalem. Shimoni holds a life-size paper cut-out doll of Gilad outside the office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Shalit has been held captive in Gaza by Hamas since June 2006. *[Flash90 photo]*

CIC exec named to lead new agency

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

A plan to restructure the landscape of Jewish advocacy and consolidate all of its parts into one unified entity is not on hold, despite recent reports to the contrary, community officials say.

In fact, the initiative is "absolutely on schedule," and a new CEO has been found to lead the yet-to-be-named organization, according to Steven Cummings, chair of the umbrella group Canadian Council for Jewish and Israel Advocacy's (CIJA) and head of the reorganization committee working on the changes.

Shimon Fogel

Media reports earlier this month said that at a Dec. 12 meeting in Montreal, United Israel Appeal Federations Canada (UIAFC) – officially CIJA's governing body – voted unanimously to put CIJA's restructuring plan on the back burner. The stories also said UIAFC wants the issue to be studied further and is asking for a final report on outstanding issues to be prepared by June.

But the reports were "totally inaccurate," Cummings said.

"We are completing the process [on the] issues of branding, membership, creating bylaws, etc... and we hope to be able to present these to the CIJA and UIAFC boards toward the end of March," he said. "I think that will be the time where the [restructuring] will get full approval. We hope to be hitting the ground running well before the summer."

Cummings said that at CIJA's Dec. 8 board meeting, a CEO was picked to head up the new centralized entity. That person is Shimon Fogel, current CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC).

Continued on page 21

Jewish community aids boycotted shoe store

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL – Some needy men in Montreal will be considerably better shod this season thanks to the generosity of opponents of an anti-Israel boycott of a St. Denis Street shoe store.

Sharon Freedman bought more than $3,000 worth of merchandise at Boutique Le Marcheur that she will donate to a local charity, possibly the Welcome Hall Mission or the Salvation Army.

The money came from her own pocket and from members of the Jewish community. Freedman is part of an informal network of supporters of the store's owner, Yves Archambault, who since early October has been defying pressure to stop selling Israeli-made merchandise.

Every second Saturday afternoon, and lately each week, members of PAJU (Palestinian and Jewish Unity) have been picketing outside the store, quietly holding banners and Palestinian flags and handing out flyers denouncing "Israeli apartheid." Le Marcheur stocks a line of Israeli shoes called Beauti-Feel, which represents a small part of its inventory of high-end footwear.

The protesters have been ticketed by police on a couple of occasions for minor infractions, but no criminal charges have been laid.

Freedman, a social worker, has been going to the store each time a demonstration takes place, along with other Jewish Montrealers. Many of them have also bought merchandise as a means of countering the boycott campaign, or have attempted to explain Israel's side.

"People have the right of freedom of speech, but trying to economically hurt a small businessman is wrong.

Continued on page 37

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The News in Brief

Canada

More Trains Ordered

MONTREAL — Montreal-based Bombardier Inc. will be making more passenger trains for Israel. The company announced it has received another order from Israel Railways for 72 double-decker railcars valued at $154 million. In October, Bombardier made public its deal with Israel Railways to manufacture an initial 78 railcars with an option for more, a contract worth $185 million.

The vehicles will be made at Bombardier Transportation's plant in Gorlitz, Germany, and in Israel. Further orders may follow under the deal.

World

Rabbi Sacks To Retire

LONDON — British Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks will retire in two years. United Synagogue president Simon Hochauser said Dec. 13 that Rabbi Sacks will step down in September 2013 after 22 years, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported. Hochauser said focus groups will help select a successor. Rabbi Sacks, who replaced Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, was knighted in 2005 and entered the House of Lords in 2009.

Libel Thrown Out

BUDAPEST — A court in Budapest threw out a libel case against Nazi-hunter Efraim Zuroff because the plaintiff, 97, didn't show up for the final court date. The court dismissed the case Dec.16, but Sandor Kepiro is expected to appeal. He filed suit after Zuroff, head of the Israeli office of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, submitted documents to the Hungarian courts in 2006 about Kepiro's alleged role in the murders of 1,246 civilians in Novi Sad. Kepiro said Zuroff had proclaimed him guilty before a trial. Zuroff expects to know next month whether war crimes charges will be filed against Kepiro.

Iranian Islamists Threaten Esther's Tomb

TEHRAN — A group of Islamists have threatened to destroy the tomb of Queen Esther in western Iran if Israel damages the Al-Aqsa mosque.

The Islamists, members of the student Islamist militia at Bu-Ali-Sina university of Hamedan, were identified by the Iranian Mehr news agency, according to the French news agency AFP. They demonstrated Dec. 12 at the tomb.

"Muslims beware that they have started the destruction of Al-Aqsa mosque while their second sacred site in Iran, the Esther and Mordecai tomb, is at peace and no Muslims make a sound," the protesters said in a statement.

Several construction and archeological projects on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem have led Muslims to charge Israel is purposely putting the Al-Aqsa mosque in danger.

Up to 25,000 Jews live in Iran. Pilgrims regularly visit the Esther shrine.

Esther is the heroine of the Purim story in which she convinces her husband, King Achashverosh, to allow Jews to defend themselves and live in the Persian Empire.

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MP wants gov't to pay for Holocaust museum

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

No sooner had Bill C-442, *An Act to Establish A National Holocaust Monument*, passed in the House of Commons last week than controversy erupted over how the monument would be funded and when it would actually be built.

Joe Volpe

The private member's bill, sponsored by Conservative MP Tim Uppal and based on previous Liberal bills – C-547 and C-238 in 2008 and 2009, respectively – calls for the National Capital Commission (NCC) to set aside a tract of land for the structure.

But according to Liberal MP Joe Volpe, the bill doesn't oblige the government to pay for it.

Instead, if granted royal assent, the bill, which is now being reviewed by the Senate, instructs the minister responsible for the NCC – Chuck Strahl, minister of transport, infrastructure and communities – to strike an advisory council from the Jewish community within one year.

According to the bill's current language, the council and the NCC would then "oversee the planning and design of the monument; choose a suitable area of public land in the National Capital Region for the monument to be located; and hold public consultations and take into account the recommendations of the public."

Additionally, it's the council's responsibility to raise funds to cover the total cost of the monument, and once the money is in place, the NCC can take up to three years to actually erect it.

It's this potential four-year delay, as well as what he considers the miserliness of the government on this issue, that has Volpe "extremely frustrated."

He believes the whole project could have been finished already, without the need to enact legislation, and should be completely funded by the government, as it has been done for many other national monuments.

In May, Volpe wrote to then-minister of transport, infrastructure and communities John Baird urging him to instruct the NCC to put up a national Holocaust memorial.

"The NCC already possesses the authority to establish a monument without Parliamentary approvals [and] currently is responsible for 16 monuments, including the Hungarian Monument, the Canadian Tribute to Human Rights, and the Monument to Canadian Aid Workers. Construction is currently underway for a National Naval Monument. Additionally, the NCC is in the planning phase for the creation of a National Monument to the Victims of Communism. None of these monuments required legislation to move forward," nor were they privately funded, Volpe wrote.

A spokesperson for Strahl refuted Volpe's claim, saying that "other monuments in the National Capital Region, for example the Hong Kong Memorial Wall, have been realized" with funding from private organizations and individuals.

"The government would consider providing additional funding, if necessary, to realize the establishment of a national Holocaust monument," the spokesperson added.

Still, Volpe maintains that because the bill has all-party support, all Strahl needs to do is direct the NCC to "go ahead and do this [monument] as well… because it's the will of the House. To meander this bill through the legislative process is an insult to everybody who has an attachment to the principles of commemorating the Holocaust."

Since the government already has the money, administrative ability and the land to establish the monument "why go to a particular community and say 'You go ahead and raise funds'? It cheapens the whole concept," Volpe said.

Continued on page 18

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Greater Toronto Area

Tender, honest, filial love

Considerable time elapsed after the Shoah before its survivors, in the main, could speak about their experiences even to their children, let alone publicly.

Those who were able did find ways to separate memory from nightmare and talk or write openly, if painfully, to the world about what they had witnessed or, worse, experienced. Though, even they, in doing so, would never be able to lift the heavy, leaden stones from their heart.

From the editor's desk...

Today, more than 6-1/2 decades after the war, a considerable number of survivor memoirs have been published. Indeed there are even public foundations, such as the Azrieli Foundation, that encourage and assist survivors to write their personal stories.

Children of the survivors, too, have written about their parents' experiences. Many, if not most, of these next-generational works have focused on the emotional disability and the resulting familial dysfunction that the war wrought. Often, the narrator tries to explain but always also escape from – and not help carry – the burdens borne by his or her parents.

An Italian Renaissance: Choosing Life in Canada (Urim Publications), by Robert Eli Rubinstein, is also a book by a child of survivors about his parents' experiences. But it is unlike most "second-generation" works.

It is not a memoir of survivorship; it is not a chronicle of horror and rescue; nor is it a self-obsessed exculpation of personality disorder.

An Italian Renaissance is a thoughtful, purposive reflection about the experiences of the author's parents before, during and after the Shoah, a near-philosophical exploration of history, memory, facts, truth, character, human strength and human frailty.

Rubinstein writes tenderly, yet always honestly, about his parents. He reconstructs, as best he can in the circumstances, pieces of a broken narrative into an unbroken story without embellishment. He reconciles truth with memory without concealment.

"I believe in honesty even when it hurts," the author told *The CJN* at his north Toronto office. Quiet and reserved, soft-spoken and precise, Rubinstein has a commandingly authoritative presence. "Things are not always what they seem. I accepted my mother's stories in childhood quite uncritically. Not everything I was told, I subsequently found out, was accurate.

"Truth can be a complex matter. Sometimes it may not necessarily be factually accurate but true nevertheless to the individual or serve a higher purpose. Survival sometimes requires us to take certain liberties with the truth and what matters was the result, namely, to become successful, good human beings."

Understanding how his parents became successful, good human beings, despite their experiences in the Shoah is the touching core of the book.

With forthright observations conveyed through straightforward, elegant writing, Rubinstein pays moving tribute to his parents. This is clear from the dedication page of the book.

"There are parents for whom /endowing life to their children /is a profound declaration of faith /and an act of courage.

"And there are children for whom /receiving life from their parents, / through the most unlikely happenstance, /inspires unbounded love and devotion.

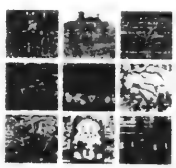
"Such are my parents. /And such is this child."

The book takes its title from the fact that Rubinstein's parents spent the immediate postwar period as refugees from Hungary in a displaced persons camp in Grugliasco, northern Italy, near Turin (Torino). The author was born in Torino during his parents internment in Grugliasco.

"Italy represented the spiritual rehabilitation of my family," Rubinstein writes. In a profoundly symbolic and actual sense, Italy was where his parents were reborn. It was where their souls began to heal in preparation for the next phase of their lives, which was to be in Canada.

"For me, Italy was the key to all the blessings that subsequently befell my family," Rubinstein writes of an earlier stage in his life. True to his loyalty to honesty, the book depicts Rubinstein's determined testing of that key, seeing which far-past chambers of his family's painful story it really unlocked.

"The book was a long time in the making. Everything was thought out very long," Rubinstein emphasized.



ROBERT ELI RUBINSTEIN

"As children of the 20th century, my parents have lived through an astonishing range of transformative events," Rubinstein writes. "The changes my parents witnessed and the challenges they overcame along the way boggle the mind. But... never did they lose their moral compass, even in the darkest days when it appeared that the bulk of humankind had done so. The coexistence of such extraordinary adaptability and dedication to principle within a single individual is rare to find. It is a special privilege to be the child of two such individuals and to have had the opportunity to learn from their personal examples."

This is a rare work of filial homage that contains within its pages example and inspiration for us all.

– *MBD*

SeeJN

THIS IS HOW YOU MAKE A SNOWBALL

Young children in a Druze village in the Golan Heights play in the snow. Inclement weather throughout Israel brought a significant snowfall in the north of the country last week. ***[Israel Sun photo]***

GTA community's the best, says Sharansky

Former MK discusses Diaspora, Israel relationship

By YOSEF TASTASSA
Special to The CJN

"The Jewish community in the GTA is one of the most important Jewish communities in the Diaspora, " Jewish Agency chairman Natan Sharansky told *The CJN* last week in an exclusive interview.

Sharansky was in Toronto on Dec. 13 to address a special meeting of the Canada Israel Chamber of Commerce (CICC).

He spoke to *The CJN* about the relationship between Diaspora Jewry and Israel, and about his special connection to Toronto's Jewish community.

"Aliyah is one of our goals but not the only one," Sharansky said, adding that the State of Israel needs strong and flourishing Jewish communities around the world.

"We understand that in today's world the borders are open and people are free to shift their living places for many reasons. The Jewish Agency has strong interests among Jews who live outside Israel. We want to keep in touch with those people, strengthen their Jewish identity, and make them see Israel as their home," Sharansky said.

Natan Sharansky *[Yosef Tastassa photo]*

"It is important that these people will keep their tradition and stick to their roots for the long-term existence of the Jewish people in Israel and around the world."

By the same token, however, he said there is a reciprocal aspect to the relationship. "I also believe that the Jewish communities around the world need Israel. Israel is important for identity and heritage. It is the home of every Jew around the world."

Sharansky said the Jewish community in Toronto is unique because of its three distinct populations: English-speaking, Hebrew-speaking and Russian-speaking.

He praised the work of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the shlichim (representatives of the Jewish Agency) who "have a crucial and important role in keeping in touch with these three populations that have unique patterns."

Sharansky was and still is a hero for many Jews around the world.

Born in Ukraine in 1948, he completed a degree in applied mathematics at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology. He became a worldwide symbol of the Refuseniks' struggle in the 1970s.

Sharansky was arrested in 1977 after the authorities refused to grant him an exit visa. He was accused of treason and espionage, and he was convicted of the charges in 1978. He spent nine years of his life in the Soviet gulag.

"Feb. 18, 1986, was the day I moved from hell to paradise," Sharansky said, referring to the day of his release from the gulag.

"After the international struggle for my release came to an end, I was transferred from the Soviet Union to the divided city of Berlin, and in the same night I was in Jerusalem with my wife and fulfilled a dream.

"The Jewish community of [Toronto] was a great activist in the struggle for my release from prison," he added.

Later, in Israel, he became a politician and established the Yisrael b'Aliyah party.

The party won seven seats in the Knesset in the 1996 elections, and he was appointed minister of Industry, Trade and Labor in the first Netanyahu government. He held the position from 1996 to 1999.

Sharansky said "there is a lot of symbolism in being a guest of the CICC, as I signed the first Israeli-Canadian agreement 13 years ago."

The CICC event was organized by Meir Klein, CICC executive vice-president and federation's director of research. Also in attendance were Amir Gissin, consul general of Israel for Toronto and Western Canada; CICC chairman Leslie Dan; CICC vice-chairman David Rubin; CICC president Oded Orgil and CICC national executive vice-president J.M. Shore.

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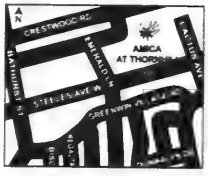

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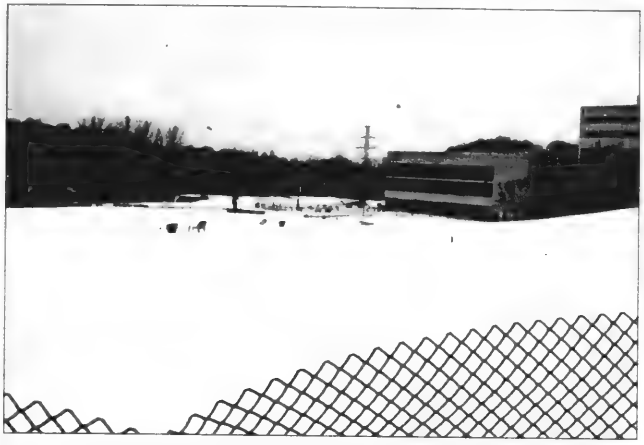

The Gales Family Pavilion sits north of the site of the former BJCC, which was demolished earlier this year. A new JCC is slated to be finished by 2014. *[Frances Kraft photo]*

Federation seeks $40M to start building JCC

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto says it needs to raise approximately $40 million before it can "responsibly break ground" on the building that will replace the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre (BJCC).

The BJCC, which was demolished earlier this year, closed in September 2009, and the new building is still expected to be finished by 2014, according to Howard English, the federation's vice-president of corporate communications.

The BJCC was located on what is now called the Sherman Campus, which also includes the Lipa Green Centre and the Donald Gales Family Pavilion.

The Gales Pavilion, which opened in October 2009, houses fitness facilities and classes as part of the Prosserman Jewish Community Centre (the entity that will include the building replacing the BJCC). The new JCC has 620 paid fitness members, an increase of more than 100 in a year, English said. The membership of 650 that was reported in *The CJN* last February included "promotional memberships," he clarified.

Before the BJCC closed, it had more than 1,200 fitness members.

The cost of completing Phase 2 of the Sherman Campus – which will also include a new Koffler Centre of the Arts and Leah Posluns Theatre, and the Sarah & Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre – will be approximately $110 million, for a total anticipated cost of $150 million for both phases, English said.

"We need about $40 million more before we feel we can responsibly break ground… but we're confident of doing that," English wrote in an initial e-mail interview.

He added that more than 90 per cent of the funds for the project "are coming primarily from donors, with assistance from a $15-million provincial grant for our GTA campus projects. We are being financially prudent by waiting to start Sherman Phase 2 until more money is raised, because we don't want to over-extend ourselves and we want to proceed without delay once construction begins."

Phase 1 of the project cost $40 million, including the $10 million Gales Pavilion, renovations to the Lipa Green Centre, and reconstruction of the parking lot, English said in a follow-up phone interview.

In a 2007 e-mail that was forwarded to *The CJN* by former BJCC member Gordon Akum, Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of UJA Federation, wrote that the BJCC would only be dismantled "once the funding of phase 2 is confirmed." Sokolsky's e-mail was a reply to Akum, addressing concerns about the redevelopment plans.

Last week, English said he couldn't speak for Sokolsky, who was not reachable, but he said that Sokolsky may "not necessarily" have been referring to all the funding.

"We have enough money to begin construction," English said. "We're proceeding prudently by waiting, as Ted indicated, until there is more funding in place before we proceed. That's not to say there isn't funding in place to begin construction. The full funding is not in place, but that is not a cause for concern… We're confident of being able to raise the money, and fundraising is progressing.

"We have enough money to start, but we don't want to start until the bulk of the $40 million is in."

In the interim, he said, if construction doesn't begin by summer, the grounds on which the dismantled BJCC stands will be used as parkland for the community.

English stressed that the Prosserman JCC has become "a vibrant hub of Jewish life" with state-of-the-art equipment.

"We want to look ahead," he said, "and when we look ahead, the future looks really good."

Greater Toronto Area

Keeping warm in winter

OUT OF THE COLD: **Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School Grade 3 students, with teacher Michelle Bernstein, display the hats and gloves they bought for the Out of the Cold program. The children collected the money for the items through their class tzedakah fund, to which they contribute weekly.**

CLOTHING DRIVE: **Robbins Hebrew Academy's middle school student council collects warm winter clothing to distribute within the community. Pictured with this year's collection of warm woolies are, standing from left, Holli Greenwald, Tyra Morton, Adam Neumark, Amanda Smoskowitz, Riley Nolk, Dekkel Bachar, Jonathan Karr, Mikki Robbins, Sam Neumark and Jordan Sugar, and, seated from left, Aaron Birbrager, Jordan Shapiro, Micaela Lewis and Courtney Marks.**

BOOKS TO GO: **Senior kindergartner Liat Jaitovitch with parent volunteer Karen Rosenstein have fun at the Bookmobile, at Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns branch on Neptune Drive. The Bookmobile program, staffed by parent volunteers, lets students take home books twice a week to read with their parents.**

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DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS:

Card size

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Entries should be submitted in a high-resolution digital scan (jpg format only) and e-mailed, along with the official contest entry form, to **smarco@ujafed.org**. Adult contest is open to those 14 years and over and children's contest is for those 6-13 years old.

Submission deadline:

Friday, January 21, 2011 at 5 p.m.

For official entry form and contest rules, please call Sonya Marco at 416.635.2883 ext.5302

All contest submissions become the property of UJA.

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The shame of it all

The first decade of the new (third) millennium draws to a close next week with a familiar, bleak tableau setting the bilateral scene, depicting yet again an unsettled horizon between Palestinians and Israelis. A treaty of peace between the two peoples will be no closer at hand next week than it was 10 years ago, or 17 years ago, or ever.

And that is such a sad waste of freedom, life, possibility and prosperity.

Ten years ago, then-U.S. president Bill Clinton tried to coax an agreement from then-Palestinian Authority (PA) president Yasser Arafat. But the president's efforts foundered on Arafat's hard-core unwillingness to commit to a non-violent end to the conflict. Seven years earlier, Clinton and so many hopeful, wishful thinkers dared to dream that the public Oslo accords signing ceremony on a crisp, cool September morning on the lawn of the White House beamed around the world for hundreds of millions of people to see and witness was a true harbinger of peace between the two contending nations.

But as we know, alas, the dreamers were forced to take shelter from the Palestinian rejectionists' unremitting campaign of violence and terrorism that was directed at the Jewish state. The dreamers were forced to hold tightly onto that dream and protect it for a future day.

Despite Israel's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in the middle of this decade and the subsequent negotiating generosity of a different Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, the Palestinians have consistently refused to declare finally and for all time an end to the conflict. Nor does it seem they will be willing to do so any time soon.

They have squandered the goodwill of yet another American president, Barack Obama, who, since his inauguration two years ago, has inclined his policies toward the Palestinians more than his predecessors did.

They still cannot bring themselves to negotiate the hard, biting, difficult issues with the Israelis across the table. To be sure, the current Israeli government is philosophically and politically committed to striking a harder bargain with the PA than its predecessor was. But that is the price the Palestinians are paying for the cumulative effect of their long-drawn aversion to peaceful coexistence alongside a Jewish state. Equally to the point, it is also the irritating concession they must make to the nuisance that Israel is a democracy.

Last week, former president Clinton's wife, Hillary, the current U.S. secretary of state, told the two sides that true peace can only be achieved through negotiations. This week, she sent two senior officials to the region who are trying yet again to seed the still-barren soil for bilateral or even indirect talks.

The second decade of the new millennium begins with expectations of Palestinian-Israel peace not much higher than the furrows in the soil into which the Americans are casting their flimsy seeds of peace. Perhaps this is a good thing, for it has been decidedly bad that so many opportunities for an agreement over the past many decades have been lost. The shame and suffering of it all for both peoples.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres said Ivory Coast would resume diplomatic relations with Israel that were severed during the Yom Kippur War. The statement came after a four-hour meeting in Geneva with Ivory Coast president Felix Houphouet Boigny. Israel had been working to rebuild ties with black African nations that severed them in 1973 under Arab pressure.

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Canadian MDA's role in fighting fire

Magen David Adom (MDA), Israel's sole pre-hospital emergency, rescue and blood services organization, was immediately on the scene of the recent Mount Carmel forest fire. More than 80 ambulances, over 250 paramedics, two multi-casualty vehicles and a med-evac helicopter were there. MDA set up relief tents to relocate the homeless, arranged for make-shift medical clinics to treat the wounded and transported hundreds to local hospitals.

When we read about the organizations in Canada that are trying to rehabilitate the devastated areas, it pains us to see that not one word was mentioned about the role that Canadian MDA has played in providing essential medical care, emergency ambulance services and support throughout the critical days ("Fire in Carmel forest kills 42," Dec. 9). There is no mention of the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on treating the wounded, nor is there mention of the need to replenish the badly depleted medical supplies and emergency equipment.

Let us remember that Magen David Adom in Israel is always there, ready to jump in, often at great risk, to comfort, treat, relocate and be compassionate to our fellow human beings, regardless of race, colour, creed or religion.

Arnold Rosner,
National Executive Director
Canadian Magen David Adom

* * *

The CJC and police services

I read with interest the story "Congress wary of CIJA restructuring plan" (Nov. 25). Police organizations across Ontario value the partnerships they have developed within the Jewish community. I have worked closely with the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) to build partnerships between the CJC and police services and law enforcement organizations through our province. The CJC's CEO, Bernie Farber, is a longtime associate member of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP). That association led to a first-time educational trip to Israel for many Ontario police leaders in 2005.

The ability of CJC through Farber's work with OACP to access other police services across the province and country has led to a greater understanding of the safety needs of the Jewish community in Ontario. Farber has a unique appreciation of the role of police leaders and community safety issues of importance to the Jewish community and has lectured on hate-crime issues for a number of Ontario police services.

The police community and the OACP in particular appreciate the importance of CJC and its relationship with police services across the province and the country. We look forward to continuing the important partnerships that help us ensure the safety and well-being of Ontario's Jewish community – and all the communities we serve across this great country.

Joe Couto
Director of Government Relations and Communications, Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police

* * *

The Peto thesis

So the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE) granted Jennifer Peto a master's degree for her factually inaccurate and baseless diatribe. Now what do we do ("U of T's standards questioned in approving thesis," Dec. 16)? Do we beat our chests and raise our fists and demand that OISE revoke her degree? That is, understandably, our natural instinct. But this reaction has unintended consequences. First, by creating a media circus around this issue, we have given Peto a forum and a loudspeaker to spew her nonsense. Second, we allowed people such as Peto to change the conversation from one about the legitimacy of her views to one about academic freedom. This is precisely the same mistake that was made around the Pride Parade and QuAIA (Queers Against Israeli Apartheid). By beating our chests and raising our fists, we gave this fringe group a microphone and allowed it to seize the moral high ground by changing the conversation to one about freedom of speech and censorship.

I am not suggesting that we remain silent in the face of hatred, but rather that a more calculated and well-thought-out response should be crafted to respond to similar situations in the future. Sometimes it is better to leave fringes on the fringes.

Daniel S. Engel
Toronto

* * *

Oldest Orthodox shul in Canada

In the article "Shomrai Shabbos celebrates 120 years" (Nov. 11), it was stated that Shomrai Shabbos Chevrah Mishnayos is "the oldest Orthodox synagogue in Toronto and likely Canada." The latter distinction is actually held by the Spanish Portuguese Synagogue of Montreal, which was founded in 1768 and is still a very active congregation.

Ezra Franken
Toronto

For more letters, see cjnews.com.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

1643

The number of days Hamas has held Gilad Schalit captive

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Take gas chambers remark in context, Kissinger pleads

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

It should have been ancient, if unsavoury, news: a cavalier reference to gassing Jews, an aside in a conversation nearly 40 years old.

But the aside was pronounced by Henry Kissinger, a German-born Jew who fled Nazi horrors as a child and who has been honoured by multiple Jewish organizations as one of Israel's saviours during its darkest days, when he was secretary of state to former U.S. president Richard Nixon.

"If they put Jews into gas chambers in the Soviet Union, it is not an American concern," Kissinger is heard saying on the latest batch of Nixon-era Oval Office tapes released by the Nixon Library.

Following its publication Dec. 11 – buried deep in a *New York Times* story that focused more on Nixon's well-known bigotries – a shock shuddered through the Jewish community and led to calls to shun Kissinger, and then to calls to forgive him.

In an e-mail to JTA, Kissinger would brook no request for an apology and did not even directly address his gas chambers remark. Instead he appeared to insist on context: his frustration at the time with the insistence of the Jewish community and U.S. senators such as Jacob Javits (R-N.Y.) and Henry "Scoop" Jackson (D-Wash.) on attaching human rights riders to dealings with the Soviets.

"The quotations ascribed to me in the transcript of the conversation with president Nixon must be viewed in the context of the time," Kissinger wrote to JTA.

He and Nixon pursued the issue of Soviet Jewish emigration as a humanitarian matter separate from foreign policy issues in order to avoid questions of sovereignty and because normal diplomatic channels were closed, Kissinger wrote.

"By this method and the persistent private representation at the highest level, we managed to raise emigration from 700 per year to close to 40,000 in 1972," Kissinger wrote. "We disagreed with the Jackson Amendment, which made Jewish emigration a foreign policy issue. We feared that the amendment would reduce emigration, which is exactly what happened. Jewish emigration never reached the level of 40,000 again until the Soviet Union collapsed. The conversation between Nixon and me must be seen in the context of that dispute and of our distinction between a foreign policy and a humanitarian approach."

Henry Kissinger

In fact, the historical consensus is that while it was true that what became known as the Jackson-Vanik Amendment – named for Jackson and Rep. Charlie Vanik (D-Ohio) – at first inhibited emigration, it formed the basis for the late-20th century politics of making human rights a sine qua non of statecraft. That resulted not only in the mass emigration of Soviet Jews 15 years later, but also in contemporary efforts to end internal massacres in countries such as Sudan.

Kissinger, however, was dedicated to realpolitik – the art of securing the grand deal, even at the expense of the moral and ethical considerations of the moment – and his disdain for human rights activists knew few bounds.

Gal Beckerman, a historian of the Soviet Jewry movement, told *Tablet* last week that this even led Kissinger to suppress a letter that might have helped salvage a deal with the Soviets to release Jews under the Jackson-Vanik stipulations.

Similar considerations led Kissinger to press Nixon during the 1973 Yom Kippur War to delay delivering arms to Israel by a few weeks. Their conversations at the time show Kissinger arguing that Anwar Sadat, Egypt's president, needed an unadulterated victory to make peace concessions. Nixon argued – correctly, as it turned out – that Sadat was already able to claim a victory, and that it was more important to stanch an ally's casualties in a war that would claim 3,000 Israeli lives.

In a 2009 review of the period in the *Jewish Press*, top Nixon aides Alexander Haig, the chief of staff; Leonard Garment, the White House counsel; and Vernon Walters, the deputy CIA chief, all recall the same dynamic: the time for hanging Israel out to dry had ended.

"Both Kissinger and Nixon wanted to do [the airlift]," the *Press* quoted Walters as saying. "But Nixon gave it the greater sense of urgency. He said, 'You get the stuff to Israel. Now. Now.'"

Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League, issued a statement saying that Kissinger's comments show a "disturbing and even callous insensitivity toward the fate of Soviet Jews" and are a reminder that "even great individuals are flawed." But, it noted, "Dr. Kissinger's contributions to the safety and security of the U.S. and Israel have solidly established his legacy as a champion of democracy and as a committed advocate for preserving the well-being of the Jewish state of Israel."

Foxman elaborated in an interview with JTA.

"He worked in an atmosphere that was intimidatingly antisemitic toward Jews," the ADL leader said of Kissinger. "We need to understand the intimidation under which it occurred."

Kissinger, Beckerman wrote in the *Forward* in 2007, "was guided by the sense that the world needs a strong America – led by versatile statesmen – that will stand as a bulwark against the disorder and disequilibrium that he experienced as a child."

How did Kissinger's Jewish identity play out in the White House? It was a complex matter and not always consistent.

In September 1972, when Kissinger was still the national security adviser, he and his arch-rival, secretary of state William Rogers, had a bitter exchange at a cabinet meeting over whether the government should lower flags to half mast for the 11 Israeli athletes murdered at the Munich Olympics. Nixon took Kissinger's advice and lowered the flags.

FDR had his own Kissinger

By RAFAEL MEDOFF
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

Henry Kissinger wasn't the first Jewish adviser to an American president who urged his boss to refrain from rescuing Jews.

Two prominent Jews gave then-president Franklin D. Roosevelt similar advice when Soviet Jews were being shipped off to gas chambers during the Holocaust.

More than 1.5 million Jews living in German-occupied portions of the Soviet Union, such as Ukraine, Lithuania and Latvia, were murdered by the Nazis. Many of them were lined up in front of huge pits and shot. Many others were shipped to German death camps in Poland.

But when Jewish organizations urged president Roosevelt to rescue Jews from the Nazis, Roosevelt's Jewish advisers gave him Kissinger-style advice.

One of Roosevelt's top advisers and speechwriters was Samuel Rosenman, a leading member of the American Jewish Committee. Rosenman, a deeply assimilated Jew, was uncomfortable calling attention to Jewish concerns.

After the 1938 Kristallnacht pogroms, he warned Roosevelt that admitting German Jewish refugees to America would "create a Jewish problem in the U.S." In 1943, when 400 rabbis marched to the White House to plead for a rescue effort, Rosenman counselled Roosevelt to snub "the medieval horde." Rosenman also tried to undermine the 1943 campaign by rescue advocates and Treasury Department officials for creation of a government agency to save Jewish refugees. The agency, called the War Refugee Board, was eventually established despite his opposition.

In 1944, the leaders of the board asked Roosevelt to issue a statement threatening to prosecute anyone involved in persecuting Jews and pledging to provide havens for Jewish refugees. Rosenman watered down the declaration for fear that giving the Jews attention "would intensify antisemitism in the United States." He deleted three of the six references to Jews, removed the offer to shelter refugees in America, and added three opening paragraphs about the Nazis' mistreatment of "Poles, Czechs, Norwegians, Dutch, Danes, French, Greeks, Russians, Chinese, Filipinos – and many others."

Another prominent Jewish defender of Roosevelt's policy toward European Jewry was congressman Sol Bloom, a Democrat and chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. The Roosevelt administration chose him as a U.S. delegate to its sham refugee conference in Evian, France, in 1938, and to its equally farcical refugee conference in Bermuda five years later. Afterward, Bloom declared, "I as a Jew am perfectly satisfied with the results" – prompting one Jewish periodical to charge that Bloom had been "used as a stooge to impede Jewish protests against the nothing-doers of the Bermuda conference."

Bloom worked closely with the administration to block congressional resolutions supporting rescue and Jewish statehood. He even backed the State Department's proposal to ban all public discussion of the Palestine issue for the duration of World War II.

Jewish leaders were furious over Bloom's actions. A document I recently discovered in the Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem quotes Synagogue Council of America president Israel Goldstein as saying that "no Jew should ever occupy the position of chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee."

The problem was not that a Jew who reached such a position of power might turn against his people. The problem was that in those years, and even in more recent times, the only kind of Jew who could rise to such a powerful post in the first place was one who was willing to cast aside Jewish concerns.

The only kind of Jew whom Roosevelt – or Nixon – would take into his inner circle was one who would tell him what he wanted to hear when it came to Jewish issues. Indeed, one State Department official privately referred to Sol Bloom as "easy to handle" – a way of saying he could be trusted never to make trouble on Jewish matters.

A few years ago, my Wyman Institute colleagues interviewed former senator and presidential nominee George McGovern about his experiences as a pilot who flew over Auschwitz in 1944 to bomb German oil plants nearby. McGovern said that if his commanders had told the pilots about the death camp and offered them the option of undertaking a bombing raid strictly for humanitarian (rather than military) purposes, "whole crews would have volunteered." They understood, he said, that the war against the Nazis was not just a military struggle, but also a fight for principles and values such as basic human decency and concern for the persecuted.

Likewise in Kissinger's time, there was strong public support for U.S. intervention on behalf of Soviet Jewry. The truth is that the American public has often been much more humanitarian-minded than some of its presidents – and their nervous Jewish advisers – ever recognized.

Rafael Medoff is director of the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, in Washington, D.C.

Saying goodbye is hard

An old, politically incorrect joke asks, "What's the difference between a Jew and a WASP?". The answer is: "WASPs leave and never say goodbye. Jews say goodbye and never leave." This joke is true to life. When people get up from the table and announce that they're leaving a wedding, you can usually catch them in the hallway half an hour later chatting on their way out. Jews find it difficult to let go of something we cherish. To paraphrase the midrash, we find it "too difficult to say goodbye."

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

Our difficulty with departing has helped the Jews survive. Because we can't say goodbye, we've held on to our traditions through generations of persecution. Because we never let go, we continued to dream of a return to Zion, even in the depths of exile. And when someone dear to us passes away, we insist on praying for them and preserving their memory. Love means never saying goodbye.

But there are times when we know we won't see each other for a while. In Hebrew, we say farewell with the word *l'hitraot* – "hope to see you soon," because we never say goodbye for good.

But when we must take leave, we make sure that the *l'hitraot* is meaningful and memorable. The Talmud tells us to say farewell with words of Torah, to ensure that the friendship is remembered not just for its laughs but also for its legacy. Jacob and Moses say farewell with a blessing, because a blessing is a way of saying I love you even when I can't be with you.

A proper *l'hitraot* continues the relationship despite the departure, and reminds both parties of the profound connection they will always share. Indeed, it's a Jewish custom to write ethical wills, in which a parent leaves behind their wisdom and blessings, and in doing so, leaves behind a piece of their soul. Jews simply can't say goodbye!

For the last 10 years, it's been my honor to share my thoughts with you on a regular basis. I have greatly appreciated your feedback (especially the disagreements). It has been a privilege to communicate with people I might not have otherwise been able to meet outside of this newspaper column.

Sadly, this is the last time I'll be writing this column in *The Canadian Jewish News*. It's now my turn to say *l'hitraot*. I hope you will continue to say hello by reading my blog or writing an e-mail, and I do hope you remember the words of Torah we shared.

God bless you, and *l'hitraot*!

How did it get to that point?

Once again, as I watch a Canadian campus get roiled – and a university shoot itself in the proverbial foot – I ask, "Where are the grown-ups?"

The British agitator George Galloway spoke at York University in mid-November. Rabbi Ahron Hoch circulated an e-mail urging community members to protest. In it, Rabbi Hoch characterized York's president, Mamdouh Shoukri, in ways I never would, saying "Mr. Shoukri has again showed his amazing tolerance for antisemitism and lack of vigilance regarding the feeling of safety for Jewish students on campus." A lawyer for York responded with a letter that I would never write, calling Rabbi Hoch's words "actionable" while warning Rabbi Hoch and his supporters to stay off campus because the university is "private property."

Gil Troy in Montreal

Predictably, the clash intensified. Rabbi Hoch circulated the exchange on the Internet, asking why York grants free speech to anti-Israel agitators such as Galloway (who also has said insensitive things about Darfur) but not to pro-Israel Jews. Meanwhile, the university felt harassed, not realizing how much the lawyer's letter exacerbated the latest mess.

As an outsider, I'm shocked that no one in the York community with ties to the rabbi and the president could talk both sides down, protecting the principle of civil free speech for all and the university's reputation. I urge York's president and his counsel to consult with key faculty insiders before pouring oil on future fires.

I understand the university counsel's first instinct to defend Shoukri against even the hint of an accusation that he's antisemitic or tolerates antisemitism. It is an ugly charge against a decent man with a tough job. The charge of "lack of vigilance" regarding the safety of Jewish students or any students is devastating enough. The antisemitism jab was inaccurate, even incendiary.

But the prospect of a university suing a rabbi – which is what actionable means – is a lose-lose. A clever lawyer could tar the university's reputation and cost York big bucks fighting it out regarding what constitutes "tolerance" for antisemitism. More importantly, universities should be bastions of free civil speech. Our recipe for bad speech should be more speech. Few academics can afford to defend themselves against libel suits. A university should never encourage resorting to courts of law rather than courts of public opinion, the sheer beauty of an effective rebuttal or truth itself.

The second half of the counsel's letter, which most people overlooked, was equally disturbing. The letter unfairly accused Rabbi Hoch of trying to disrupt with more radical action when he merely invited community members to a rally. Yes, the lawyer is correct, technically. Universities are private property. But universities want members of the public to spend money to hear speakers, attend plays and watch films on campus. They celebrate when tourists, potential students, and, of course, most important, potential donors, visit. No one wants universities to be bunkers with "Keep Out" signs.

A lawyer's job is to make sure a client remains true to core ideals and to talk the client out of foolish, emotional overreactions. Judging by this letter, it's a shame no one served that function for the university's lawyers this time.

Meanwhile, as leading Jews squabble with York's leaders and the university's core values get trampled in the crossfire, the true enemies of civility and scholarship flourish.

Let's face it. York has become a flashpoint. I hear about students who have second thoughts about enrolling and about employers who first ask job applicants what's happening on campus rather than what they're learning in class. I also hear of a thriving Jewish and intellectual life on campus nevertheless.

This incident was predictable and avoidable. People of stature committed to university values should learn from this experience: those values include students feeling safe, even if they're Jewish and pro-Israel; encouraging civility and mutual respect, not just for students but for university presidents, and keeping universities as open, welcoming spaces for the public.

There will be other incidents. Will there be grown-ups ready next time to stand up, mediate and avoid another PR disaster for York and the university community?

Spreading half the kingdom around

In 1983, newly arrived in Canada to serve as assistant rabbi at Toronto's Holy Blossom Temple, I was invited by a young film producer named Francine Zuckerman to the JCC in Ottawa. She was organizing a "controversial" event on the "controversial" topic of women and Judaism, at which Norma Joseph and I would speak. That event turned into a National Film Board film called *Half The Kingdom*, which has been shown widely on college campuses, as well as to countless organizations, conferences and study groups. Last month, we celebrated its 20th anniversary, and nearly 400 people gathered in Toronto to ask, "So, what's next for Jewish women?"

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein in Toronto

But first we need to look backward. In 1983, I was the only female rabbi in Canada. It was exhilarating and lonely those first few years. I was an exotic specimen and people would come to "see the lady rabbi." Not to study with me, or hear me, or learn with me, but just to see me. And don't ask about all the horrible dates I went on with guys who wanted to "date" the lady rabbi!

So much has changed in Toronto since then. I was elected the first woman president of the Toronto Board of Rabbis (TBR), something I thought I'd never see. We staged an all-female cantors concert, something I thought I'd never see. Two female Conservative Rabbis have joined us in Toronto, something I thought I'd never see.

Some of my female colleagues are now senior rabbis at major congregations, as well as an executive director of the TBR, a rabbinics teacher at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, all things I thought I'd never see. Many, if not the majority, of Conservative synagogues and even one Orthodox "partnership minyan" now have women coming up to the bimah and having aliyot, something I thought I'd never see.

My male colleagues don't talk anymore about the "rabbis and their wives" (well at least some of them don't), and neither a rabbi's gender nor her sexual orientation excludes her from a rabbinic position anymore. And, most importantly, I think, people don't say, "Gee, I never met a woman rabbi" that much anymore, unless they really have shut themselves up in a ghetto somewhere in a corner of Toronto where *The CJN* never reaches.

Today, we talk about wife and child abuse in the larger Jewish community. There's been a proliferation of Jewish women's study groups, women's yeshivas, women's writing and women's music. Baby namings, like the one I did in the film, are now normative. There's hardly a Jewish community of any denomination anywhere that doesn't mark in some public way both the birth and also the coming-of-age or bat mitzvah of girls.

So I honestly feel much more optimistic than I did 20 years ago. I feel personally less marginalized, less strange and less isolated for sure.

So what's next? It's time to globalize the cause. Outside our privileged corner of the West, there are so many places where women still don't have reproductive rights; can't find clean water; aren't getting educated, are being raped as war booty; are seen as sexual predators if they don't cover themselves from head to toe; are overworked and underpaid; are traded as commodity sex slaves; are locked in prisons or threatened with stoning for blasphemy and adultery; are prodded, encouraged and even expected to have more babies, whether they want to or can afford to; are being murdered by jealous husbands and lovers, and are still being taught that they're less than men in the sight of God and their fellow human beings.

If there was one thing I could pray for in the next 10 years, it would be that we western Jewish women – who, I believe, have gotten close to at least half the kingdom – make it our priority to accept no less anywhere else in the world for any of our sisters.

The Kirshner File

The passing parade ....

They died recently, leaving footprints in time...

Arthur Penn, 88 directed the iconic film, *Bonnie and Clyde*, as well as *The Miracle Worker* and *Little Big Man*. **Isadore (Irvin) Kershner**, 87, was the director of the second Star Wars movie, *The Empire Strikes Back*, a James Bond picture, *Never Say Never*, *RoboCop 2*, *A Fine Madness* and *Raid on Entebbe*. **Elliott Kastner**, 80, produced the films *The Long Goodbye*, *Harper*, *Where Eagles Dare* and *The Missouri Breaks*. **David Wolper**, 82, produced the TV series *Roots* and such documentaries as *The Hellstrom Chronicles* and *The Making of the President 1960*. **Marshall Flaum**, 85, was the producer of *Let My People Go: The Story of Israel*.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Joseph Stein, 98, a Broadway book writer, wrote the play *Fiddler on the Roof* and co-wrote *Ah, Wilderness!* **Jerry Bock**, 81, composed the score for *Fiddler on the Roof* and *She Loves Me*. **Stanley Landau Colbert**, 82, was a film and TV producer – *Flipper* and *Greatest Show on Earth* – and he and his wife owned an influential literary agency in Canada. **Murray Chercover**, 80, was president of Canada's CTV network and a creator of *Canada AM*.

Arthur Penn

Jill Clayburgh, 66, was a Hollywood and Broadway actress who appeared in *An Unmarried Woman*, *Starting Over*, *Design for Living* and *The Rothchilds*. **Ingrid Pitt**, 73, celebrated as the first lady of British horror cinema, starred in *The Vampire Lovers*, *Countess Dracula* and *The House That Dripped Blood*.

Tony Curtis (Bernard Schwartz), 85, appeared in *Some Like It Hot*, *Sweet Smell of Success*, *The Defiant Ones* and *Houdini*. **Tom Bosley**, 83, played Howard Cunningham on *Happy Days*. **Harold Gould**, 86, a character actor, was on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *Rhoda*, *The Golden Girls* and *Perry Mason*. **Maury Alan Chaykin**, 61, acted in films (*The Adjuster* and *My Cousin Vinny*) and TV (*Less Than Kind* and *Entourage*).

John Stuart Katz, 72, was chair of York University's film department and a programmer for the Toronto Jewish Film Festival and Toronto's international film festival. **Irving Ravetch**, 89, co-wrote the screenplay for *Hud*, *Norma Rae*, *The Long Hot Summer* and *The Sound and the Fury*.

Bernie West (Bernard Wessler), 92, a TV scriptwriter, co-wrote *Three's Company*, *All in the Family* and *The Jeffersons*. **David Dortort**, 93, wrote and produced *Bonanza*, TV's first full-hour western in colour. **Gerald Lesser**, 84, a psychologist, played a key role in shaping the children's TV show, *Sesame Street*. **Coleman Jacoby**, 95, wrote jokes for Bob Hope and patter for *The Gary Moore Show*; Jackie Gleason and *Your Show of Shows*. **George David Weiss**, 89, wrote songs like *Can't Help Falling in Love*, *The Lion Sleeps Tonight* and *What a Wonderful World*.

Belva Plain, 95, wrote bestsellers – *Evergreen*, *Crescent City*, *Promises* and *Blessings*. **Harry Mulisch**, 83, wrote novels in Dutch ranging from *The Assault* to *The Discovery of Heaven*. **Eva Ibbotson** (Eva Wiesner), 85, wrote children's books (*The Great Ghost Rescue* and *Journey to the River Sea*). **Edwin Newman**, 91, was a TV broadcaster who anchored the *Today* show, appeared on *Meet the Press*, moderated two presidential debates and wrote *A Civil Tongue* and *Strictly Speaking: Will America Be The Death of English?* **Sol Steinmetz**, 80, was a lexicographer, editor of the Random House Webster's Dictionary and author of *Semantic Antics: How and Why Words Change Meaning*. **Daniel Schorr**, *93*, a broadcast and print journalist, was CNN's first employee. **Thomas Guinzburg**, 84, was the first managing editor of *The Paris Review* and president of Viking Press. **Harvey Pekar**, 70, was the author of the autobiographical comic book *American Splendor*. **Robert Katz**, 77, wrote books on the Holocaust and World War II, including *Black Sabbath* and *Death in Rome*.

Theodore Chaikin Sorensen, 82, was John F. Kennedy's ghostwriter (*Profiles in Courage*) and presidential speechwriter ("Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.")

Eddie Fisher, 82, recorded 32 hit songs, from *Thinking of You* and *Oh, My Pa-pa* to *Lady of Spain* and *Count Your Blessings*. **Mitch Miller**, 99, was the conductor on the TV show *Sing Along With Mitch* and a Columbia Records executive who worked with Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett and Bob Dylan. **Rudolf Barshai**, 86, was the conductor of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, the Israel Chamber Orchestra and the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

Buddy Morrow (Muni Zudekoff), 91, a trombonist and bandleader, played with Harry James, Buddy Rich and Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey. **Nat Raider**, 80, was Montreal's pre-eminent society bandleader and musical director of the Montreal Forum. **Otto Joachim**, 99, principal viola player in the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, was a founder of the Montreal String Quartet.

Tony Judt, 62, wrote on European history (*Postwar* and *A Study on the Origins of the Modern French Left, 1871-1914*) and penned polemical essays on U.S. foreign policy and Israel. **Moshe Lewin**, 88, a historian, wrote *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power* and *The Making of the Soviet System*.

Georges Charpak, 86, born in Poland and based in Paris, won the Nobel Prize in physics in 1992. **Jacob Bigeleisen**, 91, worked on the development of the atomic bomb in the wartime Manhattan Project. **Frederick Jelinek**, 77, helped make it possible for computers to decipher and translate human speech.

Belva Plain

Richard Bing, 101, was a cardiologist whose research gave medical science a better understanding of heart disease and blood flow.

Louis Henkin, 92, a Columbia University legal scholar, established the field of human rights law and wrote *The Rights of Man Today* and *How Nations Behave*. **Daniel Soberman**, 80, was a founder of Queen's University law school and co-author of a standard textbook, *The Law and Business Administration in Canada*. **Walter Isard**, 91, an economist, founded the field of regional science. **Eli Comay**, 90, an urban planner, headed the Metro Toronto Planning Board from 1962 to 1966.

Larry Evans, 78, was five-time United States chess champion and author of, among other works, *The 10 Most Common Chess Mistakes*. **Bruce Cohen**, 65, an ordained rabbi, founded Interns for Peace, which brings together Israeli Jews and Arabs. **Dorothy Stowe** (Rabinowitz), 89, a social worker, was a founder of the non-governmental environmental group, Greenpeace. **Philip Hoffman**, 80, was a pioneer in Hawaii's 1950s surfing boom. **Wilfred Posluns**, 78, established the Dylex fashion empire in Canada.

Benjamin Kaplan, 99, a U.S. army officer in World War II, helped craft the case against Nazi war criminals at the Nuremberg trials. **Martin Dannenberg**, 94, an American intelligence officer, unearthed the original documents of the 1936 Nuremberg Laws, which stripped German Jews of their citizenship.

Richard Holbrooke, 69, was U.S. President Barack Obama's special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, the architect of the Dayton accords that ended the war in Bosnia and the former American ambassador to the United Nations and Germany. **Robert Lipshutz**, 88, was White House adviser to U.S. president Jimmy Carter and a founder of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. **Abraham Lincoln Gordon**, 96, was U.S. ambassador to Brazil and president of Johns Hopkins University. **William Taylor**, 78, a lawyer and lobbyist, was instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act and the Fair Housing Act in the United States. **Georgi Arbatov**, 87, founded and directed the Institute for U.S.A. and Canada Studies in Moscow during the Soviet Communist era.

Israel Dostrovsky, 92, was the first general manager of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission. **Israel Tal**, 86, an Israeli general, was the father of the Merkava, Israel's main battle tank.

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From left to right: Bill Myhill, Gloria Sullivan, Betty Krunys, John Blewett, Trustees of Willowdale United Church

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Na'amat director retires at age 82

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Lorraine Levine

Lorraine Levene, 82, may have retired as executive director of Na'amat Canada, Toronto, in October, but she doesn't feel like she ever "worked" there.

The wife, mother of four, grandmother of five and great-grandmother of three, said that throughout the 33 years she spent at Na'amat, she felt as if it was her family and the cause was near to her heart.

Levene, whose mother lived until 103 and her father until 96, said that growing up, "my parents, who were Labour Zionists, taught me to feed others before feeding myself, so coming to Na'amat was a natural fit. I was managing a store when I was recommended to be executive director, and it was just like coming home. [The organization embodies] everything I ever believed in."

Her proudest accomplishment, she said, is Na'amat Canada Toronto's technological high school in Hadera, Israel, completed in 1989, whose purpose is to give troubled teens a second chance at acquiring an education.

In 1980, she said, she was on a mission to Israel, and stopped in at the high school. "Then, there were only portables, and there were few bathrooms and little heat. I told them I would do my best to raise money and build a proper school."

It took almost 10 years, she said, but she helped raise more than $1-1/2 million. "At the dedication in the early '90s, they honoured me by giving the amphitheatre my name. It was a total surprise. I can't tell you what it meant to me. It is still my pet project."

Instead of a retirement dinner, she said, Na'amat is "surprising" her with a tribute book in her honour, and all funds raised will go to the school.

She was moved, she said, when Camp Gesher, part of Habonim Dror – the youth branch of Na'amat Canada – named the recreation hall after her. "What made me especially proud, was that the kids wanted to do it."

Also important to her, she said, was "bringing Israel to the Toronto community."

The organization now runs the annual Israel Day Festival at Mel Lastman Square, along with the Canadian Zionist Federation. "It is amazing how many non-Jews attended the festival, who knew nothing about Israel except what they read in the paper. They didn't know the positive side."

It is all these things combined, she said, that made her job special. "Most of all, it was the people. Not just the members, but the donors, whether they gave a lot of money or a small amount.

"I always made sure to add a personal note to every receipt. I wanted them to know they were appreciated."

She said that several years ago, a non-Jewish Ethiopian man saw an article in his local Ontario newspaper that Na'amat was helping Ethiopian Jews in Israel. "He began sending us annual donations, and every year I called him to thank him. This year he told me he had retired and couldn't send as much as before."

She misses the challenges of her job, she said, but she has completely stepped back "because I don't want to hold back the organization. I want them to find their way without me."

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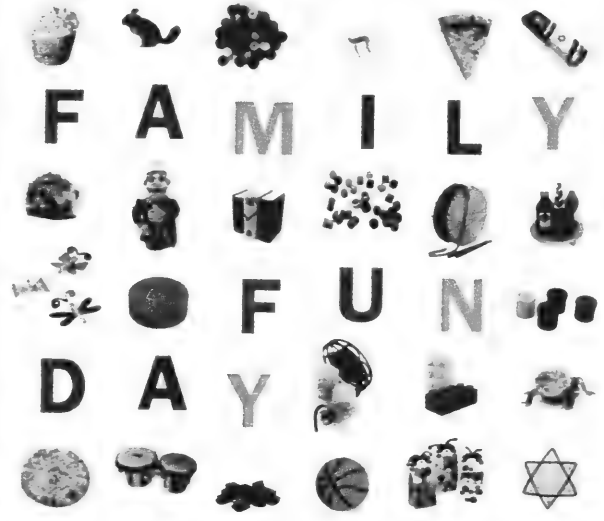

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FIGHTING FIRE: Grade 8 students at Leo Baeck Day School's Thornhill campus have been selling bottles of water to raise funds to help Israel rebuild after the recent fire in Carmel. So far, they've raised more than $500 to be donated to the Jewish National Fund. Pictured, from left, are Sarah Wise, Sierra Goldfinger and Amanda Atkin. At the same time, students at Leo Baeck's south campus raised $1,400 for the Jewish National Fund to help Israel rebuild.

A "BORN-AGAIN" CHRISTIAN BORN AGAIN AS A JEW!

WHY A MINISTER CHOSE JUDAISM

A lecture with YEHUDAH TEBBITT

Ten years ago, Yehudah Tebbitt was an Evangelical Christian minister. He began seeking the original roots of his faith and soon was questioning many key doctrines of Christianity. This led him to a deep involvement in the "Messianic Jewish" movement. His search ultimately led him all the way back to the Jewish faith!

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Longtime educator 'gives back' by teaching adults

Eighteen years after retiring as director of education for United Synagogue Day School (USDS), Aaron Nussbaum is marking his "chai" year teaching adults on a volunteer basis at two Toronto synagogues.

A native of Antwerp, Belgium, Nussbaum will celebrate his 80th birthday next month. He and his family spent the war years in unoccupied southern France, immigrating to New York just before his 13th birthday.

By Frances Kraft

A Wednesday morning Talmud class that he teaches at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue arose out of a conversation with the late Rabbi Joseph Kelman, then spiritual leader of the congregation, when the two men saw each other at a wedding. Nussbaum also teaches a Thursday morning Bible class at Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue.

"It's a way of giving back to the community," he said.

Nussbaum has called Toronto home for the past 49 years, ever since he was hired as founding principal of USDS, now known as Robbins Hebrew Academy. Prior to that, he taught and was a principal in Jewish schools for 10 years.

An alumnus of the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), he completed two masters' degrees before earning a doctorate in Hebrew literature in 1973. JTS awarded him an honorary doctorate in pedagogy in 1987.

As a student, Nussbaum, who was raised in an Orthodox home, was a member of Bnei Akiva (then called Hashomer Hadati), an Orthodox youth movement. As a teenager in New York, he attended Yeshiva University High School.

Currently a member of three Orthodox synagogues, Nussbaum likes to call himself a "traditional" Jew. He clarifies, demonstrating precision and a low-key manner that are familiar to his long-term students. "The term 'orthodoxy' means 'correct thinking,' he said. "I would put emphasis on 'correct doing.'"

He said that JTS appealed to him for its "open and critical approach to Jewish text... and yet the seminary was a place of Jewish observance."

At first, it seemed he was headed in a different direction, studying structural technology for two years at a community college in New York. He said he "fell into" education when he was teaching students in Hashomer Hadati.

Although Nussbaum spent most of his educational career as an administrator, over the years he has taught various aspects of Jewish studies at Toronto's Midrasha L'Morim, York University and the University of Toronto.

"Teaching adults is great," he said. "You allow yourself a lot of leeway to say things you wouldn't say to kids."

Some of the subject matter he addresses in his current classes may not be appropriate for children, but Nussbaum – a father of three, grandfather of eight and great-grandfather of two, who has been married 59 years – believes in being "as honest as possible with kids, always."

Jewish education has improved over the years, he said, citing the increased use of modern pedagogic methods and better professional training.

"I just met two Jewish kids, and they like [their Jewish day] school, and that's great," he said.

Nussbaum enjoys the classes he teaches, too. "It's really exciting, and it makes me go back to the sources."

A LESSON FROM THE TEACHER

"We use our intellectual powers to investigate the Torah in all aspects (Torat Emet), and simultaneously the ultimate facet of Torah is Torat Chayim, which means you follow the laws and customs as they should be followed. It unifies us, it's pleasant and it has social value."

Aaron Nussbaum at a recent class
[Frances Kraft photo]

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Toronto ER doctor volunteers in Haiti

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Karen Held's journey to Haiti began at a UJA meeting in Toronto.

Held is an emergency room physician at Markham Stouffville Hospital and a member of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's group for young health-care professionals.

In the spring of 2009, the founder of the Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid (IsraAID), Shachar Zahavi, gave a presentation to the group on the organization's disaster relief efforts in Haiti. IsraAID is an umbrella organization made up of Jewish and Israeli search and rescue, medical and relief groups that provide aid worldwide to people in need.

Dr. Karen Held works at IsraAID's primary health care clinic in Léogâne, Haiti.

Held was immediately interested and a few months later added her name to a list of doctors who wanted to work on the Haiti project. From Nov. 18 to Dec. 2, she worked at IsraAID's primary care clinic in the town of Léogâne, which was the epicentre of the January 2010 earthquake.

The primary health-care clinic is operated by the Israeli NGO Tevel b'Tzedek, one of many organizations under the IsraAID umbrella. It has been running for just a few months.

"[The clinic is] staffed by Israeli [and] Canadian physicians, as well as a local physician and a local pharmacist," Held said. "The idea is to have the foreign doctors... train the local staff so they can eventually take over when IsraAID pulls out."

As part of the Haiti project, Held added, IsraAID runs a mobile clinic once a week in a village in the mountains and teaches public health education.

"We would go to churches and community centres and talk about cholera prevention and cholera treatment and explain to the public what cholera's all about," she said.

"We were doing teaching sessions [for the local staff] on various medical topics. Because of the whole cholera issue, we were involved in local logistics planning with the WHO [World Health Organization] and the UN, and what role different NGOs should play if cholera gets bad in Léogâne. Because right now it's not, and it wasn't when I was there.

"At least when I was there, they were seeing 30 new cases a day, which for Haiti was not a lot. The majority of the cholera is up north."

Held said she would like to go back to Haiti, but hasn't made any plans yet.

"It was a really interesting experience. It gave me a lot to think about. I think there's some things that are really productive and useful... but there's a lot of things about Third World medicine and medicine in a place with a lack of resources that are frustrating. You can't necessarily always provide the care you think you should provide or you want to provide. That limitation... is challenging.

"It's a really devastating place. There's still tons of people living in tents and displaced... I don't think there was any running water in the town I was in, which is a pretty big town. Nobody had electricity unless they had generators. From a health perspective, those things are really important – particularly access to fresh water.

"I don't think [Haiti's] been able to [get a break] for a couple hundred years," Held added. "It's just total disaster."

The primary health-care clinic is fully funded by the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, which is also the largest single funder of IsraAID's humanitarian missions in the world. For more information on IsraAID, visit www.israaid.org.il.

on cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

• In an interview from Paris, Franco-Israeli novelist Chochana Boukhobza talks about her latest novel, *Le Troisième Jour*, and the role played by Jerusalem where the story takes place.

• In an interview when she was here for the 2010 Conference on Combating Antisemitism in Ottawa, Aviva Raz Shechter, head of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs department on combating antisemitism, talks about the need to also fight anti-Israel activity.

Also on the web:

• Federal government's anti-smuggling bill a "PR initiative," Liberal MP Irwin Cotler says.

From left are Westmount Collegiate Institute teacher Neil Orlowsky and students Brandon Schwartz, Ashley Cooper, Alyssa Ross, Adam Desai, Jake Newton, Harley Kizner and Corey Tuschak with supplies from dental kits that they sent to Haiti.

Students send dental kits to Haitian orphanage

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

When a Grade 12 world issues class was told to "make a difference in the world," one group of students decided to send aid to an orphanage in Haiti.

Alyssa Ross, Ashley Cooper, Brandon Schwartz, Corey Tuschak, Harley Kizner, Jake Newton, Adam Desai and April Mandaliti, all students at Westmount Collegiate Institute in Thornhill, Ont., recently sent 187 dental kits to Haiti's HIS Home for Children.

"As a group we decided that we wanted to help an orphanage in Haiti, as they have been through a lot," Ross said. "We knew that Port-Au-Prince has been greatly affected so we wanted to find an orphanage in that area. We started looking online to find different orphanages and [HIS Home] stood out. We felt that these young children could really use our help."

The students raised money by holding a bake sale at their school, with cupcakes donated by The Cupcake Shoppe.

"We raised $228, which was way more than we expected to raise," Ross said. "We only needed $110 to send the kits to Haiti, so we decided to give the rest of the money to the Daily Bread Food Bank."

Each dental kit contains two tubes of toothpaste, a toothbrush and a case of dental floss, donated by Colgate and Crest. Each kit also has a Canadian flag and sticker, donated by Thornhill MP Peter Kent.

The HIS Home currently houses 125 orphans, but Ross and her group sent 187 kits because "we felt that we should give some extras," Ross said.

UPS Canada sent the kits from Toronto to Florida free of charge, and the group used money raised from their bake sale to forward them on to Haiti.

The group chose to do something for Haiti to keep attention on the plight of the people there, Ross said.

"We felt that once the media stopped educating the community about what is going on in Haiti, people stopped caring [as much]."

For more information on the HIS Home for Children, visit www.hishomeforchildren.com.

Martin Prosserman presented with prestigious leadership award

JCCA honours philanthropist for landmark naming of Prosserman JCC

By Barbra Green

As the holiday of Chanukah came to a close, the family and friends of one of Jewish Toronto's preeminent philanthropists gathered to celebrate a different kind of miracle.

At an intimate dinner reception on December 9th, Martin Prosserman, the lead donor of the Prosserman JCC, was honoured by the Jewish Community Centre Association (JCCA) with the first-ever Keter Torah Award – The Crown of a Good Name.

"Marty Prosserman represents a miracle to the Jews of Toronto, to the Jews of Canada, to the Jews of North America and to Jews around the world," said Gary Lipman, the executive vice president and COO of the JCCA. "From a simple nickel bar of soap…he has brought forth light through his generous gift to build the Prosserman JCC."

Lipman, who travelled from New York to present the award, referenced Prosserman's five-cent inspiration for the $12 million JCC gift. Growing up poor in Montreal, Prosserman would frequent the Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA), where for a nickel, he could get a bar of soap, a clean towel and a hot shower. He realized, even then, that this was made possible thanks to the generosity of those who built and subsidized the facility.

Gary Lipman, executive vice president and COO of the JCCA (right) presents the Keter Torah Award to Martin Prosserman.

"We would not be sitting here tonight if it wasn't for the Y," said Prosserman, who learned how to swim, dance and even box at the YMHA. It is also where, at the age of 15, he met his late wife, Ellen.

The Keter Torah Award was created in order to recognize individuals like Prosserman who, through major gifts, have had JCC's named after them.

"You join a very distinct and special group of JCC philanthropists," said Lipman, whose organization represents over 2 million people and 275 JCCs and YMHAs across North America.

Prosserman's gift, the largest ever given to a JCC in Canada, was, and remains, an integral contribution to UJA Federation's $400 million Tomorrow Capital Campaign. The bold and unprecedented endeavour is re-envisioning and building three centres of Jewish life across the Greater Toronto Area: the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan, Sherman Campus in midtown Toronto, and the Miles Nadal JCC and Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life downtown.

"We are in the midst of a tremendous rebirth and revitalization," said Ted Sokolsky, President and CEO, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "The Prosserman JCC will be the centre, the anchor of it all. Marty and your family, you shared a dream we all had. Thank you for your faith. Thank you for your belief."

In addition to his own heartfelt remarks, Sokolsky had the privilege of presenting Prosserman with a congratulatory letter from the Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, the Prime Minister of Canada.

"The Prosserman JCC at Sherman Campus will stand as an enduring legacy and will help young Jewish Canadians realize their full potential for generations to come," wrote Harper. "On behalf of the Government of Canada, I commend you for your generosity and great sense of community."

While grateful for the accolades, Prosserman, true to form, reminded those present that the words of praise were unnecessary.

"I know what I did. I don't need anyone to pat me on the back," he said. "It's for them [my family] to follow through. I want my sons, my grandchildren, to realize and carry forward about giving."

It appears that wish is already coming to fruition.

His son Ron sits on the board of the Prosserman JCC and has been actively involved in various charitable organizations including the Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and Jewish Family and Child. Another son, Brian, gives of his time, teaching computers to seniors at the JCC that bears the family name. And grandson Michael is the founder and executive director of Urban Non-Violent Initiatives Through Youth (UNITY), a not-for-profit showing young people how positive forms of artistic self-expression can lead to better life choices.

"I feel fortunate that we're in the position that we can give back, whether it be money, time…any type of giving is good giving, and this is a wonderful gift that carries Bubby Ellen's legacy," said Ron in one of the evening's many emotional moments.

And with each child and grandchild who spoke, the picture of a man who values *tzedakah*, community, family and leadership came more clearly into focus. The man who founded Moore's The Suit People has raised a family committed to "carrying it forward," and is building a JCC that will improve and transform lives, much like Montreal's YMHA did for him so many years before.

דער יידיש ווינקל

דזשערי קעין

וען אַ פּינטעלע יידיש לעבן איז נעוואָרן אָפּגעמעקט פֿון דער קאַנאַדער מאַפּע: די באַראָן הירש קאָלאָניע

(1892-1942)

א פֿראַגמענט פֿון די זכרונות פֿון יצחק בוידראַנער

אכאָל, וען מען האָט אַרײַנגעקוקט אין אַ מאַפּע פֿון דער פֿראָווינץ סאַסקאַטשעוואַן, האָט מען נעקענט נעפֿינען דאָס שטעטעלע הירש. היינט עקסיסטירט עס נישט. הירש איז נעוואָרן אַ יידישע פֿאַרמער קאָלאָניע נעגרינדעט אין 1892 מיט דער הילף פֿון דער יידישער קאָלאָניזאַציע געזעלשאַפֿט אירפֿון נאָמען פֿון באַראָן הירש. ער האָט געגרינדעט די קאָלאָניע כדי צו פֿאַרשיכטערן די לאָגע פֿון יידישע אימיגראַנטן פֿון אירופּע וואָס דענען נעקומען באַזעצן זיך אירפֿון לאַנד אַרום הירש.

די קאָלאָניע האָט באַלד אויפֿגענעטלט אַ ביט־עולם (נאָך אייזדער סאַסקאַטשעוואַן איז אָפֿיציעל נעוואָרן אַ פּראָווינץ אין 1905. אַ ביסל שפּעטער איז אויפֿגעבויט נעוואָרן אַ שיינע שיל אוּן די קאָלאָניע האָט אויסגענאָלטן פֿיר רבנים. דער ערשטער איז נעוואָרן רב בערזער פֿון ענגלאַנד.

אימיגראַנטן דענען נעקומען ביז דעם יאָר 1928. אָבער מיט אַכט יאָר שפּעטער, נאָך עטלעכע יאָרן פֿון טרוקנעניס אוּן שלעכטן וועטער, וען די לאַנע האָט זיך פֿאַרוויגערט, האָבן אַ צאָל פֿון די פֿאַרמערס אַנגעהויבן צו פֿאַרלאָזן די קאָלאָניע אוּן אָנדערש זיך נידערט שטעט. אין 1937 דענען פֿאַרבליבן בלויז 17 פֿאַמיליעס אוּן אין 1942 איז דאָס שטעטל פֿאַרמאַכט נעוואָרן אוּן הירש איז אָפּגעמעקט נעוואָרן פֿון דער מאַפּע.

מיינע עלטערן דענען נעקומען קיין הירש אין יאָר 1922. זיי זענען דעמאָלט איינגעשטאַנען בײַ מײַן מאַמעס פּעטער, מיכאל שאָפּ. מײַנע עלטערן האָבען נעלעבט אין הירש ביז 1941, וווּ איך בין אויפֿגעוואַקסן אוּן דערצויגן נעוואָרן. דער פּעטער מיכאל שאָפּ איז נעפֿטרט פֿון די ערשטע־ער איז נעקומען, פֿאַר 1900 צו זיין פֿאַרם, צוויי קילאָמעטער פֿון שטעטל הירש. ער איז נעוואָרן דער לעצטער קובֿר צו חתּן אויף דעם הייליקן אָרט אין 1970, אין עלטער פֿון 94 יאָר. איך נעדענק אים וויּ אַ פֿרײַען, סטילען מענטש מיט אַ סאָציאַליסטישן אויסקוק אירפֿון לעבן.

מיינע נעאַנקן ניינען אָפּט צוריק צו מיכאל שאָפּ אוּן זיין כּלה, האָס האָבן פֿאָרלאָזט זייער הויז אוּן משפּחה אוּן נעקומען לעבן אין אַ ניי לאַנד. זיין בודדער, מײַן יידיש, האָט אים קיין כּאָל נישט מוחל נעוואָרן, וואָס ער האָט פֿאַרלאָזט רוסלאַנד.

אין יאָר 1980, צום 75סט יובל פֿון סאַסקאַטשעוואַן, איז פֿאַרנעקומען אַ צוזאַמענקום אירפֿון בית־עולם אין הירש, לזכרן אוּן לכבוד דער קאָלאָניע. מען האָט באַערט דאָס הייליקע אָרט, וווּ עס ליגן אין זייער אויבערע רו איבער הונדערט יידן. מען האָט אויפֿגעשטעלט אַ "פּלאַק", אוּן אָנדענק טאָוול פֿאַר דער יידישער קאָלאָניע. עס איז אויף דעם אויפֿגעשריבן, צוויישן אָנדערן, אין ענגליש: *הירש 1892-1942. אין אָנדענק פֿון באַראָן הירש יידישע אַגרעקולטורעלע קאָלאָניע... די קאָלאָניסטן דענען נעטריבן נעוואָרן פֿון זייער גרוים חילן צו אָנטלויפֿן פֿון דיסקרימינאַציע אוּן זיין פֿרײַ צו פֿראָקטיזירן זייער רעליגיע.*"

עס איז נעוואָרן פֿאַרזאַמלט אַן עולם פֿון אַרום 120 פֿון נאָנץ קאַנאַדע אוּן אַמעריקע – מענטשן, וואָס די קאָלאָניע האָט נעהאַט אַ השפּעה אויף זייער לעבן. עס דענען אויך נעוואָרן מיטגלידער פֿון פֿאַרלאָמענט אָפּצוזינגען כבוד. דאָס הייליקע אָרט וועט פֿאַרבלייבן וויּ אַ היסטאָרישע פּלאַץ.

פֿון רעדאַקציע: אויב איר האָט נעדאַנקען וועגן אונדזער וויקלי לאָזט וויסן,
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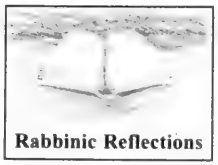

Rabbinic Reflections

By RABBI MARTIN BERMAN

At the beginning of the Book of Exodus, the Israelites are a free and prosperous people. Indeed, they're doing so well that their numbers expand, and the Egyptians begin to fear them.

So Pharaoh advises: "Let us deal shrewdly with them, so that they may not increase;" "So they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labour, and they built garrison cities for Pharaoh: Pithom and Raamses."

The Midrash Rabbah notes that the word translated by the JPS Tanach as "over them" would be *alayhem*, but instead the word in the Torah is *alav*, meaning "over him."

The midrash says that they brought a brick mould and hung it on the neck of Pharaoh, so that if any Israelite would say, "I am too delicate for such work," they would respond, "Are you more delicate than Pharaoh?"

So the Israelites joined in.

Little by little, Pharaoh wasn't working beside them. Little by little, the oppression grew, until they found themselves completely enslaved.

In life, things often happen little by little.

We ignore a leak for a little bit and it becomes a big leak. We ignore a problem and leave it to fester and grow. What was a little problem becomes a big one.

In truth, the way to overcome many problems in life is also little by little. It's hard to make big changes, but if you take them one step at a time, you can accomplish your goals.

Any dietician will tell you that the best way to lose weight is in a slow but steady manner. Quick weight loss usually leads to quick weight gain. Sudden big changes in life often lead to great dislocations and problems.

We must always be aware that even little steps can lead to big outcomes, be it for good or bad.

Rabbi Martin Berman is spiritual leader at Shaar Shalom Synagogue in Thornhill, Ont.

A wood cutting by Gustave Doré of Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh.

It's never just a name

As we begin reading the Book of Exodus, it's important to note that the book is not actually named Exodus. The English name for the book reflects what it considers to be the main event of the book: the Exodus from Egypt. In a Jewish world, the main event of the book isn't the Exodus, but rather the Revelation at Sinai. Clearly we're using the wrong name.

In actuality, the name of this book in Hebrew is Shmot, which means Names. So rather than beginning to read Exodus, we're actually beginning to read Names. Just changing the name of the book back to its original title creates a new perspective when we approach it. We're no longer looking for an exodus as the defining event, we're now searching for names.

Midrashic Moments

By Rachael Turkienicz

To truly understand the importance of this change, we must explore some of the significance that Judaism places on names.

From the very beginning, no creation was complete until it was named. The meaning of light changes when we call it day, and, likewise, darkness transforms when we call it night.

According to the midrash, God paraded all the animals before the first human being, who named them. Only after they're named is their creative stage complete.

Likewise, one of the stages of achieving independent life in Judaism is the naming stage. We are very careful about the names we choose for our children. The name will speak to the soul of the child and both will converse with the Almighty to form identity and personhood. We choose the names of righteous people in the family or inspirational people from our history.

There are times when a person may be facing a serious challenge in life or health. At such times, some people will add a name or even change a name in the belief that if we add a name, we add a voice to the conversation of destiny. If we change a name, perhaps we can change the destiny entirely. Clearly, we don't take this lightly.

So why would an entire book of the Torah be titled Names, especially when it seems that either the Exodus or the Revelation at Sinai would serve as key focal moments?

But the books of the Torah don't stand in isolation. They speak to each other.

The first book of the Torah is Genesis, and it spoke to us about creations – the creations of the universe, people, families, nations and covenant. The second book, Names, is now speaking to us about identity, both internally and externally. We watch the Israelites enter Egypt with a list of names, a firm identity. We watch how quickly the names disappear as slavery takes their place. We celebrate Sinai as the moment of self-identification, standing next to God.

The midrash in which the first human being names all the animals has a wonderful conclusion. After all the animals have been named, God asks the human what will he call himself, and he answers, "Adam, for I was taken from the earth." And in an astounding moment of meeting, God asks Adam, "What will My Name be?" Adam answers, "You are my Creator, You are my Lord."

We have named our Creator and we continue to name our children, our creations. I think nothing could be more fitting than to call a book of the Torah "Names."

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

Jewish Life

Ashdod of the Philistines

Today Ashdod is known as a port along Israel's Mediterranean coast that sometimes makes the news because of its proximity to the Palestinian enclave in Gaza from which it occasionally gets shelled. Yet Ashdod is also one of the major archeological sites along the coast of Israel.

Ashdod was first mentioned in the Ugaritic texts from coastal Syria dating to the latter part of the Bronze Age circa 1400-1200 BCE. It was a major site in antiquity and is mostly remembered as being one of the cities of the Philistine pentapolis. That is the five Philistine cities, which also include Gaza, Gath, Ekron and Ashkelon.

Past Forward
By Alex Gropper

The Philistines are a fascinating people. One of the most tantalizing things about them is their close cultural connections to the Mycenaeans. It is the Mycenaeans who are generally associated with the Greek host that besieged and sacked Troy. The siege and destruction of Troy is an event whose historicity is still hotly debated. But if it did happen, most scholars would place it at the end of the Bronze Age, which is dated around 1200 BCE. This is also the time when the Philistines make their appearance along the coast of Israel.

For archeologists, a major indicator of cultural affinity is pottery. At Ashdod, the earliest Philistine pottery that we have dates to the supposed period of the Trojan War. Furthermore, it is identical to the last phases of Mycenaean pottery. It is an intriguing example of the close connection between the Philistines and the Mycenaean Greeks.

It's ironic that the two cultures that are so crucial to western civilization, namely the Greek and our own, should have had such a close connection so early in their history. What is even more intriguing is the implication of how these two cultures could have influenced one another.

In the Bible, the person who is most closely connected to the Philistines is Samson, whose heroic exploits were carried out at their expense. It has been pointed out that there are parallels between Samson's deeds and that of Greek mythological heroes, especially Hercules.

Unlike most of the other Judges, Samson is not an adjudicator but a larger-than-life figure who is a man of action, a prankster who loves riddles, and a heroic figure who spends his time fighting the Philistines. He also gets romantically involved with their women. This fatal flaw costs him his life when he demolishes the temple to their god Dagon, by pulling it down on himself and the Philistine host gathered inside.

Israeli excavations at Ashdod were undertaken by Moshe Dothan, who along with his wife, Trude, are considered to be among the world's greatest authorities on the Philistines.

I once interviewed Trude Dothan for a show I did for the CBC, and she told me about the ground plan of a Philistine temple in Israel that she and Moshe had discovered that was identical to one found in Cyprus. The Cypriot temple was in turn identical to one found on the Greek mainland. This was an amazing piece of information that further stimulated my interest in the Philistines.

More recently, new evidence has been found about Philistine origins by scholars such as Prof. Timothy Harrison, an archeologist at the University of Toronto's Near East and Middle Eastern civilizations department, as well as professors Baruch Halpern and Ann Killebrew of Penn State University's ancient Mediterranean civilizations department. This evidence places the homeland of the Philistines in Cilicia, an area in what is now the southeastern coast of Turkey. Such new evidence has helped to rekindle an interest in the Philistines and their habitation in Israel, especially at sites such as Ashdod.

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Israel in snow

By Mark Mietkiewicz

Just a week after the country's most harrowing forest fire, much of Israel was blanketed with snow. Although the country gets a sprinkling of snow most winters, real storms are still a fascination for its residents.

The best place to start your tour is at YouTube for videos **[http://bit.ly/isnow1]** and Flickr for photos. **[http://bit.ly/isnow2]** You'll find hundreds of entries, including a video demonstrating the universal reflex for people experiencing their first snowfall: trying to catch as many flakes on your tongue as possible. **[http://bit.ly/isnow3]**

Jewish & Digital
By Mark Mietkiewicz

The Golan's Mount Hermon, home of Israel's ski slope, is the only place that you might find snow throughout the winter. When it opened in 1969, mules were used to get up the hills. There are ski lifts now. Ski Hermon's website has a couple of ski-cams, shots of the slopes and a snow-depth report. **[http://bit.ly/isnow4]**

Actually, Israel *does* have a second ski hill, sort of. Ski Gilboa, situated on the historic mountain where King Saul met his demise as recounted in the Book of Samuel, boasts a year round ski hill – although this one is decked out with an artificial ski surface. **[http://bit.ly/isnow5]**

Brian Blum doesn't have a lot of experience driving in any kind of snow – and it showed when he tried to tough his way through an Israel storm a few years ago. The main Tel Aviv to Jerusalem road had been closed, but he thought he knew better. So he took the "alternate route." Join Blum on his harrowing trek. **[http://bit.ly/isnow6]**

Jerusalemite (and former Chicagoan) Joyce Schur says when snow hits, her city comes to a standstill. "People just want to stand around staring at it… [the] reason being because no one knows what to do with it! … There's also no such thing as ice scrapers or calcium chloride. The city's municipal workers rush to the Super-Sol and grab big blue boxes of kosher salt for de-icing streets like Herzl (I am not exaggerating)." **[http://bit.ly/isnow7]**

Can we ever expect to see a white Tel Aviv? Don't hold your breath, says *Ha'aretz*. "Only an external cold wave could overcome the relatively warm winds from the sea – something that occurs once every 30 or 40 years. The elders of Tel Aviv remember (or perhaps not) the great snow of February 1950, which piled up to half a metre." **[http://bit.ly/isnow8]** Here are photos from that remarkable storm, including a snowman by the sea. **[http://bit.ly/isnow9]** The Hebrew Wikipedia article on Climate in Israel on the country's other big snowfalls. **[http://bit.ly/isnow14]**

Although this month's was a large storm, snow is nothing new to the Holy Land. Thousands of years ago, the prophets were also moved by its beauty. It was King David who said to God in Psalm 51:9: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." **[http://bit.ly/isnow10]**

Rabbi Boruch Leff has written two seemingly contradictory articles, The Mystical White Snow **[http://bit.ly/isnow11]** and Snow: The Dark Side. **[http://bit.ly/isnow12]** He points out that while snow has been described "as being an illuminating force that is tantamount to spiritual light," Kabbalah has also compared snow to a barrier to holiness. How can snow be both good and bad? Read the articles to understand how the rabbi bridges the dichotomy that is snow.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based website producer who can be contacted at highway@rogers.com.

'KOSHER' LABEL IN ADVERTISING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

Of rabbis, rent and absurd Chomskyisms

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Under the title, "A disturbing desecration of Jewish values" (*Jerusalem Post*, Dec. 12), Rabbi David Rosen, the Jerusalem-based director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, wrote a scathing rebuke to the effort of a number of rabbis in Israel to prohibit Jews from renting or selling property to non-Jews. This effort, initiated by Rabbi Shmuel Eliahu of Safed in the form of a statement to be signed by other religious figures, was the subject of several prominent stories last week in the Canadian media. It was also the focus of an excellent editorial in last week's *CJN*.

"It is some small comfort that the majority of rabbis approached by Eliahu refused to support his initiative, that the chief rabbis have disassociated themselves from it, and that many notable rabbinic figures have publicly condemned it," Rosen wrote. But he went on to raise concern that "this deplorable letter" reflects the "degree to which fear and paranoia prevail in segments of our society."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quick to condemn the "no rent" rabbis' ruling, as were other senior political figures. Benny Begin, a Likud cabinet minister prominent for his very conservative political views, is less well known for his principled defence of the protection of Israel's minorities under the rule of law. He has been in the forefront of those arguing that not only is Israel's Jewish character compatible with its liberal democratic commitments (as enshrined in its Declaration of Independence) but that the latter in particular must be protected.

"We must respond, publicly, to indicate to the public, to the Arab sector, that we do not agree with the letter," Begin urged.

* * *

It's interesting that many on the far left who would correctly denounce the actions of the "no rent" rabbis are also among those who lead the campaign against recognizing Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people.

In their view, while it's racist to refuse to rent or sell property to Arabs, it's not racist to refuse to recognize Jewish "ownership" to a part of their ancestral homeland. This despite the fact that such "ownership" was recommended by the UN itself in 1947.

Ironically, leftist radicals misapprehend their own intolerance toward Jewish claims as "progressive." They fail to acknowledge that one cannot denounce the former as a form of bigotry without also condemning the latter in the same way. But this is precisely what many on the radical left – and radical right – do all the time, with impunity.

* * *

Noam Chomsky is praised in some circles for having been designated the world's No. 1 public intellectual. That title has never inhibited him from saying outrageous things. In fact, it's probably part of his wide appeal.

Noam Chomsky

Still, it's one thing to be provocative, and another to be blatantly and factually wrong, even to the point of uttering sheer nonsense.

But that's precisely what Chomsky did when, on TVO's Dec. 6 *The Agenda* with Steve Paikin, he insisted that Hamas' refusal to recognize Israel's legitimacy is no different from Mexico's refusal to recognize America's.

Yes, that's what he said. According to Chomsky, while Mexico recognizes the United States as a fact, it doesn't recognize the legitimacy, for instance, of U.S. sovereignty over former Mexican territory such as Texas.

Paikin immediately jumped in to note that Mexicans aren't crossing the border to blow themselves up in U.S. cities to air their grievances. That observation seemed lost on Chomsky, as did the obvious fact that Mexico has not declared its intent to destroy the United States and replace it with a Mexican state, even in part.

More to the point, Mexico's relations with the United States are not based on its temporary acceptance of the "fact" of America's existence, but upon genuine co-existence and mutual recognition.

Chomsky's remarks are breathtakingly absurd, and the absurdities of his analogy with Hamas keep mounting the more one thinks about it.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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CJC 'took best possible action'

Continued from page 3

He added he was also "very upset" by the fact that a key Jewish community group such as Canadian Jewish Congress would salute and help the government in its "inadequate" support of the monument.

Congress CEO Bernie Farber told *The CJN* that his group supports Bill C-442, adding that Volpe's funding concerns are overblown and that passing the legislation is the fastest way to get the project done.

He said Volpe sent Congress letters on this issue throughout the bill's progress through the legislative review process.

"We can have differences of opinion. But Congress was representing the will of Holocaust survivors and the understanding that this [monument] has already been years in the making," Farber said.

"Having to wait to see if a government would or would not fund it, I believe, and many survivors believe, that they would not live to see the day it would be erected. So we took what we believed was the best possible action" in supporting the bill.

In a statement, Thornhill MP Peter Kent, minister of state of foreign affairs (Americas), who urged Uppal to bring the bill forward, said that the "project is far too important to get bogged down in partisan bickering… it was always the intention to fund the project with donations from Canadians of all religions and origins."

Hank Rosenbaum, past-president of the Canadian Yad Vashem Society and a Holocaust survivor, echoed Congress' position, saying survivors have "waited many years" for a monument and fundraising should come from the Jewish community.

"The economic times are horrible. We don't want to burden the government of Canada… We don't want to load up taxpayers with another expense that the community could fund," Rosenbaum said.

However, Volpe noted that Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney announced last week that Ottawa is funding two memorial projects by Vancouver's Khalsa Diwan Society.

The society will get $82,500 to work with the Vancouver Parks Board to find a location and design a monument to commemorate the *Komagata Maru* incident of 1914. That ship, with 376 Indian passengers, was refused entry at the Vancouver port and returned to India, where many passengers died in clashes with British soldiers.

Bernie Farber

Kenney said the society will also get $104,000 in public funding to develop the first phase of a museum about the incident.

Rosenbaum responded that there could be any number of reasons why the government chose to fund the Komagata Maru project and that it had no bearing on the Holocaust monument memorial.

Earlier this year, the government gave Congress $500,000 to fund a Daniel Libeskind-designed sculpture memorializing Canada's 1939 refusal of entry to the M.S. St. Louis. That funding came from Citizenship and Immigration Canada's Community Historical Recognition Program (CHRP).

Arab-Jewish dialogue group hopes to branch out

BY MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — It began as a friendship between longtime Winnipeg Jewish community leader Harold Buchwald and Egyptian-born Winnipeg businessman Ab Freig.

"Harold and I were both on the board of the Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice," Freig recalled. "We were talking one day and decided that it might be a good idea to establish a group where Jews and Arabs could get together and begin a dialogue with each other."

Now, after more than three years of quiet dialogue between Jewish and Arab community leaders in Winnipeg, the Arab Jewish Dialogue – one of the last initiatives of the late Harold Buchwald, who died in April 2008 at age 80 – has matured to the point where the group members are ready to go public and entertain invitations to expand their dialogue between Canadian Jews and Arabs to other Canadian communities.

The newly declared Winnipeg chapter held its first public function – by invitation only – on Dec. 14 at Winnipeg's historic Fort Garry Hotel. About 50 to 60 attendees were treated to an overview of the history of European antisemitism by Catherine Chatterley, a postdoctoral fellow in the University of Manitoba's department of history and the director of the Canadian Institute for the Study of Antisemitism.

Ab Freig, left, and Howard Morry, co-chairs of the Arab Jewish Dialogue *[Myron Love photo]*

Although not Jewish herself, Chatterley said she was drawn to a study of antisemitism in part because her learning about the Holocaust occurred in a vacuum, and she was driven to study its origins.

In her presentation, she described in words, and in slides illustrating Christian art and sculpture, the evolution of the Christian demonization of "the Jew" through the centuries and, later, the racialization of Jews by 19th-century nationalists.

Among the highlights of her presentation:

- Jewish moneylenders in Christian Europe were only active in the 12th century. After that, Italians took over the role because it was too dangerous an occupation for Jews to be engaged in.
- While there are semitic languages, there's no such thing as a semitic race or semitic peoples.
- Goebbels, not Hitler, ordered Kristallnacht, much to Hitler's disapproval, because pogroms were for the lowly Slavs, he felt, not Germans.
- The Internet has been the major driving force in a new, worldwide and virulent outgrowth of antisemitism.
- European-style antisemitism is a relatively new phenomenon in the Arab and Muslim world, dating back less than 25 years.
- antisemitism is rebounding in Europe as the impact of the Holocaust wears off.

Chatterley is scheduled to be the first in a series of speakers that the Arab Jewish Dialogue plans to present. "It's important to foster dialogue to create understanding between peoples," Freig said. "If you get to know each other, it's much less likely that you will hate the other."

Mel Lazareck, president of the Jewish National Fund's prairie region (and recently appointed special representative from Manitoba to Israel), who is also a member of the Arab Jewish Dialogue, said the Jewish and Arab members of the group have gotten to know each other and their families very well and have taken several trips together – most recently a visit to Egypt.

"We're hoping that our example will inspire other Canadian Jews and Arabs to get to know each other," said Howard Morry, a past president of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg and co-chair of the Arab Jewish Dialogue with Freig.

Morry said there has been interest in the Arab Jewish Dialogue from Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. "We hope to go national some time next year," he added.

Wiesel to act as honorary chair of antisemitism institute

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Nobel Peace Prize laureate Elie Wiesel earlier this month agreed to become honorary chair of the Canadian Institute of the Study of Antisemitism [CISA], established here this summer by historian Catherine Chatterley.

"Prof. Wiesel is such a powerful symbol for so many of us – both Jews and non-Jews," Chatterly said in expressing her pleasure. "He is a uniquely respected symbol of Jewish continuity and survival after the Shoah, a remnant of that incredibly diverse and creative world that was Jewish Europe, but also symbolic of our deep universal humanity, our connection to one another and our hopeful resilience as a species."

CISA is committed to building a coalition of individuals from a variety of political, ethnic and religious backgrounds who want to educate the public about the history and nature of antisemitism in its classic and contemporary forms, Chatterley said.

"Unfortunately, our post-Holocaust focus on racism and human rights has not produced an equivalent knowledge or concern about antisemitism. We must work to change this reality. Antisemitism must be given equal weight and concern and must be placed on the international human rights agenda." she added.

Elie Wiesel

With these goals in mind, she said, she is even more pleased that Wiesel has accepted her request. "I am very grateful that he has chosen to stand as the symbolic head of CISA. I'm thankful to be able to consult with him as CISA charts its course for the future," Chatterley said.

Chatterley, who was born and raised in Winnipeg, completed a BA in European history at the University of Manitoba and teaches a course on antisemitism and the Holocaust there. She trained as a cultural and intellectual historian at the University of Chicago in the fields of modern Jewish history, modern German and central European history. She spent two years in Montreal in a master's program at Concordia University under the guidance of Prof. Frederick Krantz, who is also the founding director of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, and she was a member of the Montreal Institute for Genocide Studies.

"Holocaust denial, obfuscation, other forms of minimization and outright erasure are growing worldwide," Chatterly said. "CISA is dedicated to resisting these processes intellectually and to protecting and preserving the scholarly study of the Holocaust as a catastrophic and transformative event in western history."

CISA is an independent academic charitable organization. For more information, visit http://www.can-isa.com.

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History grad's dreams come true at the Israel Museum

Tenenbaum in Jerusalem's Old City

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Since she started her internship at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, Dori Tenenbaum's life has come full circle.

In 2008, she went on a six-week archeological dig in Khirbet Qeiyafa, which is located on the hills that border the Elah Valley. Tenenbaum was part of the team that discovered a Hebrew ostracon, a piece of pottery with Hebrew script on it.

While at the museum one day, more than two years later, she found that same ostracon on display.

"In my wildest dreams I could not have predicted I would be part of a discovery of an inscription that would be hailed as the world's oldest Hebrew inscription, let alone seeing it on display at the museum I am working at," she said.

Since October, Tenenbaum has been interning at the museum, a longtime dream of hers.

"For a long time I have known that I wanted to work at the Israel Museum," she said. "I was hooked after my first visit. Summer 2008 I [wanted to work there], but the museum was closed for renovations.

"I have always been fascinated by history. I look around me and see the stories of peoples long ago, whether it be from shoes left behind, pottery, or an inscription.

"When it came time to thinking of a career, the thought in the back of my mind was always 'how do I find a way to end up at the museum?' I see museums, like universities, as the venue to interpret history."

After graduating from York University, where she majored in history, Tenenbaum learned about a program called Career Israel. Career Israel places Jews from around the world in internships in Israel, which is how she got the internship at the Israel Museum.

Her main job at the museum is helping it become digital.

"For the average person, when they hear this, they yawn. It sounds boring, but I love it. It is the nitty-gritty details that make a museum function," Tenenbaum said.

"I have learned so much in the process, not just about museums, but also about the pieces I have worked on. It is not just about entering information into the computer. It is about internalizing the information that I am inputting. It is about seeing how each piece fits into the big picture, understanding that each artifact or artwork fits into a theme when placed in the gallery.

"The experience has been incredible," she added. "The internship has been a dream come true... I truly look forward to going to work each morning."

Tenenbaum, a Torontonian by birth, found the experience so incredible, in fact, that she recently decided to make her six-month stay in Israel permanent.

"Aliyah is something I have always thought about, but never was really sure it would happen," she said.

"When I decided to come on [Career Israel], I wanted to use it as a pilot trip for seeing what life is like really living in Israel... There really is nowhere else in the world for me to be. Israel is one of the best places in the world to be in my field. Since Israel has been inhabited by so many cultures, you really get everything here. Spiritually, I feel at home here."

In addition to archeology and history, travelling is something Tenenbaum has always had a passion for. In the summer of 2007, she spent three weeks studying modern and contemporary Italian culture in Rome, and once her internship at Israel Museum is complete, she plans to spend three weeks in Europe. Her fascination with history is very much connected to her love of travelling.

"I studied the history of Greece, Rome, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Israel. I always enjoy when Jewish history comes up in the historical sources."

With all her travel experiences, Israel is the place Tenenbaum feels most connected to. "[It] is my home," she said.

"Judaism is extremely important to me. I grew up in a modern Orthodox home that stressed Judaism and Zionism. Being a Jew is my identity, it defines who I am. I am a Jew first and a citizen of the world second."

When asked about her favourite moment in Israel so far, she finds it hard to choose just one.

"There have been so many amazing adventures and experiences that I cannot choose. With my program, we went on this amazing three-day trip to the Golan and the Galilee.

"I toured around the Old City of Jerusalem and attended cultural events around the city. I met amazing new people— Israelis, North Americans and new olim. I could go on and on about my experiences and the amazing people I have met along the way."

For a full account of Tenenbaum's Israeli adventures, visit www.adventuresofdoritheexplori.blogspot.com.

Omission

The article "On-set tutor's first student was Lindsay Lohan" (Dec. 16) should have included the information that Andrea Eisen's pen name is Andrea Dana.

Fogel to head restructured advocacy agency

Continued from page 1

He's scheduled to assume his new post on Jan. 1, Cummings said.

The details of the national restructuring plan exist in a brief called the "Newco Document," which the CIJA reorganization committee had distributed to all its affiliated agencies, including Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), CIC, the University Outreach Committee (UOC), the Quebec-Israel Committee (QIC) and UIAFC.

Steven Cummings

The document remains unavailable to the public due to "a number of issues that continue to be tweaked. But it has had very broad distribution within the federated communities," Cummings said.

In November, officials at Congress voiced fears it would be dissolved under the reorganization and that its 90-year history and resonance within the community would be lost.

Cummings said that one of the natural steps in the creation of a new community advocacy entity would be the dissolution of "a number of boards as they exist today," followed by their rebirth as various "regional councils" that would be formed as part of the new advocacy structure.

That dissolution process is well underway, he said.

"Part of the reorganization is to create one advocacy organization. CIC, CJC, UOC and QIC will be folded into one new organization. This is happening over the next few months," Cummings confirmed.

Mark Freiman, Congress president and a member of the restructuring committee, said CIJA's consolidation process is now moving into the area of "making some difficult decisions," although he said he's encouraged that many issues that are important to his organization "remain on the table, and there is a stated openness to further discussion on issues, including the future of the [CJC] name and tradition. I'm especially encouraged by the insistence of the committee on issues of transparency."

The branding of the new entity is still up in the air, Cummings said, though he confirmed that the "Congress" moniker is still being considered.

"There are a lot of people that support the name CJC. It's a name that has a great history," Cummings said, adding that CIJA will be "looking at a number of firms" to help it finalize the naming decision.

Cummings said he expects much more news about the restructuring project to come out over the coming months.

"Our constituency is the Jewish community... but we're not quite ready to make this a public process."

Fogel told *The CJN* that he's "excited" about his new job.

"For some time, I've felt that the direction that [CIJA] is going in is the most appropriate and most effective way for us to move forward as the next stage in the evolution of Jewish and pro-Israel advocacy here in Canada."

He said that CIJA had always intended to use the first few months of 2011 to "provide real specificity of each dimension" of the new entity to the CIJA and UIAFC boards for final endorsement at UIAFC's June meeting.

Fogel said the restructuring committee is now expanding and heading into "Phase 2," in which it will widen its consultation with stakeholders with the aim of "capturing different representation" from more diverse voices in the Jewish community.

It will be Fogel's job to "staff" the new committee for Phase 2, he said, adding that it will go through a "very difficult" process in implementing the Newco plan.

Asked if this meant layoffs at the various agencies being folded into the new entity, Fogel said staff cuts are part of it.

"Each agency has its own culture, approach, set of agenda items... all of which are important, and the challenge is to merge not just the advocacy agendas they had carriage of, but also achieve something greater than the sum of its parts," he said.

Fogel added: "Economics wasn't the driving force of the reorganization process. But there is an expectation that now that [CIJA] is undertaking it, they will be able to achieve a degree of efficiencies."

The savings would go to preserving and expanding *"tachliss"* (essential) programs rather than to "overhead," he said.

With regard to how the restructuring will affect staff at the various institutions, Fogel said that for some, it would mean "a reaffirmation of their positions, but it may mean a different set of files that they have to deal with that they didn't have to before. For others, it may mean identifying their generic talents and redeploying them to areas where they can be just as effective, but which address a hole in the range of services and expertise that we want. And for some, it may be an opportunity to leave the system in a constructive and dignified way, either because they feel it's time for a change or other opportunities present themselves.

"But what informs the entire [restructuring] process, and I've heard this repeatedly from all leadership, is the recognition that everybody who's professionally involved in the system right now merits full consideration reflecting their commitments to the things that were most important to the community."

ABRAHAM'S TENT: As part of their Bible studies, Grade 2 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School enjoyed a recent visit to Ohel Avraham (Abraham's Tent) in Bialik's Israel Interactive Centre. The centre's director, Nurith Sela, right, transformed the room into a tent to teach students about life in Israel at the time of Abraham.

Audit says agency board driven by ideology

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

A long-awaited forensic audit has shed further light on the infighting that has convulsed Rights and Democracy, a federal government human rights agency that was plunged into turmoil after its newly appointed chair sharply questioned funding to Middle Eastern organizations critical of Israel.

Last week, a leaked report issued by the firm of Deloitte & Touche recommended that Rights and Democracy's new board of directors should "review, define and establish [its] strategic orientations and communicate them to management personnel."

And rather than discovering examples of wrongdoing at the agency, the auditors found that bookkeeping deficiencies were being resolved.

Critics say that Rights and Democracy – which receives $11 million in annual funding from the government – has been transformed into an ideologically driven body since pro-Israel board members, such as new chair Aurel Braun, came on board in 2009.

In its report, Deloitte & Touche said, "Our review indicates that the strategic orientation of Rights and Democracy appears to have changed during the years 2005 to 2010, especially with the arrival of new members of the board of directors."

Deloitte & Touche added, "These changes seem to be the source of several conflicts between certain members of the board of directors and certain management personnel."

The Montreal-based agency – which was created by then-prime minister Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative government in 1988 to encourage democracy and monitor human rights around the world – was thrown into chaos after Braun claimed that three organizations should have been denied funding.

Braun, a University of Toronto political science professor appointed to his position by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative government, objected that grants of $10,000 each had been sent to Al-Haq and Al Mezan, two Palestinian groups, and B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization.

Braun's position reportedly offended some board members and touched off philosophical clashes, though he strenuously maintained that the main issues really turned on accountability and transparency.

In his defence, Braun said the former president of Rights and Democracy, Remy Beauregard, who died after a contentious board meeting last January, had decided to "repudiate" the grants to Al-Haq, Al Mezan and B'Tselem.

Braun and Gerard Latulippe, the agency's current president, were due to discuss the audit at a parliamentary hearing last week, but it was postponed until the new year after the House of Commons broke for the holidays.

Mordecai Richler Boulevard?

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A Montreal-area city councillor Marvin Rotrand deposited a petition signed by 2,475 people in favour of naming a street or other public place in honour of the late Mordecai Richler at Montreal City Hall last week.

Rotrand, however, no longer thinks it's realistic to expect that the writer will be commemorated on the 10th anniversary of his death this coming July with the renaming of a street.

Marvin Rotrand

Rotrand, who launched the idea with Côte des Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough mayor Michael Applebaum in November, quickly surpassed his goal of collecting 2,000 signatures, including more than 1,000 online, the great majority of them apparently from Quebec.

The petition is now in the hands of Montreal's place names commission.

But it has become clear to them that renaming any street after anyone is likely to arouse opposition, and, in the case of Richler it has reawakened a vitriolic response from some francophone Quebecers.

"Many thought that naming a street was not appropriate or would be divisive," said Rotrand, who is majority house leader.

The proposal was immediately denounced by the head of the nationalist St. Jean-Baptiste Society head Mario Beaulieu who called Richler an "anti-Quebec racist" who "hated and denigrated French Quebecers."

That theme was picked up with a Facebook page entitled "Non à une rue Mordecai-Richler! Non au racisme anti-québécois!" to which 625 people have signed on. According to its creators, Richler "constantly denigrated Bill 101 and measures aimed at making French the common language in Quebec by associating them with Nazism and exclusion." Any commemoration of him would be "an insult to our culture and our identity."

The site has attracted comments that may be considered hateful themselves.

"There have been some extreme comments, but I don't think they represent the mainstream," Rotrand said. "The people who signed [his] petition come from all linguistic and cultural backgrounds." Some may not agree with his opinions on Quebec politics, but Rotrand said they recognize Richler's literary genius and the responsibility of his birthplace to have some permanent commemoration.

Rotrand said the most popular alternative and the one that he favours is the naming of a library, and the public Mile End Library, which is located near the district in which Richler grew up and made famous, seems to be a likely choice. There is a precedent: in the 1980s, Lachine named its public library for one of its most famous sons, Nobel Prize-winning author Saul Bellow.

Another suggestion that has come up frequently, which Rotrand also finds attractive, is the city's sponsorship of a literary prize in Richler's name.

SINGLES EVENTS
DEADLINE: Wednesday 4 p.m.
8 days preceding issue date

Shaar Shalom Singles
(in conjunction with the Intersynagogue Singles (45+)
invite you to
"LET'S DANCE AGAIN"
To the fabulous D.J.
DAVE JONES
Great music, dancing, & a casual
Mix and mingle evening
Sun., January 9 - 7:30 pm
Shaar Shalom Synagogue
2 Simonston Boulevard
(1 light north of Steeles on Don Mills)
Admission: $8.00
includes coffee & cake
For information, please call
David (416-224-9494)

Bone marrow drives held at campuses across Canada

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

The first country-wide "Get Swabbed" challenge was held at university campuses across Canada last month.

The challenge was launched in 2009 after Dustin Shulman, philanthropic chair for McMaster University's Alpha Epsilon Pi chapter, heard about Jonathan Grossman, a Thornhill, Ont., man who was searching for a bone marrow match.

Grossman did receive a bone marrow transplant, but died from chemotherapy-related complications on Aug. 30, 2009.

Only after a bone marrow drive was held for Grossman at Adath Israel Congregation in April 2009 did OneMatch, the bone marrow and stem cell registry run by Canadian Blood Services, start supporting drives. They previously found donors only through their online system.

Jason Grossman, Jonathan's son, credited the change in OneMatch's system to his father.

"It's a testament to who my dad was," he said. "If something in the system is wrong, you have to go and change it.

"He's been such an important influence on me. It's fantastic to see his legacy is carrying on."

Jason and his sister, Jessica Grossman, organized a drive at the University of Western Ontario in London. It was the first time a bone marrow drive was held there, Jason said. By the end of the drive, 618 people had been swabbed.

"For the one day that we did it in the space that we had, [it's] pretty amazing," Jessica said, stressing the importance of joining the registry at a young age.

"As you hit a certain age [50], you're unable to donate," she said. "Finding a match is very difficult… The more people who donate when they're younger, the better the chances for someone to find a match.

"It's actually been proven that the younger a person donates marrow, the better the chance of the transplant being successful."

Across Canada, 15 universities took part in the Get Swabbed challenge, including the University of Guelph; University of Toronto, Mississauga, St. George and Scarborough campuses; McMaster University; Wilfrid Laurier University; Waterloo University; University of Alberta; Algoma University; University of Windsor; Queen's University; Carleton University; University of Western Ontario; Memorial University and University of Ottawa.

Adam Moscoe, vice-president of Hillel Ottawa, said this was the first time Ottawa's Jewish student community organized bone marrow drives at University of Ottawa and Carleton.

Students get swabbed at the McMaster University bone marrow drive.

From left are Jessica Grossman with her mother, Julie, and her brother, Jason, at the University of Western Ontario's bone marrow drive.

The drives, which were organized partially by Hillel Ottawa and AEPi, added 475 people to the registry – 260 from Carleton and 215 from Ottawa.

"It is essential that young people of all ethnicities join the database," Moscoe said. "If someone 'matches' with someone, they are that patient's last hope of survival. Only 30 per cent of patients find a match within their family.

"I am thrilled that to see the Jewish community come together, working with Canadian Blood Services for such a great cause."

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Students Association; Faith Acts Ottawa; University of Ottawa Health Services; and numerous fraternities and sororities also helped to plan the drives, Moscoe said.

At McMaster, Shulman and AEPi again helped organize a drive. This year, they broke the record for the most people swabbed in a 24-hour period. In total, 1,144 people were swabbed, and 1,129 of those were done within the 24 hours.

"When the solution is something as simple as getting cheek swabbed, I think it's important we all do something relatively simple that could save people's lives," Shulman said.

"One of the most amazing things about this drive is it's one of the few events run on a campus that everybody can support and take part in, regardless of background or age."

Indeed, the McMaster drive saw support from many student groups, including the McMaster Health, Aging and Society Students Association; the Student Health Education Centre at McMaster; the McMaster Medicine and Health Society; McMaster Jewish Students Association; McMaster Students for Health Innovation; Golden Key Society, McMaster chapter, and the McMaster Cancer Society.

As a result of the 15 university drives, 5,709 swabs were collected.

For more information on OneMatch or to be added to the bone marrow registry visit www.onematch.ca.

Business

Buddies develop 'fresh' home accessories

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It's a question many shoppers face time and time again, what to give the person who has just about everything?

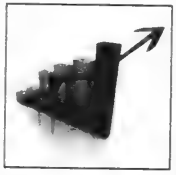
How about a "pet chateau – a really cool line of foldable, portable dog and cat houses," perfect for the office or cottage.

Or "tissue bath mats" that feel so soft and comfortable it's like walking on tissue paper.

Or foldable ottomans that double as a bench with a built-in tray.

Not your everyday sort of purchases, but it's amazing what you end up needing when the product is an everyday home accessory that fills a specific niche.

Adam Schachter and Jon Levy have created a business that caters to an underserved market segment. Their company, Fresh Home Elements (FHE), specializes in lines of home accessories that are "fresh, cool, contemporary, fun."



As well as affordable, notes Levy, who handles the back office part of the business – finance and logistics.

Schachter is more of the face of the company who deals with retailers and buyers. They work with a factory in China to make sure the finished products are up to their standards of quality and value.

FHE's product lines includes portable shopping and storage baskets, a portable bench with a wood tabletop, a folding chair and a line of picture frames.

"I design a lot of it myself," said Schachter. "I have a design director who works closely with me."

He generates many of the ideas, but he's also receptive to suggestions from people who have a keen eye on the market.

"I have such a strong enough relationship with retailers that they say, 'Adam, there's a hole in the market for this,' and I develop it."

The pet chateau is one product that came out of that creative process.

Schachter's contacts come from many years spent in the housewares business, and they have proven receptive when he makes the pitch to carry the firm's funky line of products. FHE merchandise can be found in Costco, as well as Costco's U.S. and Mexican branches, in Home Outfitters, Zellers, The Bay, Black's Photography, BINZ, T.J. Maxx in the United States and TK Maxx in Europe.

"We're thrilled with the rapid growth our brand has seen," said Schachter. "The success that has been generated here in Canada has leveraged us into the United States and beyond."

Although they won't be specific, Schachter and Levy say revenue after only one year in business is in the seven-figure range. They expect that number to double in 2011 as they expand into new international markets, including Japan and the United Kingdom. They're already taking orders for next year's back-to-school season for a storage system that's perfect for university students living in dormitories.

Needless to say, running a new business is a major undertaking. Schachter estimates he puts in 80 hours a week and "I'm on my BlackBerry 24/7."

Levy came to FHE with 10 years experience operating his own business, a DVD and entertainment firm that exported digital media. Schachter's route to entrepreneurship was more circuitous.

He studied radio and television arts at Ryerson University before moving to California to work on a tabloid TV show.

Eventually though, "I kind of realized that my priorities changed. I always thought I'd be in a boy band and be a rock star in L.A."

Instead, he got a job offer in Red Deer, Alta. At that point, he re-evaluated his career path and decided on a change with more stability.

Eight years ago, he returned to Toronto, put down roots and worked in the housewares industry. A little more than one year ago, he and Levy – they'd been friends since they were 10 – formed FHE.

"I've always been a sales guy at heart," said Schachter, the company president.

Levy, the managing partner, is more comfortable behind the scenes. "I deal more with the business financials and logistics," he said "I'm not flashy. Adam meets buyers, does sales and… is the face of the company."

Starting the business proved challenging. They sunk their own money and that of private investors (about 10 per cent of the total) into the company, since banks don't like to lend to firms without a track record. Before starting, "We had all our ducks in a row," said Levy.

So far, they're satisfied with the progress the business has made. They're making money and planning expansion.

"If you have good products at a good price that are original and different, you can get them into stores," Levy said.

"The key to us is to come up with original designs that people see as good value," he added.

Adam Schachter, left, and Jon Levy

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel tov Sylvia & Irving Ungerman on your 65th anniversary. Wishing you good health and happiness. Love, your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov Moey & Libby Greenberg on your 70th anniversary. With love from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Sahri & Bernard Baum and Ofra & Benny Perelstein are delighted to announce the recent marriage of their children Rebecca Woods Baum and Doron Pearl.

Happy 10th birthday Noah Wolgelerenter! Love, Mom, Dad, Nathan, Bubi, Zaidi, Grandma and Grampa.

Mazel tov on the recent wedding of Tali Medoff & Aaron Simon.

Jordan & Brooke Halpert are thrilled to announce the arrival of Jillian Zoe Oct. 26. Proud grandparents are Lily & Bob and Barbara & Avrom.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to WWW.CJNEWS.COM and click the Family Moments button!

JNF
Say it with Trees
"Mazel Tov on your Special Anniversary"
JEWISH NATIONAL FUND
416-638-7200

What's New

By LAURA STRICKER

Our regular columnist, Leila Speisman, is away on medical leave.

Weather: Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
TRAVEL INSURANCE
• Snowbirds
• Visitors to Canada
• Trip Cancellation
25% OFF LIMO VOUCHER TO TORONTO PEARSON AIRPORT WITH PURCHASE
call 416-636-3575
or email alana@travel-secure.com
Travel Secure
Your travel insurance specialists

There is no paper Dec. 30. Deadline for Jan. 6 is Dec. 23. Deadline for Jan. 13 is Jan. 3. Phone 416-391-1836. Fax 416-391-0829. E-mail cjnwhatsnew@gmail.com.

Friday, Dec. 24

EREV SHABBAT

Erev Shabbat service at Temple Har Zion. 8 p.m. **Rabbi Cory Weiss** will discuss "The Jewish View of the Messiah." 905-889-2252.

Saturday, Dec. 25

FAMILY FUN DAY

Join Beth Tzedec for an afternoon of family fun with sports, havdalah crafts, ceramics, havdalah drum circle, cookie decorating and more. 4-8 p.m. $10 each, advance registration only. Dinner $5 extra. 416-781-3511.

SHABBAT SERVICE

Join Shaar Shalom Synagogue for a winter Shabbat service in the social hall, with a special kiddush following service. 8:45 a.m. All welcome. 905-889-4975.

Sunday, Dec. 26

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Bingo, karaoke and games with Pride of Israel. Pizza and salad dinner. $10 for adult members, $12 for adult guests. $6 for ages 12-17, $4 for ages 6-12. Children 5 and under free. Purchase tickets in advance: 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

Other News

FOOD WRITER SPEAKS

"New Year, New You." Hear from food consultant, food writer and columnist **Norene Gilletz**. Beth Tzedec. Jan. 3, 1:30 p.m.

FILM SCREENING

Tuesdays with Larry, Beth Tikvah's film series. With commentary by **Larry Ankiewicz**, programming co-ordinator for the Toronto Jewish Film Festival. Jan. 4, *A Serious Man*. 2 p.m. $5 at the door.

CHORAL CONCERT

Celebrate Shabbat Shirah in a casual café setting and enjoy performances by Renanim Youth Singers and The Varsity Jews. Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tikvah. $18, $20 at the door, children under 16 free. 416-221-3433 for tickets.

SHABBAT SERVICE

Join Solel Congregation of Mississauga for its upcoming invite-your-neighbour Shabbat service. Jan. 14, 8 p.m. Open to the community. 905-820-5915 for information and directions.

BILLY ELLIOT

Beth Sholom is going to *Billy Elliot*. Jan. 30, 2011. $130 and $150. 416-783-6103 ext. 228.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Bernard Betel Centre needs volunteers for Meals on Wheels, to help seniors with basic computer skills, Healthy @ Home program and visiting seniors, in person or over the phone. 416-225-2112 ext. 127, karens@betelcentre.org.

BAYCREST VOLUNTEERS

Baycrest needs volunteers to assist their clients. Every Friday from 3-4 p.m. Baycrest has Kabalat Shabbat services. Volunteers are needed to escort clients to the program and help the women light the candles. 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

MISHPACHAH MINYAN

Families with young children are invited to attend services in the Cayne Family Chapel at Shaar Shalom Synagogue. 10:15 a.m. Jan. 8. Service ends to coincide with the main service so the participants can join the other members of the congregation for kiddush.

Continued on page 25

Intergenerational dinner opens dialogue for young adults

Holocaust survivor Agnes Tomasov, seen with her granddaughter Danielle Samuel, reads from her memoirs at this year's Dinner of Miracles. ***[Dana Bronsteter photo]***

BY STEPHEN SWEET
Special to The CJN

Professionals in their 20s and 30s recently had an opportunity to once again dialogue informally with Holocaust survivors.

At the sixth annual Dinner of Miracles on Dec. 6, held this year at Toronto's Petah Tikva Anshe Castilla Congregation, one or two Holocaust survivors sat at a table with six to eight young adults. The survivors told their story to their small group, who were free to ask questions.

"The young adults [engage] in conversation with the survivors, which is the whole point of the event," said Shawna Samuel, organizer and co-chair with Sherri Rotstein of the evening for the sixth year in a row.

As in past years, the dinner sold out within about a week.

"I think it's a very important event," Rotstein said. "We can tell by the number of returnees each year who come back and listen to the survivors."

For some participants, the experience isn't just for one night. "Many of the young adults maintain contact with the survivors once the event is over," Rotstein said. "I think that speaks to the importance of getting young adults to be able to connect with Holocaust survivors."

Many return to the event year after year, and some become moderators who facilitate the discussion at their table. They continue to be amazed by the stories they are told.

"Every time I hear what I think could be the most unbelievable story from a survivor, I'll come back the next year and hear one that blows my mind again," said Regan Tessis, who has been a moderator at all six dinners.

The idea for the dinner came from Samuel and Rotstein six years ago.

"Both of us have grandparents who are survivors, and fortunately and unfortunately, we grew up hearing the stories," Samuel said. "But we had a lot of friends who didn't have that opportunity."

Typically, she added, the only forum for the stories was in a lecture-type format at schools and community centres, and they found a lot of people weren't interested in doing that.

"So instead, we thought of an idea that would be more intimate and non-intimidating for young adults or the Holocaust survivors," Samuel said. "They can share a holiday meal, have heimishe food and share their life's story."

Tessis said that it's "a great format because you get to know [the survivors]. You feel that the stories are more catered to your questions. There's a very personal feel to it, and it allows for that collective dialogue with the survivors."

The organizers are aware that as time passes, the event will be harder to organize.

"From six years ago to now, we've lost a number of survivors who participated in the event," Samuel said. "They passed away, and that's the reality of life. We have to keep on listening to these stories and documenting them, eventually passing them on to the next generation."

Holocaust survivor Agnes Tomasov, the keynote speaker this year, read from her memoirs, which were recently published by the Azrieli Foundation. She and her family escaped the Nazis by joining the Slovakian partisans in the mountains.

The evening began with a moving recording of *Hatikvah*, made by Jewish survivors just a few days after they were liberated from Bergen-Belsen.

Rotstein and Samuel plan to continue to run the event every year.

Continued from page 24

45+ SINGLES DANCE

Shaar Shalom Synagogue Singles presents Let's Dance Again. Jan 9, 7:30 p.m. with DJ **Dave Jones. David**, 416-224-9494

YIDDISH FOR BEGINNERS

Join Temple Har Zion for Yiddish for Beginners. The series of 6 classes begins Jan. 6. First class is free, remaining dates will be announced at the first class. $15 for temple members, $25 for guests. 7:30-8:30 p.m. 905-889-2252

MEKOROT WEEKLY STUDY

Join a discussion and text study with **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner** of Yeshiva University Toronto Kollel as Mekorot begins the weekly study of the Book of Yonah. Tuesdays beginning Jan. 4, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Shaarei Shomayim. 416-877-2050

ADULT EDUCATION COURSE

Solel Congregation of Mississauga is holding a five-week "Doing Jewish" course starting Jan. 2011. For people who want to learn more about Judaism or for Jews who would like a refresher course on such subjects as the Jewish calendar, life cycles, kashrut and the Jewish home, High Holidays, etc. Each week a different topic will be discussed. Call 905-820-5915 to register and for directions.

SHABBAT POTLUCK

Or Hadash Synagogue is having an Oneg Shabbat with a dairy potluck dinner. Jan. 7, 6:30 p.m. 451 Botsford St., Newmarket. E-mail info@orhadash.org to confirm attendance and what you will bring to eat, or for more information.

DIABETES MEETING

Jewish Diabetes Chapter Meeting. "Diabetes and the Importance of Skin care," with **Dr. Frank Rosenberg**, dermatologist. Shaarei Shomayim, Brotherhood Hall. Jan. 11, 8 p.m. $1. 416-363-0177 ext. 7403.

HAFTORAH LESSONS

Have you ever wanted to learn to chant a Haftorah? **Cantor Ben Silverberg** at Shaar Shalom Synagogue will hold classes in the new year. Call him at 905-889-4975, ext. 27 or e-mail cantor@shaarshalom.ca to get on the list.

FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Computers: Beyond the Basics. Four Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m. Six students.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday social afternoons. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub, refreshments. $2. Pearl, 416-635-6317, or **Sheila**, 416-665-3333.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama Jan. 19, 10 a.m. Line dancing Thursdays, starts Jan. 6, 10-11:30 a.m. Social bridge Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Art classes start Jan 18, 10 a.m. Canasta Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-3 p.m. Seniors woodworking – skilled craftsmen. 416-630-6487.

LZA Senior's Cultural Club. Tuesdays 10 a.m. Discussion group at Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Temple Sinai Social Club. Enjoy an evening of camaraderie with the Temple Sinai Social Club (65+) Observe Shabbat with music and prayers. Buffet chicken dinner will be served (vegetarian available on request). Jan. 7. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Kabalat Shabbat service at 8 p.m. Members $16, guests $20. Registration required by 12 p.m. on Jan. 5. 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Lecture: "Great Italian Composers – Giuseppe Verdi, Part 3." Dec. 28, 10-11:30 a.m. Members $3, guests $6.

Lecture: "The French Revolution and Its Meaning, Part 1." With **Barry Fluxgold**. Jan. 4, 10-11:30 a.m. Members $3, guests $6.

Wellness lecture: "Get Around Safely This Winter." Toronto Public Health's falls prevention program, Part 1, Jan. 6, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Free.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St. www.prossermanjcc.com, 416-638-1881.

Buy tickets for Stage West, Mississauga – *Joseph and the Amazing Dreamcoat* Jan 26, Casino Rama Feb 15, *Billy Elliot* at Canon Theatre March 2 and *Tuesdays with Morrie* May 11.

Registration for courses starting January now open, with more Ryerson Chang programs for 50+.

Register now for winter family programs: Shabbat Party, Drama Tots, Preschool Dance, Lego Brand Brick Club, Baby and Me Sign and more. Visit the website for a full list.

There are no Creativity Club, Jokers Club or PRO meetings in December.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211, www. mnjcc.org.

Michael Bernstein Chapel services Sundays, 8 a.m. and Thursdays, 7:15 a.m. Kosher breakfast after services. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

2011 Toronto Jewish Film Society subscriptions are selling out. Eight great films at Al Green Theatre. Noted speakers introduce and discuss each film. 2011 paid-up members can buy 7:30 p.m. memberships for their kids (18+) for $60 if they've never been TJFS members. **Joelle**, ext. 139, or joellem@mnjcc.org to register.

Registration open for all winter programs. Aquafit, Zumba, Baby and Me, etc. Register at ext. 0.

Winter session of Shabbat Club for three- to six-year-olds with **Sarah Brodbar-Nemzer**. Games, songs, candles, crafts and more. Fridays, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. starting Jan. 21. Register at ext. 0.

Hebrew courses Jan. 18 and 19. Eight-week courses emphasize Modern Hebrew reading, writing, and conversation skills. Ext. 154, sharonis@mnjcc.org.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 22

What's New

NEW BIALIK CAMPUS

Bialik Hebrew Day School has announced the opening of registration for its new northern branch, slated to open on the Lebovic Campus in Vaughan in September 2013. Standing from left are philanthropists and Bialik supporters Irving Himel, Mel Himel, Pamela Himel and Joe Dwek. They look on as siblings Joanna Shore and Jonathan Spinner register their children for Bialik South in 2013 and Bialik North in 2014, respectively.

PEACE DOVES: Robbins Hebrew Academy students Jason Garbe, left, and David Ciss show off their kirigami doves, part of a tikkun olam project in which students folded 1,000 doves to show their hope for world peace. As part of the project, the students also read Isaac Bashevis Singer's story *Why Noah Chose the Dove*.

MAKING MUSIC: Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School Grade 4 student Tali Pukier, foreground, explains her self-made musical instrument – the rattle tattler – to Grade 1 students Adina Macklin, left, and Maya Sommer, right. Grade 4 students created a string, wind or percussion instrument and explained to their schoolmates, from kindergarten to Grade 8, how their instrument produces sound.

What's New is now online. You can find it at cjnews.com

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Frimette Lyons	Nov 27/10	117 Scenic Millway
Jo Lavitch	Nov 28/10	1679 Bathurst St
Bernie Frankel	Nov 27/10	1 Northwestern Av
Eleanor Chava Segalowitz	Nov 26/10	32 Barkwood Cres
Sybil Kunin	Nov 28/10	175 Cumberland St
Sarah Connor	Nov 28/10	3252 Dundas St W
Louis Savlov	Nov 29/10	645 Castlefield Ave
Rose Schacht	Nov 29/10	6200 Bathurst St
Vladimir Dorfman	Nov 29/10	601 Clark Ave W
Mina Miller	Nov 29/10	546 Steeles Ave W
Eddie Silverman	Nov 29/10	35 Canyon Ave
Alan Walton	Dec 1/10	20 Oxton Ave
Marc Huber	Nov 29/10	329 Betty Ann Dr
Ethel Shepherd	Dec 1/10	3560 Bathurst St.
Zvi Moses	Dec 2/10	1 Clark Avenue W
Sol Dennis	Dec 2/10	85 Skymark Dr
Helen Paciornik	Dec 2/10	55 Ameer Ave
Lily Cartman	Dec 5/10	59 Wolfe Street
Henry "Hak" Koretsky	Dec 7/10	21 Mayfair Ave
Henry Waks	Dec 7/10	61 Yorkville Ave
Dr. Arthur Rubinoff	Dec 7/10	54 Admiral Road
Patricia Cohen	Dec 6/10	506 County Road
Sam Levinson	Dec 9/10	7071 Bayview Ave
Eva Heti	Dec 7/10	1 Northwestern Av
Rosalie Glassbourg	Dec 8/10	1140 Bloor St W
Celia Finer	Dec 9/10	9800 Yonge St
Violet Ujazd	Dec 11/10	1201 Steeles Ave W
Helen Krakauer	Dec 9/10	355 St.Clair Ave W
Abraham Isaac Shniffer	Dec 11/10	120 Regina Ave
Allen Wassermuhl	Dec 6/10	517 Kingston Rd

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Ostrirov, Nyusya	Dec. 6/10	Private
Bendahan, Mercedes	Dec. 1/10	5935 Bathurst St
Fine, Jack	Dec. 1/10	115 Antibes Dr
Trakhtenberg, Bella	Dec. 2/10	170 Red Maple Rd
Orgad, Gavriel	Dec. 2/10	Private
Obazanek, Toby	Dec. 3/10	3560 Bathurst St
Fletcher, Isabel	Dec. 4/10	155 Antibes Dr
Chwaiewsky, Sam	Dec. 5/10	22 Norfinch Ave
Greenbaum, Samuel	Dec. 5/10	100 Antibes Dr
Lapsker, Arie	Dec. 5/10	7300 Yonge St
Rosenblum, Esther	Dec. 7/10	170 Red Maple Rd
Katz, Ada	Dec. 8/10	Private
Rykiss, Belle	Dec. 10/10	550 Cummer Ave
Blane, Vera	Dec. 10/10	3560 Bathurst St
Mukamal, Naima	Dec. 11/10	553 Lawrence Ave.
Ber, Zysha	Dec. 10/10	Private
Eckler, Morey	Dec. 10/10	Private
Wloski, Jozef	Dec 12/10	81 Townsgate Dr
Mazin, Semyon	Dec. 12/10	6091 Bathurst St
Ostrirov, Nyusya	Dec. 6/10	

HEDREW BASIC

Anne David	Nov 29/10	718 Sheppard Ave W
Sidney Lovas	Nov 29/10	28 Crow's Nest
Lazar Hason	Dec 2/10	493 Brunswick Ave
Golda Kopanski	Dec 3/10	3560 Bathurst St
Pauline Grabel	Dec 5/10	7460 Bathurst St

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On Campus

Rabbi, York U officials meet in wake of lawsuit threat

By LAURA STRICKER
Staff Reporter

Following a meeting with York University president Mamdouh Shoukri earlier this month, Rabbi Ahron Hoch was conciliatory but unrepentant as he reaffirmed the need to take action against antisemitism on university campuses.

Mamdouh Shoukri

York threatened Rabbi Hoch with a lawsuit after he sent an e-mail to members of the Dan Family Village Shul encouraging them to take action against former British MP George Galloway's lecture at the university on Nov. 16, as part of Galloway's "Free Afghanistan, Free Palestine, Free Speech" tour.

The rabbi's e-mail stated that by allowing Galloway, a Hamas supporter, to speak at York, Shoukri "again showed his amazing tolerance for antisemitism and lack of vigilance regarding the feeling of safety for Jewish students on campus."

York spokesperson Alex Bilyk said at the time that the e-mail "suggested Dr. Shoukri was antisemitic and not concerned about the safety of Jewish students on campus. That's untrue." In a letter to the rabbi, York's lawyer said the statement harmed the reputations of both Shoukri and the university, and demanded an immediate retraction and apology.

The recent meeting – which was also attended by York provost Patrick Monahan and University of Toronto law professor and former Canadian Jewish Congress president Ed Morgan – was meant to lower tensions.

It was described as "friendly" by Rabbi Hoch.

"We were greeted very warmly and not as adversaries in any way. We engaged in a productive dialogue, both during and after the meeting," he said in a mass e-mail sent to community members Dec. 10.

"The university changed course and they reached out to me to meet, which I was happy about. I'd rather be a constructive critic in a pleasant situation as opposed to a situation where there's real hostility," Rabbi Hoch told *The CJN*.

While he would not specifically talk about what went on in the meeting – both parties agreed to keep the discussion private – Rabbi Hoch stressed that it's necessary for the community to work together to curb antisemitism on all campuses.

"It must be highlighted that the recent events at York are not unique to York," he said in his latest e-mail. "They are happening on campuses all across the country. That these problems occur at York is particularly painful, because it is in our backyard and because of all the support that York provides to the advancement of Jewish education."

While action against antisemitism can and should be taken by community members, he told *The CJN*, university administrations need to take action as well.

"When you have sympathy to genocide, when you have student federations being led by Hamas sympathizers, there's an obligation on university administrators and leaders to speak out no matter how complex or controversial that might be.

"Under the guise of free speech and academic expression you have a continued normalization of the antisemitic ideal that Israel has no right to exist. That is a very dangerous phenomenon," he added.

"Right now, universities around North America are not doing anything about it. They don't want to touch it because it's complex.

"The war against Israel is also a war against the West. It's not just a Jewish issue here. It's a Canadian issue."

Bilyk told *The CJN* last week that York won't be pursuing a lawsuit against Rabbi Hoch.

Anything goes on campus? The answer is no

By WAYNE L. FIRESTONE
JTA

In recent weeks, Jewish student activists have confronted mock Israeli checkpoints, opposed a student group that wanted to raise funds to defy the Gaza blockade and fought to keep an Israeli hummus brand on campus. In some instances, efforts to delegitimize Israel have even included a sprinkling of American Jews and Israelis.

Opinion

Even if such incidents are exceptional, should we really accept that "anything goes" on campus? The answer is no.

Hillel's Schusterman International Center issued guidelines this week to ensure that local Hillels know which organizations, groups and speakers are considered valid partners in promoting civil and informed discourse on Israel.

Our guidelines state that "Hillel welcomes, partners with and aids the efforts of organizations, groups and speakers from diverse perspectives in support of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state."

We firmly state, however, that "Hillel will not partner with, house or host organizations, groups or speakers that as a matter of policy or practice:

- Deny the right of Israel to exist as a Jewish and democratic state with secure and recognized borders;
- Delegitimize, demonize or apply a double standard to Israel;
- Support boycott of, divestment from, or sanctions against the State of Israel;
- Exhibit a pattern of disruptive behaviour toward campus events or guest speakers, or foster an atmosphere of incivility."

These guidelines already are being utilized locally here in Washington. The Tufts Hillel referenced them to say no to a partnership with its local chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine based on the national organization's support of boycotts, divestment and sanctions.

Does this mean that debate or discussion among students might be stifled? Of course not.

Among the key tenets of the document is the principle that "Hillel welcomes a diversity of student perspectives on Israel and strives to create an inclusive, pluralistic community where students can discuss matters of interest and/or concern about Israel and the Jewish people in a civil manner."

At the same time, we reject efforts that may divide the Jewish community on campus over the potentially rich debate and discussion that occurs about Israel. We seek to engage and educate students not only to prepare them to advocate for Israel, but also to enrich their Jewish identities with an understanding of the centrality of Israel to their own lives and to Jewish civilization.

I am confident that Hillel can play a critical role in helping this generation of students not only develop a strong sense of Jewish identity, but also a personal connection and commitment to the State of Israel.

Wayne Firestone is the president and CEO of Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life in Washington, D.C.

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Hariri tribunal findings 'null and void': Khamanei

By AVI ISSACHAROFF
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

JERUSALEM — Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Monday any findings by an international tribunal into the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri would be invalid.

"This tribunal is a rubber-stamp one whose verdict is null and void whatever it is," state television quoted Khamenei as saying during a meeting with the emir of Qatar.

Iran is a supporter of Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shiite group that says the tribunal is a tool of Israel aimed at discrediting it by blaming its members for Hariri's murder.

Hezbollah and western diplomats say they expect members of the group to be indicted. Lebanese politicians fear a crisis, and possible relapse into sectarian violence if that happens.

Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri, Rafiq's son, visited Iran in November seeking its help to prevent political tensions.

Khamenei, the most powerful figure in the Islamic Republic, said: "I hope parties with influence involved in Lebanon will act on the basis of intelligence and wisdom so that this [tribunal outcome] does not become problematic."

Hezbollah, which is part of Lebanon's unity government, has repeatedly denied any involvement in the killing, and Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has said he will not allow the arrest of any of its members.

A trial could not start before next September, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon has said.

Tensions remain high in Lebanon, with the report of the international tribunal investigating the murder of the former Lebanese prime minister soon to be released and Hezbollah's threats becoming more vocal.

The report is expected to implicate key Hezbollah figures in the assassination.

Over the weekend, senior officials in the radical Shiite organization threatened that if a compromise is not reached between the followers of the current prime minister and their own followers, Lebanon will "enter a new era."

Rafiq Hariri

The head of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese parliament, Muhammad Ra'ad, said that his party had given a last chance to efforts by Syria and Saudi Arabia to reach a compromise that would restore calm in Lebanon, but he warned that "time was short."

Ra'ad said that in a few days, those who collaborated against the "resistance," as Hezbollah likes to call itself, will have to make good use of their time.

Otherwise, they warned, Lebanon will enter a new era and Hezbollah will close accounts with all those who opposed the "resistance."

The Lebanese government was due to convene on Wednesday, following weeks when it did not meet because of tensions surrounding the international tribunal's report.

The meeting will be headed by Lebanese President Michel Suleiman, who is trying to draft a compromise agreement.

Hezbollah is demanding that the government end its financial backing of the international tribunal as a precondition for staying in the government.

But Hariri has refused, and the issue will be discussed on Wednesday.

Also on the meeting agenda is the case of Defence Minister Elias Murr.

Documents released on WikiLeaks suggest that Murr provided the U.S. government information about Hezbollah sites that Israel should bomb.

According to the two-year-old documents, he demanded that the Israelis avoid hitting Christian sites.

Murr apparently also instructed the Lebanese army to refrain from joining the fighting and to make do with civil defence operations. This information was relayed to U.S. diplomats during a lunch meeting.

Murr's plan was for the army to stay out of the fighting and, following a Hezbollah defeat at the hands of Israel, to take over the areas controlled by the Shiite group.

At the time of the meeting, in 2008, Suleiman was chief of staff of the army, and he was ordered by Murr not to interfere if Israel attacked.

With files from Reuters

Court sentences 16 in murder of Ilan Halimi

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

JERUALEM — A French appeals court on Dec. 17 upheld the convictions of 16 people for their roles in the 2006 kidnapping, torture and murder of Parisian Jew Ilan Halimi, handing down sentences of up to 18 years in prison.

The appeals court in Creteil near Paris heard appeals of defendants already convicted by a lower court into the slaying of Halimi, who was lured by a young woman and then abducted and killed.

The ringleader, Youssouf Fofana, was not on trial in the proceedings that began Oct. 25. He chose not to appeal his conviction and life sentence.

Two of his close associates, Jean-Christophe Soumbou and Samir Ait Abdel Malek, were sentenced to 18 years behind bars in the verdict Dec. 17. A state prosecutor had sought 20 years for each. Malek had previously been sentenced to 15 years. Soumbous' penalty was unchanged.

Ilan Halimi

The appeals proceedings took place behind closed doors because two of the defendants were minors at the time. Minors aren't publicly identified when tried in court under French law.

A nine-year sentence was upheld against the young woman who had taken part in luring Halimi into the gang's clutches. She was one of the two minors when the crimes occurred.

Six people who took part in kidnapping Halimi received sentences of 12 to 15 years. Seven others received sentences ranging from eight months to 11 years in prison, which was given to one woman who recruited others to act as bait for kidnappings. An apartment building guard who made available the room where Halimi was held got 10 years.

One of the 17 defendants on trial was acquitted.

Halimi, 23, was held captive for more than three weeks. He was found naked, handcuffed and covered with burn marks near railroad tracks south of Paris on Feb. 13, 2006. He died on the way to the hospital.

The case revived worries in France about antisemitism, which is considered the main motive of those involved in the killing. It has led to deep anxiety in France's Jewish community, the largest in western Europe.

Twenty-four people, including eight women, were convicted in the original trial last year on a variety of charges, including kidnapping by an organized group and failing to assist a person in danger.

Fofana, a French citizen of Ivory Coast descent, was accused of five other kidnapping attempts. When he was convicted by the lower court, he brashly flashed a thumbs-up sign.

Disturbances that he had caused while a witness in the appeal led to a temporary suspension of the proceedings.

Britain withholding MIA info from Israeli parents

JTA

LONDON — The British government is refusing to release documents that could shed light on the fate of three missing Israeli soldiers, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported.

Miriam Baumel, the mother of one of the Israeli soldiers who has been missing in action since 1982, has been requesting the release of the documents for the last two years, according to the British newspaper.

"We are conscious that the release of sensitive information would cause harm to our relationship with Syria," the British Foreign Office has said in response to the requests, according to the newspaper.

Israeli soldiers Zachary Baumel, Yehuda Katz and Zvi Feldman have been officially listed as missing in action since a battle with Syrian and Palestinian forces near the Lebanese village of Sultan Yaqub at the end of the First Lebanon War.

Syrian forces are believed to have captured the soldiers and paraded them through the streets of Damascus. Britain's ambassador to Syria, Ivor Lucas, filed a report to London on the day of the battle and is believed to have witnessed the soldiers' capture, according to the *Chronicle*.

Miriam Baumel, through her British lawyers, is attempting to obtain a copy of the report. A Freedom of Information Act appeal has been filed, though no date has been set for the hearing.

"I am calling on the British government to act in a humanitarian manner and let the families know by releasing this document, for us to go further in finding our children," she told the *Chronicle*. "If you have children, if one of your children would be lost, how would you feel?"

After Carmel fire, a hands-off approach to forest land

By MARCY OSTER
JTA

JERUSALEM — Omri Boneh has been in a daze since the massive fire in Israel's Carmel forest.

The director of the northern region of Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael-Jewish National Fund, Boneh saw decades of the agency's work destroyed in the four-day inferno, which reduced swaths of the verdant forest in northern Israel to a black, dead landscape.

Boneh had personally planted thousands of the trees over a 25-year career as a forester on Mount Carmel.

But Boneh, whose name means "build" in Hebrew, doesn't want to dwell on the past – he's already thinking about the future.

The first step for rehabilitating the forest, Boneh says, is waiting, allowing nature to take its course. It's called natural regeneration.

"Planting, which is probably the most important action in forestry, will be just in case natural regeneration is not adequate," said Boneh, who has dealt with the aftermath of five other significant fires on Mount Carmel.

The most recent blaze, which broke out Dec. 2, was at least six times as large the next worst fire. Some 12,000 acres of land were burned and five million trees consumed. Forty-three people were killed, and 250 homes were destroyed or severely damaged.

Late last week, four days after the fire was extinguished, Israeli Environmental Minister Gilad Erdan convened the first government committee on the rehabilitation of plant and animal life for the Carmel forest region.

The committee agreed that natural regeneration was the best course of action and that no planting would take place in the Carmel in the coming year. The committee also suggested that buffer zones with sparse vegetation should be created between communities and roads to prevent the spread of fires to populated areas, as well as in large forest areas to prevent the spread within the forests.

Approximately $46 million would be needed for rehabilitation, the committee estimated. That includes rehabilitating plant and animal life and preventing soil erosion, and infrastructure repairs of trails, roads, camping grounds and observation points.

Compensation to the victims of the fire and their families would add to the estimate.

Not everything in the path of the fire was burned indiscriminately. In some places, the fire skipped a hill, valley or field, and in others, homes were spared. Boneh said he found that some of the groves he planted at the beginning of his career were only partially damaged. He called the surviving trees "a good start for the next generation."

Ido Izhaki, head of the University of Haifa's Carmel Research Center, has been researching the Carmel region since a major fire there in 1989. He agrees it would be a mistake to plant new trees on a large scale in the wake of the fire.

"The forest needs to be left alone to recover, with only minimal human intervention," Izhaki said.

Most of the trees burned were Allepo pines. Seeds from the massive trees, which have adapted themselves to forest fires, were released from the trees' pine cones by the heat of the fire and were spread far and wide by its coals and winds. These seeds will begin sprouting in a few weeks, according to Boneh.

At some point, he said, foresters could become involved in "selective thinning" to limit the new forest's density and help young trees grow, as well as some planting to ensure biodiversity – creating a mixed forest by reintroducing broadleaf trees such as oaks, carobs and other species natural to the area. Some of those trees also will begin to regenerate naturally soon, with sprouts emerging from the stumps of the destroyed trees.

Fires also contribute positively to a forest's growth, Izhaki said.

Following a massive fire in the Carmel fountains in 1989, he said that "we observed the development of flora and fauna in the region and saw that some 15 to 20 years after the fire, the forest reached a climax in terms of its fauna and vegetation diversity. This indicates that after about this amount of time following a fire, the forest will be home to more species of wildlife and vegetation than there were before the fire."

Fires, however, are only beneficial to biological diversity if they are infrequent. Today, due to human factors, the frequency of fires is too high, and thus the forest's recovery is likely to take longer, Izhaki said.

Friends group takes mission to India

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Magen David Synagogue in Mumbai, India. *[Richard Diamond photos]*

Students outside Sir Jacob Sassoon High School in Mumbai.

It was a smallish group by mission standards – only 10 participants in all – but organizers of a recent trip to India are hoping it will pay big dividends.

India is the next big frontier for Israeli commercial and diplomatic relations, said Richard Diamond, co-chair of a mission to India sponsored by Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University (CFTAU). In a strategic sense, Israel's economic and political future rests on developing good relations with countries such as India, whose economy is growing at an impressive clip and whose stature in international relations is bound to grow. On the domestic scene, he stated, Jews should attempt to foster better relations with the local Indo-Canadian community.

Diamond, senior vice-president of Canderel Stoneridge Equity Group Inc., a real estate development company, said Tel Aviv University has an ongoing relationship with Indian academic institutions and sponsors academic gatherings regularly. But that's just one part of a burgeoning relationship that in recent years has seen Israel and India grow closer economically, politically and militarily, he said.

"India and Israel share many values. They're multicultural, secular, democratic, capitalistic with growing economies, highly oriented to education and both have conflicts with their neighbours," he said.

The defence relationship between the two countries "is huge," while India has become Israel's number 2 trading partner, behind only the European Union. It has eclipsed the United States, which has fallen to third place.

India is particularly interested in Israeli innovations in high tech. "They love to hear about Israel water management, solar power, and about a country that takes great economic strides without large economic resources," Diamond said. "Israel has talent, people, innovation. Those are its natural resources."

During the recent CFTAU mission, participants acted as ambassadors for the university and for Israel as well. They met with Indian business leaders, including a banker, a journalist, government representatives, Israeli diplomats and members of the Indian Jewish community. Diamond was impressed by a meeting with Bharat Wakhlu, resident director of Tata Services, "who was extremely knowledgeable about Israel." (The Tata Group is a leading Indian multinational conglomerate.)

Vanessa Valkin, executive director of CFTAU, said the mission also met with the Indian Friends of Tel Aviv University, which was created by Indian Jewish community leader Aaron Solomon. There are only about 5,000 Jews remaining in India, and in a country of 1.2 billion, Jews historically faced no discrimination.

The 2008 attack on the Chabad Lubavitch centre in Mumbai – carried out by Islamic terrorists linked to Pakistan – came as a shock, she said.

The group stayed at the same Taj Mahal Palace hotel in Mumbai that terrorists assaulted in 2008. Security at the hotel is run by Israelis, she said, and Israelis are also beginning to put their money into local real estate investments.

The mission visited the Lubavitch centre as well as a historic synagogue just outside Mumbai that was once the centre of Jewish life. Today, it serves only seven families.

In Delhi, the group attended Shabbat services, and they learned the small community is seeing many of its young people enter mixed marriages.

In late fall, TAU joined with the Confederation of Indian Industries to sponsor a conference of Indian and Israeli CEOs, "to foster business relationships," while over the last two years, the university hosted a couple of Indians studying in the Sofaer International MBA program. TAU feels it is sowing the seeds for future relationships that will benefit both countries, Valkin said.

Diamond believes the Canadian Jewish community should develop its relationship with the local Indo-Canadian community. "I feel it's natural for Canadian Jews to have good ties with the Indian community," and visiting their homeland is part of that process, he said.

Diamond, who's on the board of the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto as well as chair of National Jewish Campus Life, has been to Israel several times with senior business and political figures. He believes bringing Indo-Canadians to Israel is a natural next step.

"This is part of a strategic move to change the Canadian Jewish perception of where their interests are. We have to think more about China and India and less about western Europe," he said.

Israel & the Jewish World

Israel Briefs

Bill passes hurdle

A bill that would validate conversions to Judaism through Israel's military rabbinate passed a preliminary reading in the Knesset. The measure, sponsored by David Rotem of the Yisrael Beiteinu Party, passed by a vote of 75 to 18. It was opposed by the haredi Shas Party. Yisrael Beiteinu and Shas are part of the majority government coalition. The bill, which still must pass two more readings in the Knesset, would allow the conversions to be approved by the state without the signature of the Chief Rabbinate. It would protect Israeli soldiers who have converted through military conversion courts from having their conversions overturned. The measure would force all state agencies – including rabbinic courts, the chief rabbis of cities and other Orthodox marriage registrars – to accept the converts as Jews. About 4,500 soldiers, the majority of them women, have converted to Judaism while in the Israeli military. Sephardi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar has formed a committee to study religious ways that would allow him to approve the conversions.

Bon Jovi to play Israel

Bon Jovi will perform in Israel in the coming year, the band's lead singer Jon Bon Jovi told Larry King on his talk show. Bon Jovi said the rock band would include Israel on its list of stops during its "The Circle" world tour in 2011. The group, which was at the height of its popularity in the 1980s, also will visit Greece for the first time. Several high-profile musical artists have cancelled shows in Israel in the past year, bowing to political pressure from pro-Palestinian groups. Rod Stewart appeared at Ramat Gan Stadium in June. The rock band Deep Purple will return to Israel in May for two concerts, Ynet reported.

EU waits on statehood

The European Union won't recognize Palestinian statehood until an "appropriate" time, its Foreign Affairs Council said in a statement. The 27 EU foreign ministers issued the statement in response to a letter from Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat to EU foreign policy head Catherine Ashton asking the body to join countries that have already recognized a unilaterally declared Palestinian state. Argentina and Brazil announced their support last week of a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state. "The EU commends the work of the Palestinian Authority in building the institutions of the future State of Palestine and reiterates its full support for their endeavors in this regard and the [Palestine Prime Minister Salam] Fayyad plan," read the EU Foreign Affairs Council's statement. "[The council] reiterates its readiness, when appropriate, to recognize a Palestinian state," it added, saying that "urgent progress is needed towards a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." The statement said the ministers were disappointed that Israel didn't extend its settlement freeze and reiterated that their "views on settlements, including in east Jerusalem, are clear: they are illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace."

Carmel firefighter dies

The death of a firefighter who tried to save passengers on a burning bus raised the toll from the Carmel forest fire to 44. Danny Hayat, 35, died Saturday at the Rambam Medical Center in Haifa. He was burned over at least two-thirds of his body and had undergone two skin transplants since the fire two weeks ago. He was in an induced coma. Hayat, a father of two whose wife is pregnant, was one of three firefighters who tried to pull prison guards from a bus that was engulfed in flames while rushing to evacuate a prison in the path of the historic blaze earlier this month. Thirty-eight of the passengers on board were burned to death. The other victims of the fire, which is being called Israel's worst civilian disaster, were three police officers – including Haifa Police Chief Ahuva Tomer – two firefighters and a 16-year-old volunteer. On Sunday, the Israeli cabinet decided to award financial rights to the families of those who were killed trying to rescue the prison service bus during the Carmel fire similar to those given to the families of fallen soldiers. According to the decision, the families of Hayat and fellow firefighter Uri Semandayev, Fire Service volunteer Elad Riven and bus driver David Navon will be recognized as bereaved families according to the 1950 Families of Fallen Soldiers Law.

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Adventure travel in the Galapagos Islands

By MELODY WREN
Special to The CJN

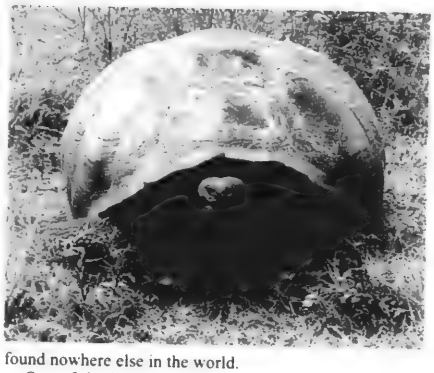
The best way to see the breathtaking Galapagos Islands is to travel by ship, and the smaller, the better.

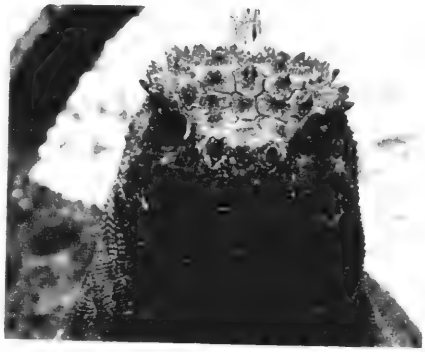
In the highly regulated Galapagos National Park, smaller vessels are given access to more islands. Recently, I travelled through them on the Ecoventura line's 65-foot, 20-passenger motor yacht Eric.

After a short flight from Guayaquil, Ecuador, to San Cristobal Island to join the Eric, our itinerary for the seven-night journey took us first to Genovesa in the north, then east to Fernandina, a relatively young island at half a million years old. We then worked westward through successively older islands back to San Cristobal, crossing the equator four times.

The Galapagos Islands sit right atop the equator: an archipelago of volcanic peaks spread across 130,000 square kilometres from stark Fernandina to relatively fertile Santa Cruz and San Cristobal. They are separated from the mainland of South America by 965 kilometres of very deep water, and lie at the confluence of marine currents from the Antarctic, equatorial Pacific and South American coast.

The hot- and cold-water temperatures give rise to a wild diversity of habitats and creatures adapted to them. This extraordinary ecosystem is home to more than 3,000 varieties of plants and animals, approximately 20 per cent found nowhere else in the world.





Animals in the Galapagos Islands tend to ignore humans — unless you get too close. Pictured, clockwise from top left, a giant land tortoise, the stern gaze of the marine iguana, a nazca boobie and her eggs, and finally, a sea lion relaxes with her cub. ***[Melody Wren photos]***

One of the highlights of our trip was that the animals ignore human visitors unless you get too close. Any month is good to visit, but October is particularly special because of all the newborns and hatchlings we saw. We snorkelled with penguins and white-tipped sharks and sea lions, and came face to face with giant tortoises. We stepped into a veritable maternity ward with dozens of sea lions nursing their newborns.

Ambling along the shoreline of Santiago, we came across fur sea lions, a species that was once on the verge of extinction. A glut of marine iguanas lounging lazily in the sun blended into the landscape so well so you had to step carefully to avoid stepping on them or their droppings. Hundreds of dolphins swam alongside our ship one evening, and another day, as we crossed the Bolivar Channel, we spotted seven Bryde's whales just off the bow. We hiked along ancient lava tunnels and felt like explorers going back to the beginning of time.

Every day we travelled to one or two islands by Zodiac, tossed by the high rolling waves, causing us all to screech and our driver, Luis, to giggle like a schoolboy at our reactions.

Each island features different types of birds. We crossed the equator toward Genovesa, a volcanic caldera that is home to many bird species: red-footed boobies with their scarlet webbed feet, Nazca boobies, Galapagos mocking birds with their piercing eyes, four species of Darwin finches, and the elusive short-eared owl as it hunted over an open lava field. On Fernandina, we walked on a coral sand beach where swallow-tailed and lava gulls gather near tide pools. As we entered a forest of cactus and mangroves where great frigate birds were nesting, the males inflated their striking red throat pouches to attract females as they flew overhead.

On stark Espanola Island we saw many pairs of blue-footed boobies perform their ritual mating dance, lifting their bright cerulean feet, offering gifts of twigs to each other. Espanola is also the only nesting place of the wave albatross, a gallant bird, majestic in the air but awkward ashore.

Snorkelling was a focal point of the trip – even for the water shy – who soon were enraptured by the colourful inhabitants of the crystal-clear water: angel fish, parrot fish, yellow tailed grails, surgeon fish, sea urchins, white-tipped reef sharks, sting rays and chocolate-chip starfish (yes, that is their name). We had our picture taken with tiny Galapagos penguins as we snorkelled around Tagus Cove, on the western side of Isabela Island. On the cliffs of Isabela we were surprised to see graffiti, some of it dating back to the 1800s.

Once we returned to mainland Ecuador, the noise and bustle seemed to have multiplied in our absence, in jarring contrast to the calm and largely unspoiled beauty of the Islands.

Wren's trip was sponsored by Ecoventura, a company that has a fleet of three small ships and is Ecuador's first carbon-neutral company. The Eric is one of the first boats in its fleet to have wind turbines, and solar panels. www.ecoventura.com.

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Attention Film Lovers: Subscription tickets for 2011 are still available from the Toronto Jewish Film Society. Eight film events have been scheduled on selected Sundays at the Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, from January to December. To become a member, please contact Joelle Malka, 416-924-6211, ext. 139, or e-mail joellem@mnjcc.org

• • •

TV Show Explores Sex and Religion: Members of Toronto's First Narayever Congregation are featured in an upcoming episode of Vision-TV's series, Sex + Religion. In an episode titled *Same Sex Attraction*, the show explores how one's sexual orientation might affect one's relationship with God. In the show, **Mitchell** and **Orrin**, the first gay members of First Narayever to get married after the congregation voted to allow gay marriage, discuss their experiences. Airs Dec. 27 at 11 p.m. The final episode, *Sexual Fantasy*, airs the same evening at 11:30 p.m.

• • •

Names in the News: A YouTube video titled *Magen Boys Entertainment Presents Hip Hop Chanukah* that has been circulating over the Internet shows **Rabbi Mendel Kaplan** of Chabad Flamingo in Thornhill and an energetic troupe of yeshiva boys in black hats, and **Magen Boys** hip-hop artists and break dancers celebrating the miracle of Chanukah with messianic joy at Yonge and Dundas streets.

Their extraordinary performance opens with a staged confrontation between the rabbi and some street performers who pretend to object to the "religious crap" he seems to be laying on the public as he discusses the holiday. The interaction quickly evolves into a spirited hip hop rap about Chanukah, followed by the lighting of a large menorah, and some high-octane dancing. Meanwhile, a steadily increasing circle of smiling observers gathers, many using cameras to record the lively piece of street theatre.

"Our goal has been to inspire the performance of mitzvot," Rabbi Kaplan told *The CJN*. "If you can be the cause of a single mitzvah, that has enormous meaning and importance." More specifically, the American-born rabbi, who moved to the GTA in 1998, added that he hoped the video would inspire people to light Chanukah candles. The YouTube video has had more than 100,000 hits, he said.

Watch it here: http://bit.ly/hp7s5j

• • •

• **Mel Gibson Shenanigans:** The *New York Post* reported last week that actress **Winona Ryder** heard **Mel Gibson** make antisemitic remarks long before his taped racist rants were broadcast around the world.

In the January issue of *GQ*, Ryder says she was at a Hollywood party 15 years ago and heard Gibson call Jews "oven dodgers," a term she said she had never heard before. Ryder said that at the time no one believed her.

• • •

Theatre Notes

• Acting Up Stage Company and Studio 180 Theatre present *Parade*, the musical by **Jason Robert Brown** and **Alfred Uhry**, and directed by **Joel Greenberg**, about the infamous Leo Frank case. $32 to $40. Berkeley Street Theatre Upstairs, Dec. 30 to Jan. 22, 2011. 416-368-3110, www.paradethemusical.com

• Birdland Theatre and Talk Is Free Theatre present *Assassins*, the dark killer musical by **Stephen Sondheim**. The Theatre Centre, 100-1087 Queen St. W. Jan. 6 to 23, 2011. 416-504-7529, www.artsboxoffice.ca.

• The Next Stage Theatre Festival, which features eight presentations by local and international artists, runs Jan. 5 to 16, 2011, at the Factory Theatre, Toronto.

• • •

Passages: John Katz, the Philadelphia-based film maven, had many Toronto connections. He was an instructor in the film studies department at York University for many years until he took early retirement 12 years ago. He was also a programmer and consultant for the Toronto International Film Festival in its early days and for the Toronto Jewish Film Festival from 1993 to 1996. Former students from York whom he influenced include **Niv Fichman** and **Larry Weinstein**, who went on to found Rhombus Media, a top Canadian production house; and **Bill Gladstone**, writer of this column, who studied film at York in the 1970s. Katz, who died Nov. 26 in Philadelphia at age 72, leaves his wife **Joan Saltzman** of Philadelphia, and his son **Jesse** and grandson **Max Katz** of Toronto.

Former jazz singer releases CD based on biblical story

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

A Thornhill mother who is a supply teacher, former jazz singer and ba'alat tshuvah (a Jewish woman who has become observant), has drawn on those aspects of her life in a recent creative endeavour. Liora Oppenheimer (who used to sing as Lowa Kay) recently released a CD called *Hannah & Peninah: A musical interpretation*, consisting of 16 original songs based on the Book of Samuel.

The music is part of a script that Oppenheimer wrote after her fourth child was born, she said in an interview at her home office. Inspiration came to her in a dream, initially. "At 3 a.m., I woke up and had to write the lyrics down."

It occurred to her that she had much in common with the biblical Peninah, and with Hannah, who yearned for a child, and she decided to take a closer look at the text.

Oppenheimer found herself intrigued by the multi-layered story, and by the character of Peninah – the other wife of Elkanah, Hannah's husband and mother of his children before Hannah conceived.

Issues addressed in the story, including lashon hara and bullying, demonstrated in Peninah's treatment of Hannah, are relevant today, Oppenheimer said.

As well, she added, she hopes the CD and the play, which she still plans to mount, will inspire people to take classes and learn more about the text and the issues that arise in it.

Continued on page 32

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Cadence boasts slick vocal acrobatics, instrumental imitation

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Unlike many a cappella groups who just sing lyrics, the four members of vocal group Cadence also use their voices to imitate instruments. Amazingly, they can imitate horns, percussion, bass and other instruments, which allows them to sound like a full band.

The internationally acclaimed group spans the eras with a strong focus on swing music and the jazz era. "We are going for that vintage-era look with black fedoras and suits and matching ties, kind of like a Rat Pack, cool kind of look," says Cadence singer Carl Berger.

In October, Cadence released its third CD, *Speak Easy*, to rave reviews. *Speak Easy* is an equal mix of traditional jazz standards including songs such as *On the Street Where You Live*, *Ain't That a Kick in the Head* and *Just a Gigolo*, revamped pop tunes such as *Black Cars* and all-new, instant-vintage originals.

Speak Easy boasts of slick vocal acrobatics, instrumental imitation and infectious energy. *Speak Easy*'s arrangements, by members of the group, include nine cover songs and three originals penned by Berger and singer Aaron Jensen, *Good Love*, *High and Drysville* and *The Tramps*.

"Good music is good music whatever instrument you play it on, so a song has to sound good on a piano or a guitar with the voice before it can be really successful as an a cappella song," Berger says.

Cadence has shared the stage with musical greats such as Bobby McFerrin, Quincy Jones and Gordon Lightfoot. They want their audiences leaving their upbeat and humorous show both entertained and happy. Berger says the music has a serious edge to it, but at the same time, Cadence thrives off a connection with their audiences and that includes having the crowd joining them for parts of songs.

Cadence goes for the vintage-era look. Carl Berger is pictured at right.

A highlight for Cadence this year was to be part of the much-anticipated Kevin Spacey film *Casino Jack*. Cadence sings the original score to the movie's soundtrack, along with Toronto jazz singer Emilie-Claire Barlow. In fact, it was Barlow who introduced Cadence to the film's composer, Canadian Jonathan Goldsmith.

The group is coming off a celebrated European tour, and in 2011, Cadence's appearances will include performances in New Orleans, Boston and Vancouver, and a Jazz.FM91, live-to-air concert on Jan. 20 from their hometown of Toronto.

Balancing touring and family life is a big challenge, Berger says. Berger and his wife, Heidi, a logistician for a consulting company, have a two-year-old son, Marley.

"We are lucky that our significant others are very supportive of what we do. My wife particularly is kind of our number 1 fan and really wants me to keep pursuing what I am doing, but it is a huge challenge.

"We try to keep our trips short when possible, but the added responsibility of having a kid at home puts a little stress on the relationship, but it always works out in the end. Sometimes they join me on the road," Berger says

Along with Berger and Jensen, the other members of the group are Kurt Sampson and Ross Lynde.

Although Berger is the only Jewish member of Cadence, the group has been booked at bar mitzvahs and Jewish weddings and other events, and because the group is not using any instruments, "we can perform in a synagogue on Shabbat and we do that once in a while. So, we have learned a few Hebrew songs."

Cadence is in the midst of recording a holiday album to be released in 2011, and Berger hopes that it will include a Chanukah song or two.

You can sample and download some of the group's songs on their website at www.cadence-unplugged.com.

Oppenheimer looks to make Torah more immediate

Continued from page 31

A native of Israel who immigrated at age five, Oppenheimer (née Kigel) was raised secular. It wasn't until her late 20s, when she spent time in Israel on an Aish Hatorah Jerusalem fellowship, that she began to explore Judaism.

A French major at the University of Toronto, Oppenheimer also spent a year in Aix en Provence. As well, she pursued jazz singing and other creative outlets, taking a script-writing course and writing a play for the Fringe Festival. She had also taken voice courses at the Royal Conservatory as a teenager.

In 1996, when she was in her late 20s, she won first prize in the Ontario Pop competition's singer-songwriter category, an immediate springboard for a budding career as part of the French Canadian jazz scene.

Now, Oppenheimer's dream is to mount her play as a full musical. She has been reworking it as an opera instead of the original score, which has elements of pop, jazz and opera.

The show is approximately 90 minutes long and features five leads and half a dozen secondary roles. Originally, it was supposed to have an all-female cast playing for women audiences, so Oppenheimer sang all the male characters' parts on the CD.

She produced the CD herself, hiring arranger Fishel Pustilnik and Pinball Recordings studio.

Oppenheimer sees work like hers as filling a gap. "I think there's room for Jewish entertainment on a higher level spiritually, and there's so much heritage in the Torah that's not being exposed."

As well, she said, portraying Bible stories dramatically, makes them "more immediate and more lasting," she said.

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It's warm in Siberia, really

I finished reading Ian Frazier's long and funny *Travels in Siberia* on a snowy night, which proved to be Montreal's first real return to winter. Much of Frazier's travels take place during a late-summer ramble he made with two supremely strange but likable Russian guides. Upon returning to his New Jersey home and Manhattan circle of writer friends, he was met with repeated disappointment when he told them that his Siberia hadn't been cold at all, but swampy, mosquito-ridden, a gigantic expanse of forests, riverways, rutted roads and rail lines.

By Norman Ravvin
Special to The CJN

Frazier will be familiar to readers of *The New Yorker*, where he routinely publishes essays and humour pieces. In 1989, three issues of the magazine were devoted to his loving and sharp-eyed view of the history and contemporary state of the American Great Plains.

Work on *Travels in Siberia* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) began in 1993, just after the fall of the Soviet Union. He became "infected with a love of Russia," which led him to return repeatedly to the huge area of the country east of St. Petersburg, which touches the Arctic Circle, shares its long southern border with China and Mongolia, and whose Pacific coast stretches from the Sea of Japan to within a few miles of the Alaskan coast.

Travel books often traffic in clichés, but Frazier relies on none of them. His book is not aimed at helping intrepid readers approximate his Siberian route. And he does not make the effort to convince his readers that understanding Siberia will aid them in comprehending post-Cold War economics, political trends or climate issues. Frazier is astute on these fronts, but he addresses them indirectly. The guiding and constant goal of his book is to convey his own unexplainable love for Russia, and to explore the strangest, the richest, the most foreign aspects of Russian culture and daily life.

Frazier and his two guides travelled over much of Siberia in a Renault van that contributed its own narrative of spectacular and farcical breakdowns, followed by spit and glue repairs on the roadside.

But deep into Siberia, roadways give way to train travel; Frazier and his companions pack themselves and the Renault into a boxcar (a *vagon* in Russian) for a bizarre overnight ride with a pair of other eastbound vehicles and their passengers. A rented truck and drivers take them farther, across ice roads on Lake Baikal and up the frozen Lena River.

The cities of Siberia, many built on spec on the taiga during Soviet times, are an odd agglomeration of old Russia, with revered wooden chapels, disregarded monumental statues of Lenin and weird modern creations, like the Mega-Ikea Mall at Novosibirsk. Its parking lot is empty, but locals trudge from bus stops to shop the "hallways as wide as airplane runways." The mall's background Muzak is "bizarre, unthreatening American country songs, in a style that might be called shopping country."

On his winter travels Frazier is often put up in the homes of Russians, who convey a mix of love and distress over the challenges of northeastern Russian lives. On his initial summer trip, his lead guide is forever on the lookout for acceptable places to camp out. These settings, often trash strewn, evoke the margins of Russian cities, where the detritus of contemporary life is the disheartening, almost farcical borderland before one enters the countryside.

One has to dip into *Travels in Siberia* to appreciate how Frazier handles this aspect of Russian life without rancour, self-righteousness or western superiority. He meets it head on, usually with humour.

Near the end of his travels in Siberia, Frazier puts his finger on one of the key characteristics of his experiences. Hardly ever, while in Russia, does he feel "normal." Sitting with a scientist friend on the major campus at Novosibirsk, he is surprised to find that he "felt normal. I had never felt just that *normal* in Russia before... I had been to Siberia five times, to western Russia five or six more. Never in all those travels had I felt merely normal."

These concluding thoughts are the closest Frazier comes to explaining his Russia love. More often he operates wonderfully and straightforwardly as a recorder of the sights and scenes that motivate that love.

Norman Ravvin is chair of the Concordia Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.

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The Canadian Jewish news

Coast to Coast

We buy quality goods, says store owner

Continued from page 1

If he loses money, his five employees may lose their jobs," she said. "It's harassment and borders on incitement to hatred.

"Israel is not perfect and I disagree with a lot of things, but they should not hurt a small business."

The protesters have included Amir Khadir, the sole member of the National Assembly for Québec solidaire, which has officially endorsed the so-called boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against Israel.

Freedman thinks boycott proponents should be aware that the cellphones and computers they use probably contain Israeli-made components, and even the locking system of the Bixis, Montreal's popular bicycle-sharing program, comes from Israel.

PAJU says its aim is to make St. Denis Street, the heart of a trendy district of shops and restaurants, an "Israeli apartheid free zone," and Le Marcheur is the first target.

Freedman said she finds this "racist and quite frightening. It reminds me of Hitler's judenrein [edict]."

Archambault has also received encouragement from Norman King, who has been a member of the Montreal Dialogue Group, composed of Jews and Arabs, and is sympathetic to the Palestinian cause.

He wrote an open letter to Archambault, a copy of which Dida Berku, a lawyer and Côte St. Luc councillor, sent to *The CJN*. Berku and her husband, businessman Jacob Kincler, are among those who have been going to Le Marcheur during the demonstrations.

King said PAJU "does not in any way represent the concerns of the Jews of Montreal, with the exception of a few individuals."

He pointed out that Amnesty International, an organization with which he has been involved, is against the use of boycott as a means of protest against a country's human rights record.

The Quebec-Israel Committee has advised community members not to go to the store during the protests, but Berku believes that's the best time to show solidarity with Archambault.

While she agrees confrontation with the protesters should be avoided, Berku said it can be an opportunity to engage in a "civil discourse." There has been some heckling and heated verbal exchanges, and at least one incident of physical contact that police broke up.

Sharon Freedman, right, takes delivery of her purchases from Ginette Auger, wife of store owner Yves Archambault, at Boutique Le Marcheur.

"Mr. Archambault is happy when we are there when they [the protesters] are there," she said. "The fact is that he has been holding out, and we have to support him, especially when the protesters are there. Customers and passersby are just hearing one side of the story. We can educate them."

PAJU president Bruce Katz called the tickets for handing out flyers and standing with banners, rather than keeping moving, "intimidation tactics" on the part of the police. The group, he stressed, won't back down. In fact, it has put out a call for all other groups in Quebec that support a boycott of Israel to join in the protests.

If Archambault removes the Israeli shoes from his shelves, Katz said PAJU will encourage everyone to shop at Le Marcheur.

"No one – no one is going to dictate to me what to sell," Archambault told *The CJN*. He insisted that will not change. "We have a free society in Quebec, and there is a free trade agreement between Canada and Israel."

Archambault, who has owned the store since 1979, said he has no allegiances in the Middle East conflict, and stocking shoes from Israel has nothing to do with politics. "We buy goods on two criteria only: their quality and comfort."

He noted that he also sells shoes from China, but the protesters have no quarrel with that.

The demonstrations have affected his business in the sense that he has had to take time to deal with police and consult a lawyer.

"Thanks to the encouragement of the Jewish community, we have been able to keep sales at a reasonable level."

Anti-smuggling bill a 'PR initiative,' Cotler says

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Canadian government's proposed anti-smuggling bill, C-49, is so blatantly unconstitutional that it could only have been tabled as a "PR initiative" to satisfy public sentiment, says Liberal MP Irwin Cotler.

Irwin Cotler

While the Liberals are prepared to co-operate with the government on an anti-smuggling bill that's consistent with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, it won't support legislation that "singles out" asylum seekers and refugee claimants.

Even the *National Post*, the "Conservatives' own newspaper," pointed this out in an editorial, the human rights advocate said in a Dec. 3 media briefing with journalists.

Cotler lambasted Justice Minister and Attorney General Rob Nicholson for appearing to be a partisan supporter of legislation that would not pass a charter test.

"The attorney general is an independent legal officer, and it is the justice minister's responsibility to make sure that legislation is charter-proof," Cotler said.

"When I sat in cabinet [as justice minister], I was there to give independent legal advice. In Nicholson's case, "that [duty] was not discharged," Cotler said.

On other issues, Cotler gave an update on the recent Conference to Combat anti-Semitism, noting that in the follow-up to the early November meeting, the Inter-parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism (ICCA) is working on increasing the number of governments signing on to the Ottawa Protocol. These include Argentina, Australia, and Spain, and the United States, which are indicating a "favourable" disposition to doing so, Cotler said.

The ICCA also wants Canada and other protocol countries to appoint "special envoys" to monitor and combat antisemitism, such as already exist in the United Kingdom, France, Spain and the United States.

Cotler also was highly supportive of the fact that the protocol arrived at a definition of antisemitism that could be "uniformly" applied by the international community.

In that context, Cotler adamantly rejected a recent *Globe and Mail* blog post by former Canadian ambassador Norman Spector. He insinuated that Cotler has been disingenuous by citing the protocol's declaration that "criticism of Israel is not antisemitic and saying so is wrong."

In the context of Israel's plans to construct more housing in east Jerusalem, Spector in his blog wanted to ask Cotler, first, whether it was "antisemitic" to criticize those plans, and second, to know Cotler's own position on them.

Cotler said his answer to Spector's first question was obviously no, but "Mr. Spector knew the answer to that without having to ask." As for the second – Cotler's position on the construction – Cotler said that construction in east Jerusalem "has to be conducted in accordance with the law.

"There are private builders in Jerusalem, and cases before [Israel's] Supreme Court. I [would] support the findings of fact and collusions of law of that court, which I consider one of the best in the world.

"If they find [the construction] legal, I stand by that. If they find it not to be legal, I will go by that as well."

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Second straight Grey Cup 'a blast' for Als coach

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

Marc Trestman seems to be getting used to it.

Speaking over the phone a little more than two weeks after his Montreal Alouettes captured a second-straight Grey Cup with a victory, once again, over the Saskatchewan Roughriders, 21-18, the 55-year-old head coach sounded downright blasé about having turned his team into something already being likened to a dynasty.

Under Trestman's leadership, the Als have racked up the winningest record in the franchise's history.

The Als' second Jewish head coach after Marv Levy (who also led the team to two Grey Cups, in 1974 and 1977), Trestman was his laconic self, modest to a fault and not given to complex analysis.

"It was a great game, and a well-played game by both teams," Trestman told *The CJN*. "We did the things offensively we needed to do; we moved the football at the end, controlled the game, controlled the clock.

"I thought it was a great team win."

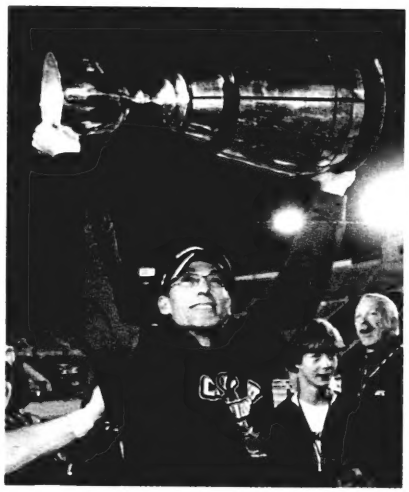
Trestman said it "didn't matter" to him who took the most valuable player title. (The contenders were slotback Jamel Richardson – who actually won it – for his eight catches and 109 yards, and star quarterback Antony Calvillo, who completed 29 of 42 passes for 336 yards.)

Way more important was the win.

"Defensively, I think, we played terrific football," Trestman said. "We contained a great offence and eliminated the big play, so it was a great team win."

But did the winning coach feel any pressure going in?

"I don't feel any pressure," Trestman replied. "There's plenty of that to go around. I mean, everybody's working hard, trying to pull everything the same way. I love to coach football and I enjoy the day-to-day challenges that it brings, but I don't feel there's any pressure."



Marc Trestman holds the Grey Cup following victory over the Saskatchewan Roughriders in 2009.

Is it fun, though?

"Oh, it's a blast!"

But Trestman, who spent 17 years coaching college-level football and in the National Football League before arriving in Montreal, offered only a terse "no comment" when asked about rampant rumours that the Miami Hurricanes – the first team he ever coached for in 1981 – was trying to lure him back.

Last week the Hurricanes announced they had signed Temple University coach Al Golden to turn around their football program.

According to the Alouettes' website, Trestman's contract has been extended until the end of the 2012 season.

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Israeli swim team competes in Dubai

By RAMI HIPSH
Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

DUBAI — After a month of uncertainty, Israel's national swim team arrived last week in Dubai ahead of the World Short Course Championships.

The Israeli delegation cleared many hurdles to get to Dubai. Officials of the emirate refused to issue the Israelis visas until the last minute, and they only allowed them in without stamping their passports and making them undergo stringent security checks.

"It seems they feared we would bring in something special, but everything went quietly," said Noam Zvi, chair of the Israeli Swimming Federation (ISF).

Alex Giladi, Israel's representative on the International Olympic Committee, arrived to wield his influence to make sure the Israeli flag would fly in the complex's hall and that there would be no hitches with registration.

In 2009, the United Arab Emirates refused to grant a visa to Israeli tennis star Shahar Peer, preventing her from competing in the Dubai Championships. The move prompted Women's Tennis Association (WTA) president Larry Scott to fine the Dubai tournament $300,000 (US) and demand that in future, Dubai would permit Israelis to take part in WTA events there. In 2010, Peer competed in the tournament, although she was placed in a virtual security cocoon.

Last week, four Israelis took to the pool on the first day of the competition, Guy Barnea and Jonathan Koplev in the 100-metre backstroke, their strong card, Gal Nevo in the 200-metre freestyle and Alon Mandel in the 100-metre butterfly.

Amit Ivry withdrew from other heats to focus on the butterfly, which is her best discipline, where she hoped to reach the final.

Leonid Kaufman, the national coach, concurred: "We have goals – that all the swimmers set personal bests and that they advance at least to the next stage. The second goal depends on the ability of the other swimmers in the championship. We expect Ivry and Nevo to reach the finals. They're capable of it," he said.

Some 800 athletes from 137 countries gathered at the $100-million (US) Hamdan Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Sports Complex, which can accommodate 15,000 spectators.

"Dubai and the Gulf States want to prove they can do the biggest things," said Kaufman. "They built the tallest tower and the biggest Disney World and now a swimming complex that competes with all others. I was in China, and this is no less than the Olympic complex."

Becky's life is in my hands

NEW TO CANADA
By NINA SHENHAV

It's a typical evening in our household. The kids are watching TV, I'm in bed, and Meir is standing in the middle of the room, his arms raised, lecturing me passionately.

Meir: "She has a job, *and* she helps her husband with cleaning and cooking. Can you imagine?"

Honestly, I can't. He's talks about his friend's imaginary wife, I'm guessing.

I yawn. It's boring. The phone rings, and I pick up happily. A man's voice comes from the other side.

Man: (hesitantly) "Uh… Nina Shenhav? I'm your biggest fan."

Me: "Welcome to the club!" (What can I say, I'm a star – by nature, if not so much by reality.)

Man: "Yeah, well. I read your column religiously, and I need to ask something from you. I need you to write something for my daughter."

Me: (cutting him short): "I'm sorry, sir, I'm not gonna hear of any requests, like please write a bat mitzvah speech for my daughter Rebecca, or something as such."

Man: "It's nothing like that! It's about my daughter Rebecca's bat mitzvah. I need a speech."

Me: "How much are you paying, 'cause those days – when I put my heart, soul and energies in, and in return get only an invitation to the party – those days are over!"

Man: "We're serving dairy desserts."

Me: "When do you need it done?"

Man: "Last week, but I'll settle for tomorrow."

Me: "How many words do you need?"

Man: "No more then 2,000. You have to write about me and my wife – what great parents we are, how much Becky adores us, and how important we are to her."

Me: "And what about Becky herself? Tell me about her."

Man: "Well… she loves us tremendously, adores us, worships us."

Me: "OK, what does she love doing?"

Man: "Uh…uh…"

Me: "Kay…What is she good at?"

Man: "Don't know."

Me: "What are her hobbies?"

Man: "Not sure."

Me: "Who are her best friends aside from you?"

Man: "Beats me."

Me: "What do you know about Becky?"

Man: "Who?"

Me: "Becky!"

Man: "Oh, she's 12 tomorrow. She's having a bat mitzvah. Aren't you listening?"

I hung up. Truth is, I'm not really in the mood for the task, yet looking at the alternative (and I'm looking at it – Meir's still with his raised hands, still going on about wonder woman, who folds socks while baking and cleans ovens while playing the trumpet), I might as well.

The night, and the day after, are exhausting. I enter Becky's Facebook page, and interview her many relatives, neighbours, friends, enemies and then, finally, Becky's life is in my hands. Neatly printed.

I head to the bat mitzvah, and hand the speech to the proud father. "Oh, the speech?" he says. "We decided to pass. Instead we're going with a unique cabaret gig, acted by my wife and me."

Well, at least I got me some dairy desserts…

NEW YEAR'S EVE APPETIZER - MOZZARELLA SKEWERS

1 container baby mozzarella balls (bocconcini)
1 package fresh basil
25-30 cherry tomatoes, small to medium size

DRESSING:
1 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
1 Tbs. olive oil
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper

Wash and dry tomatoes and basil. If basil leaves are large, cut in half. Using small skewers about 4 1/2" long, slide on a tomato, piece of basil folded in half and ball of mozzarella. Repeat on new skewers until all the pieces have been used. Combine ingredients for dressing and brush or sprinkle over skewers just before serving. Dressing can also be served on the side for dipping.

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Joints need to move

FITNESS CORNER
By FELYCE ZOMPARELLI

A recent study done at the University of California found that light exercise may protect against osteoarthritis of the knee and hip in high-risk populations.

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis, and although no cure exists at this time, there are many ways to relieve pain and remain active.

There are many causes of osteoarthritis, including age, injury, joint stress, obesity, heredity and muscle weakness. One of the easiest ways to reduce joint pain and inflammation is to lose weight. Losing as little as 10 pounds can take enough pressure off the joints to significantly decrease joint pain. Low-intensity exercises such as bicycling, swimming, dancing, water aerobics, light weight training and low-impact aerobics are not only good ways to lose weight but they have also been found to be the most effective ways to strengthen and stabilize the joints with the least amount of long-term damage.

Movement of affected joints prevents stiffness and reduces pain by increasing circulation, which reduces inflammation. The worst thing someone with osteoarthritis can do is not move. Sedentary lifestyle can lead to joint stiffness and increased swelling of the affected area, promoting immobility.

Workouts should include a full-body warm-up. Stretching before a workout can cause muscles to tighten prematurely, resulting in joint stiffness. An effective warm-up should include full-body moves to loosen joints, ligaments, tendons and muscles before exercising. Thirty minutes daily or 60 minutes three times a week of joint-friendly exercises is all it takes to strengthen the surrounding muscles, which will reduce stress and relieve stiffness of the joints. Make sure to include core and lower-back strengthening exercises during your workout. Core strength has been shown to reduce stress on the joints. Incorporating full range of motion exercises every morning and evening will improve flexibility and reduce joint stiffness. Stretching after every workout is important for flexibility and joint mobility.

Want to learn more. E-mail me at felycesfitness@rogers.com.

They are Jewish children

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

How would you describe your appreciation of and respect for what orphanages do? What do you think when a friend fosters a child? My guess is you feel a deep respect for their initiative and are in awe of them. Somewhere, someplace you might feel compelled to do the same.

What do you consider when you read this quote from Maimonides: "A person is obligated to be careful in dealing with orphans and widows since their spirits are low – even if they are wealthy"? And the Torah states: "Every widow and orphan you shall not afflict" (Exodus 22:21)?

Now think deeply about you as a kid, or what your child is like when he/she is scared. It moves you almost like no other image, eh? It's not surprising. A scared and unsettled child touches the most sensitive place in our heart. Sometimes it reminds us of our own childhood loneliness.

Take all of these feelings and thoughts and act on them. You have the opportunity to help a child. Jewish Family & Child (JF&CS) – a government-mandated children's aid society, and an outstanding one at that – has in its jurisdiction 93 Jewish children waiting to be fostered.

In a recent statement, JF&CS said: "There are currently 93 Jewish children in the care of JF&CS. Unfortunately, that number only continues to increase. We welcome Jewish foster parents of all levels of religious observance across the GTA. Remuneration: minimum $1,000 per month; training will be provided. Contact the JF&CS intake department at 416-638-7800."

While these children's are not orphans they cannot stay with their families. Being parentless must be brutal. May I suggest you call JF&CS. I know families who have fostered a child, and one that fostered more than 60 Jewish children, and they advise people to foster a child.

Sometimes their experience was magical. Sometime it didn't work out. But they did it. They opened their hearts and homes. Give it a try. (JF&CS can hook you up with a foster family to get more information and learn what fostering a child is like.)

A Jewish child is alone here in Toronto. Show them love. Hug them. Make them feel safe. Foster a Jewish child. Your children will grow. You will feel like an important part of our world. Think about what you'll do for that child.

Once again, remember what you think about when you read about or hear of individuals doing incredible things for children? Do not discount the "you" within this formula. The only difference between those who foster and those who don't is initiative, not will. I have heard from individuals who truly want to assist children, but are not sure how to, or afraid that they might screw up.

Do something different. Open your heart and home, or at least call JF&CS and get information. Share it with your family, your loved ones and give it a go. If fostering a child works, it will make a world of difference to everyone. If it doesn't – well, you can try again later!

Yasher koach. Let's foster all 93. Let's make the Toronto Jewish community an example to other communities through the statement, "We leave no children behind." Please.

Let me know if you have fostered a child or are thinking about it. I'll encourage you. E-mail me at avrum@veahavta.org or drop by my blog at http://avrum.net. You have the resources, both materially and soulfully. Share your love. Do it. 416-638-7800.

They are Jewish children.

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